

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Mudford Infant School**  
Christchurch

LEA area: Dorset

Unique Reference Number: 113738

Inspection Number: 197263

Headteacher: Mrs D.Murcott

Reporting inspector: Mrs A.J.Pangbourne, 23818

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707227

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Queens Road Mudford Christchurch Dorset BH23 3HH
Telephone number:	01202 485513
Fax number:	-
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr F.Paines
Date of previous inspection:	19 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup> March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Alison Pangbourne, RgI	Science	Attainment and progress
	Information technology	Teaching
	Areas of learning for children aged under five	Leadership and management
Mr Jan Zachary, Lay Inspector		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
		Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr Tom Simpson	English	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	History	Curriculum and assessment
	Geography	Special educational needs
	Music	Equal opportunities
Mrs June Watson	Mathematics	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	Design technology	Efficiency
	Physical education	
	Art	
	Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Zachary Associates  
23 White Cliff Mill Street  
Blandford  
Dorset  
DT11 7BQ

01258 450223

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The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House

33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

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

- Standards in religious education exceed those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good. Examples of good teaching were seen in all classes.
- There are very good strategies for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour and pupils behave very well.
- There is very good provision for children who are aged under five.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make good progress.
- There is very good provision for pupils' moral development.
- The school plans and manages the money made available to it well.

### **Where the school has weaknesses**

- Standards of attainment are too low in information technology and pupils make unsatisfactory progress, particularly in Year 2. The school has already recognised this as a weakness.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan, carry out and record their own investigations and progress is unsatisfactory in this aspect of science, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- There is no structured programme to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- The school does not meet all statutory requirements.

The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be addressed. The plan will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

### **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 1996. It has maintained broadly average standards of attainment. The governors' action plan has successfully addressed most of the weaknesses pointed out in its last inspection. Medium-term plans, which will eventually become schemes of work, have been established for each subject to assist curricular planning, although clear links to the National Curriculum programmes of study are still to be included. Assessment procedures are appropriately included in planning documents and a common form of record keeping has been established. Support for pupils with special educational needs has been improved to ensure that they have full access to all areas of the curriculum. The school has set appropriately challenging targets to raise standards in English and mathematics. The school is satisfactorily placed to make further improvement.

## Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i> B <i>average</i> C <i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E
Reading	C	D	
Writing	C	E	
Mathematics	C	D	

The information shows that the performance of the pupils in 1998 was in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards are below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. The cohort of pupils taking the tests included a high number of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in language and literacy skills.

Inspection evidence shows that standards overall are average by the end of the key stage in English, mathematics and science. Standards in speaking and listening are below average. There is currently no structured programme to develop these skills and many pupils start school with below average skills in language and literacy. In science, standards are lower in the experimental and investigative aspects of the subject because pupils have insufficient opportunities to plan their own investigations and this impedes progress, particularly for higher attaining pupils.

Standards in information technology are below expectations because there are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to develop their skills. In religious education, the standard of attainment of the oldest pupils exceeds the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Progress is good in history.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Not applicable	Satisfactory
Information technology	Not applicable	Insufficient evidence
Religious education	Not applicable	Good
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons seen. Fifteen per cent of lessons seen were judged to be very good. Almost half the teaching seen was good, especially in English lessons and in the classes for children aged under five. Here, the teaching was never less than good. Examples of good teaching were seen in all classes.

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

### Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. It has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and relationships with each other are good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is similar to the national average.
Ethos*	Good. There is a strong commitment to raising standards and relationships are good.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the school and provides strong leadership. The governing body is supportive and the governors are developing their roles, particularly in monitoring the curriculum. The role of some curriculum co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
Curriculum	Satisfactory overall. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their experimental and investigative skills in science and to develop their skills in information technology. Planning is sound, although medium-term plans are not closely linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Assessment procedures are good.
Special educational needs	Provision is very good. Individual education plans identify clear targets and pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Very good provision for moral development. Good provision for spiritual and social development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. Good number of support staff. Good accommodation. Most classrooms are spacious and there is a satisfactory range of resources.
Value for money	Good.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

### The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The children behave well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school does not provide enough information about what is being taught.</li> <li>• They do not receive enough information</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The standards their children achieve.</li> <li>• The school encourages parents to play a full part in its life.</li> <li>• The school promotes good attitudes and values.</li> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> </ul>	<p>about their children's progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like longer notice about events which are happening in school.</li> </ul>
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Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school provides appropriate information about what is being taught. Parents receive satisfactory information about their child's progress, although not all reports to parents comment sufficiently on pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects. Inspectors agree that parents receive insufficient notice about school events. However, the school has already recognised this and plans to give parents more notice.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to continue the good work of the school and to raise standards, the senior management team and the governing body should now address the following in their action plan: (These are indicated in the paragraphs numbered below.)

- Raise standards and improve progress in information technology, and particularly in Year 2, by:  
ensuring that all pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in all aspects of the information technology curriculum \*;  
improving the policy and scheme of work to ensure that pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically;  
establishing a consistent system of assessment and ensuring that assessment information about what pupils know and can do is used to assist lesson planning.  
(paragraphs 12, 34, 38, 39, 59, 69, 103-108 )
- Raise standards in speaking and listening by:  
implementing a whole school programme to systematically develop these skills.  
(paragraphs 9, 36, 80, 85 )
- Raise standards and improve progress in science, particularly for higher attaining pupils by:  
ensuring that sufficient emphasis is placed on experimental and investigative science and providing opportunities for pupils to plan, carry out and record their own investigations.  
(paragraphs 11, 27, 97-99, 101, 102 )
- Comply fully with statutory requirements by:  
ensuring that information technology is taught sufficiently;  
ensuring that the annual governors' report to parents contains all statutory information;  
improving the quality of annual reports to parents by including comments on pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects.  
(paragraphs 34, 51, 52,59 )

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan: (These are indicated in the paragraphs numbered below.)

- Develop the role of the curriculum co-ordinators to include the monitoring of standards and teaching \* (paragraphs 56, 102, 107 )
- Improve the condition of the roof \* (paragraph 66 )
- Provide more opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to develop their independence skills \* (paragraphs 20, 86 )
- Improve the pace of mental arithmetic sessions. (paragraphs 30,92,94 )

\*These areas have already been identified by the school as in need of improvement.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Mudeford Infant School is situated in a residential area near Christchurch. The school draws its pupils mainly from the local area, comprising mostly of owner occupied properties, although some pupils live in housing association property. Since the previous inspection, the school has included pupils from a wider catchment area and some pupils live in Somerford. Most pupils attend some form of pre-school education. The school has maintained the characteristics described in the previous inspection, although the number on roll has been reduced. Children's attainments on entry are broadly average. However, a significant number of children have below average skills in language and literacy. The socio economic circumstances of pupils are broadly average with about two per cent entitled to a free school meal, which is below average. The pupils are predominantly white with few pupils from ethnic heritages. There are about 11 per cent more boys than girls, particularly in Year 2.

2. At the time of the inspection, there were 181 pupils on roll, of whom three have statements of special educational need and 35 were included on the special educational needs register as needing levels of support provided by the school itself. The school has an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, 56 children were aged under five. They are admitted to school at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday on a part time basis. Children with birthdays in the autumn term become full time in January, those who have birthdays during the spring term become full time in February and those who have birthdays during the summer term become full time at the beginning of that term. They are accommodated in two classes in a double unit, which is purpose built for children of this age.

3. The school aims to provide a warm and welcoming environment in which all are valued and all can learn, strengthened by close and supportive links between children, staff, parents and the community; to provide a stimulating and creative environment in which every child, with respect to their individual needs, is given equal opportunity to develop aesthetic awareness, learning and social skills with confidence and self-esteem; to recognise each child's potential through offering a wide range of challenging, enjoyable and differentiated experiences that allow each individual to make decisions, take responsibility, evaluate and achieve the highest standards possible and to provide rules and guidance which reflect a high standard of behaviour through shared spiritual and moral values within the framework of a supportive school community.

4. Its priorities are to raise standards overall, but particularly in mathematics, writing and information technology; to improve the pupils' speaking and listening skills; to reduce the number of pupils on the special educational needs register and to develop more self awareness, self confidence and independence in the pupils. The school has set appropriate targets to raise standards in English and mathematics.

## Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

For latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
99 (98)	33 (33)	29 (34)	62 (67)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	27 (26)	24 (25)	28 (30)
	Girls	25 (28)	22 (32)	23 (30)
	Total	52 (54)	46 (57)	51 (60)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81 (79)	78 (84)	83 (88)
	National	- (80)	- (81)	- (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	28 (25)	28 (30)	30 (31)
	Girls	23 (29)	26 (32)	26 (31)
	Total	51 (54)	54 (62)	56 (62)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	83 (79)	94 (91)	87 (91)
	National	- (81)	- (85)	- (86)

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Comparative figures for 1999 are unavailable.

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed		%
Through absence for the latest complete Reporting year:	Authorised	School 5.0
	Absence	National comparative data 5.7
	Unauthorised	School 0.7
	Absence	National comparative data 0.5

### Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during

The previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	15
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0



## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

5. The school has maintained the broadly average standards of attainment identified in the previous inspection. Improvements have been made in religious education, where pupils now exceed the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, the results of national tests show that there has been a steady improvement in reading, writing and mathematics until 1997 but that there has been a slight decline since. Results for 1999 show little improvement, particularly in writing and mathematics. The school recognises these weaknesses and plans are already in place to raise standards, particularly in writing. One day each week has been appropriately assigned to the development of writing skills. The cohort of pupils taking the tests in the last two years has been untypical and the school has an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. Statutory assessment and baseline assessment data is carefully analysed and the school has set appropriate targets to raise standards in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that the school is on course to meet these targets.

6. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average. Teacher assessments in science show that the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was above the national average. The proportion of pupils who exceeded these standards was average in reading and mathematics, below average in writing and well below average in science.

7. There is national data about the performance of schools in a similar context- that is, schools with up to eight per cent of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal. Compared to these schools, pupils' performance at the age of seven is below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. This school has an above average number of pupils with special educational needs.

8. The results of the narrow range of attainments measured by the school's baseline assessments and inspection evidence show that attainment on entry at the age of four is broadly average. However, language and literacy skills are below average for many children and many start school with poorly developed speech. Very good planning, good teaching and a very broad and rich curriculum ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all the areas of learning necessary for their development. By the time they are five, pupils attain standards which broadly meet those expected for their age and have considerably broadened and firmly consolidated their knowledge in all the areas of learning. However, attainment in language and literacy skills is just below expectations, particularly in speaking and listening. Inspection evidence shows that standards overall meet the expectation for the end of Key Stage 1. Standards in English, mathematics and science meet expectations. Overall, pupils make sound progress.

9. Standards in speaking and listening are below national expectations by the end of the key stage and pupils make satisfactory progress. They can name characters in a story, but find difficulty in communicating their feelings. Their response to questions sometimes indicates underdeveloped listening skills. Standards in reading are in line with national expectations by the end of the key stage and pupils make good progress. By age seven, many pupils use a range of strategies to help them read unknown words. They know the difference between poetry, fiction and non-fiction texts and find information from a range of sources. Standards in writing also meet expectations by the end of the key stage and pupils write for a range of purposes, using simple punctuation correctly and showing a developing awareness of the reader. The pupils make good progress in writing. Overall, progress in English is good.

10. Pupils make sound progress in mathematics. They develop their understanding of number bonds and recognise coins. They develop a sound understanding of measures and most tell the time. They explain their results when constructing block graphs to show their favourite colours. Occasionally, progress is adversely affected when pupils are insufficiently involved in oral sessions or when tasks are

too easy for them. Although the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced, it has yet to impact positively on the progress made.

11. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to plan, carry out and record their own investigations and progress is unsatisfactory in this aspect of the curriculum, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Pupils understand the properties of materials and develop their scientific language as they move through the school. They understand that their environment contains a variety of living and non-living things and know the basic conditions needed for survival.

12. Standards in information technology are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Although pupils in the reception classes and Year 1 make satisfactory progress, progress is unsatisfactory in Year 2. This is because pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the development of skills and understanding in the use of information technology. Pupils do better than expected for their age in religious education and they make good progress. This is because lessons are well linked to the expressive arts, teachers have high expectations and activities are well planned.

13. Standards in literacy are sound throughout the school. Standards and progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening enhance learning in other areas. For example, pupils use their writing skills to record their observations in science and use their developing speaking and listening skills well when describing how to make an electrical circuit. In mathematics, pupils explain their strategies for reaching their answers. Standards in numeracy are also sound. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils use their measuring skills in design technology to make vehicles and in science to measure the growth of a bean.

14. Pupils make sound progress in design technology, geography, music, art and physical education. Progress is good in history. Where progress is good, very well planned lessons which interest the pupils and the good quality of the teaching, together with tasks which are well matched to the needs of the pupils, contribute positively to the progress made.

15. The majority of pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. This is a result of the high level of support given to them and to the school's caring ethos. High attaining pupils generally make satisfactory progress when they receive suitably challenging work. However, these pupils are not always offered tasks which are sufficiently challenging in science. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

16. Most pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, respond very well in lessons. There was at least a sound response from the pupils in all the lessons observed during the inspection and in the overwhelming majority of lessons response was at least good. In nearly three out of ten it was very good. The behaviour of pupils has improved since the last inspection.

17. The pupils have good attitudes towards their learning. They settle quickly to lessons and apply themselves well to the task in hand. They are enthusiastic about their work and are keen to contribute to class and group discussions, although this very enthusiasm sometimes leads to the inappropriate shouting out of answers to questions from their teachers. Pupils of all abilities sustain concentration, even when not being directly supervised by an adult. This is particularly apparent during parts of the literacy hour, but is a common factor of all lessons. Pupils strive hard to achieve agreed group and individual targets and most take pride in their work.

18. The response of children aged under five is good and often very good. They show positive attitudes to their work and behave very well. In their first week in school many are already secure in class routines. They respond well to all adults in the unit and take responsibility for themselves during their 'planning time.'

19. Behaviour in lessons, in the playground and around the site is mostly very good, contributing well to an orderly and secure environment which is conducive to learning and personal development. Even the younger pupils respect and follow the school's code of conduct. They are polite and friendly towards adults and one another. They show respect for property and books. There is no evidence of graffiti or litter. No bullying was seen during the inspection and there have been no exclusions during the last year.

20. Relationships between the pupils are good. They support each other well in class and work well together in group or paired activities, sharing equipment where necessary. For example, pupils in a science lesson collaborated well in pairs to construct electrical circuits. Relationships with teaching and support staff are also good and there is a high level of mutual respect. Overall, the pupils' personal development is satisfactory. When opportunities arise, they show independence in lessons. For example, groups of pupils worked well independently in a physical education lesson when dismantling apparatus, while, after an art lesson, they were happy to tidy away equipment and materials. Many enjoy carrying out minor routine responsibilities in class or around the school. The pupils listen well to the opinions of their peers and treat these with respect. Particular examples of this are found in religious education, personal and social education and during circle time. The personal development of pupils is successfully enhanced through their participation from time to time in music and drama events provided by professional artistes.

### **Attendance**

21. Following the last inspection, the school continues to maintain satisfactory levels of attendance, which are close to the national average. Unauthorised absence is a little higher than average, but this is due to a very small number of specific pupils and the school is addressing the issue well. Punctuality is good at the beginning of the school day and after lunch, and lessons start promptly and efficiently.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

22. The quality of teaching is good overall. Six out of ten lessons were good or very good and the rest were satisfactory. Fifteen per cent of the lessons seen were very good. Examples of good teaching were seen in all classes. This represents an improvement in the standard of teaching since the previous inspection, where the quality of teaching was sound overall. A factor in the improvement in teaching is the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, which has impacted positively on the standard of teaching in English.

23. The quality of teaching is highest in the unit for children aged under five. Here, the quality of teaching was never less than good and two lessons were very good. All adults working with these children have a very good understanding of the needs of such young children and work well together as a team. Very good planning ensures that all children have access to the full curriculum and that activities are well matched to their needs. Both teachers in the unit have high expectations and a warm, affirming style, which encourages all children to persevere. The organisation of the unit, where children plan their own tasks from a structured range of activities for part of each morning, places good emphasis on practical activities and the development of independence skills. Pace is brisk and the teachers take every opportunity to extend language. Assessment is used very well to plan what children need to learn next.

24. The quality of teaching is good in English, religious education and history and this contributes positively to the good progress made in these subjects. Lessons are well planned and the teachers' enthusiasm for the subjects is successfully communicated to the pupils. The quality of teaching is sound in mathematics, science, physical education and music. There was insufficient evidence to make

a judgement on the quality of teaching in information technology, design technology, geography, or art. This is because no teaching was seen in information technology, design technology or geography, and the length of the inspection only allowed time for one lesson to be seen in art. Examples of good teaching were seen in all subjects observed with the exception of science.

25. Very good teaching is a feature of some English, religious education and physical education lessons. Half of the very good lessons were in one class in Year 2. These very good lessons were characterised by very high expectations, well-planned activities which were matched to the needs of all pupils and a brisk pace. For example, during the literacy hour, effective use was made of questions to devise the maximum benefit from the text of 'Arts and Crafts around the world'. This enabled pupils to understand that sets of instructions have structured features. In Year 1, pupils learn to sequence a story effectively through role-play due to very good organisation and use of resources. Very good teaching in religious education, in Year 2, was characterised by a very good knowledge of the subject and a style of class management which allowed pupils freedom for experimentation; for example, pupils dramatised the story of 'The Creation' using readings from the Bible and musical accompaniments.

26. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported in lessons by class teachers and by experienced and well-qualified support assistants where appropriate. Their needs are well met and appropriate arrangements are in place to provide them with tasks which are well matched to their abilities. Pupils receive their extra support in the classrooms. Teachers and support assistants effectively monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs using a record sheet to note the results of on-going assessment of progress in relation to learning and behavioural targets defined in individual education plans.

27. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects which they teach. Planning is thorough and they generally plan activities to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of attainment. However, higher attaining pupils are sometimes insufficiently challenged in science and expectations are not high enough. For example, pupils have insufficient opportunity to plan their own investigations and devise their own recording method. This contributes to unsatisfactory progress in this area of the curriculum. With the exception of some science lessons, expectations are high for all pupils, including higher attainers, in all other subjects.

28. There is an appropriate balance between practical tasks and whole-class teaching and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, in some lessons, introductions to activities are too long and this has a negative effect on the amount of work which pupils are able to complete in a lesson. For example, in a music lesson in Year 2 an over long introduction meant that pupils had insufficient time to use the instruments effectively. The teachers over-direct some lessons, particularly in science, and pupils have little opportunity to use their initiative and extend their own knowledge. Pupils are given good opportunities to work in pairs and small groups, particularly in English and mathematics.

29. The management of pupils in lessons is consistently good. Pupils respond positively to the tasks they are given and relationships between pupils and teachers are good. All teachers make their expectations of behaviour clear to the pupils and are firm but pleasant. Good behaviour is noticed and praised and praise is used effectively to reinforce good discipline. Classroom assistants and parent helpers are well briefed and interact positively with pupils.

30. Resources are used appropriately, particularly during the literacy hour. Teachers prepare and choose them carefully. For example, pupils in Year 1 were fascinated by old toys such as a mechanical acrobat when learning about 'old and new' in a history lesson. Unusual musical instruments encourage pupils to experiment with musical sounds. In the best lessons, pace is brisk and effective intervention encourages pupils to persevere with the task. Where teaching is less successful, pace is slow and

introductions are too long. Mental arithmetic sessions during numeracy lessons are often conducted at too slow a pace.

31. The teaching of literacy is good. The school has successfully adopted the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school and this has had a significant impact on the quality of teaching. Good emphasis is placed in teaching these skills and this contributes positively to the good progress made in English, particularly in reading. Literacy skills are taught well across all areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils use their developing skills to record their findings in science, history and geography. The teaching of numeracy is sound and the school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. This has yet to impact positively on the standards attained.

32. Teachers assess pupils well during lessons through discussion and observation. Cards showing the targets for each task are often on display for each group. Pupils are reminded of their targets and encouraged to assess their own work against these targets. All teachers record their daily assessments competently and use their assessments to plan tasks which are generally well matched to the needs of the pupils, including high attainers and those with special educational needs. Appropriate intervention during group activities and review time at the end of lessons is used to evaluate what pupils have learnt. Teachers use positive comments in their marking to help pupils improve their work.

33. Homework is used appropriately to extend and enrich pupils' learning. All pupils regularly take books home to read with their parents. Older pupils undertake simple mathematical activities and younger pupils take home activities relating to their topic: for example sheets to complete showing which items in the home use electricity. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the amount and type of homework that their children are expected to do.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

34. Overall, the curriculum provided for the pupils at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is broad and generally balanced and satisfies the requirements of the National Curriculum with the exception of information technology, where pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills. There is an imbalance within science, however, as there is insufficient emphasis on the experimental and investigative aspects of the subject. The school's provision for literacy and the introduction of a literacy hour is well established through a well-structured approach and is having a positive effect on standards. The National Numeracy Strategy is also in place and the school's overall provision for numeracy is satisfactory. The school has made a conscious decision to maintain a broad curriculum with a strong aesthetic content, and provision for the other subjects is also satisfactory. Requirements to teach sex and drugs education are met through science, religious education, circle time and the literacy hour. Aspects are also covered during personal and social education lessons where, for example, pupils learn the skills of co-operation and empathy. There is currently, however, no policy for personal and social education and this area is appropriately identified on the school's current development plan as an area of future focus.

35. The curriculum provided for children aged under five is very good. It is a strength of the school. It is very broad and balanced and covers all the desirable areas of learning. It provides children with a firm foundation for work in the National Curriculum programmes of study. There is very good emphasis on practical activities and the organisation of the curriculum, where children plan, carry out and review their own activities in small groups from a structured choice, makes a very positive contribution to the development of their social and independence skills. The curriculum is very well planned to ensure that within this organisation, all children, including those with special educational needs, are offered a balance of activities, which are very well matched to their individual needs. Assessment procedures are very good. Baseline assessments are carried out effectively, particularly in literacy and numeracy, when children are working in small groups with their teachers. All adults competently assess children and maintain detailed records of their achievements. They use this information to ensure that tasks are well matched to the needs of all children.

36. Planning of the curriculum at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and has improved considerably since the time of the previous inspection. The school has recently developed useful subject based medium-term plans, which will eventually form schemes of work. They are suitably based on the results of National Curriculum initiatives and include sections on content, focus, learning intentions and assessment opportunities. They are not, however, linked closely enough to the National Curriculum programmes of study and still need further development. There is also sound weekly planning. This is sometimes, but not always, constructed collaboratively by teachers within a year group. Policies are in place for most subjects. However, the English policy is out of date, which is unsatisfactory. In practice reading and writing are taught effectively, but there are no structured strategies in place for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills.

37. Planning and provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum with support where necessary. Due regard is given to matching the curriculum provided to their specific needs, and this is reflected in planning at all levels. Particular attention is given to developing their skills in literacy with individual and group targets agreed through a process of mutual assessment. Individual education plans are regularly completed and updated by class teachers with support from the special needs co-ordinator and outside experts at advanced stages of assessment. The school is very aware of gender and ethnicity issues. Attainment, for example, is analysed against gender while the headteacher regularly views pupil interaction during playtimes. However, there is no formal strategy in place for monitoring the school's equal opportunity policy. There is satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities. The only extra-curricular activity at present is choir, although gymnastics and French clubs are planned for the future. A sound range of visits and visitors to the school enriches the curriculum. The latter include well-known authors, dramatists, professional musicians and puppeteers.

38. A wide range of strategies is in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress. Overall, assessment procedures are good. This is an improvement on the findings of the last report. Constructive reading records are regularly completed. Spelling, word recognition, phonic and writing skills are also regularly assessed and the results recorded on record sheets or in exercise books. New National Curriculum assessment sheets for mathematics and science have been piloted and introduced this term. There are also successful assessment strategies for design technology, religious education and physical education. Satisfactory assessment strategies for information technology have recently been introduced in Year 1. These have not yet been introduced in Year 2 and this contributes to a lack of challenge for older pupils, as they do not develop their skills sufficiently. There is also some assessment of progress in the remaining subjects, but this is more informal. One very successful aspect of the school's assessment strategy is its tracking procedures. These involve the regular examination of a sample of work in all subjects produced by a sample of three pupils from each class across the ability range. This exercise is used to track coverage, attainment and progress. However, there is no agreed whole school system of recording the results of the tracking procedures as yet. Procedures for the identification and assessment of special educational needs are very good. Baseline assessment and other procedures are used well to identify needs and to monitor progress. Support assistants make effective use of assessment sheets to monitor the work of individual pupils, especially those with special educational needs, and to report progress back against targets to teachers in detail.

39. The school successfully uses assessment information to inform planning and teaching in many subjects. These include literacy, numeracy, religious education, physical education and sometimes history. There are examples, however, in information technology and geography where this is not the case. Baseline assessment is very effective and used very well to dictate the most appropriate tasks to be provided for the youngest pupils. Statutory assessment data is carefully analysed and the results used to inform strategic planning. An example of this is the school's recent heavy emphasis on improving pupils' writing skills.

## **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

40. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Since the last inspection, the quality of provision for pupils' moral development has improved. All pupils including those with special educational needs and children who are aged under five receive good support from staff. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical difficulties, play a full part in all school activities. Teachers make every effort through religious education, personal and social education and other lessons, and through circle time, to enhance the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of all pupils.

41. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. This aspect is effectively fostered in religious education lessons, daily assemblies and other lessons in the curriculum. For example, after a Bible story of the wedding at Canaan, an opportunity to reflect led to pupils thinking about flowers and their association with weddings. Pupils in Year 1 reflect on the feelings of Mary Jones at different stages of her journey. In assembly, a lighted candle helps pupils to reflect on the meaning of friendship as portrayed in both a traditional Indian story and the story of Zacchaeus. Acts of collective worship contribute positively to pupils' spiritual development and they meet statutory requirements. The curriculum is enriched by visits to museums such as the Electricity Museum when pupils had an opportunity to sit in a tram and reflect on the feelings of ladies wearing big hats and wide skirts. A sense of awe, wonder and delight is promoted by studies of the natural world, such as the yearly observation of the life cycle of the frogs in the school pond.

42. The quality of provision for pupils' moral development is very good. It is clearly promoted by the good ethos of the school. Teachers are polite and treat pupils with respect. They value their contributions to class discussions. Adults provide good role models. Pupils are very effectively taught the difference between right and wrong and school rules are consistently applied across the school. They are reinforced during assembly themes such as 'doing your best' and how this impacts on places and other people. Circle time, which takes place in most classes as part of personal and social education, provides a good forum for pupils to share their experiences and concerns. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and relevant stories are used successfully to promote pupils' understanding of moral issues, such as the story of Ruby the bear with the missing ear. Pupils identified with the feelings of someone treated unkindly because they were different.

43. Provision for social development is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to work together co-operatively within lessons. For example, in mathematics, pupils work within a small group to investigate a 'magic' number square. In literacy, pupils co-operate in a role play situation to develop an understanding of story settings, characters and structure through first hand experience using model farm animals. They are taught from an early age to be self-reliant, such as when changing for physical education lessons, making choices, putting equipment away correctly and tidying their classrooms at the end of a session. They willingly help with routine tasks such as registers, lunchbox trolleys and gymnastic equipment. Pupils learn to be responsible for themselves and for others, such as by coming into school responsibly. Fund raising for charity and an understanding of the local community are actively encouraged; for example, through festivals such as Harvest, Remembrance and Grandparents days.

44. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The arrangements for visits and visitors enhance pupils' understanding of their own culture, such as visits to museums, churches and environmental walks. Visiting theatre groups, authors and puppeteers provide a rich contribution to the curriculum. Multi-cultural education is soundly promoted by the study of art, music and literature. For example, there are displays of arts and crafts from around the world. Indian music and traditional stories from other religions are featured in assemblies. There is a satisfactory range of multi-cultural books in the school.

## **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

45. The arrangements for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils are satisfactory, and make a positive contribution to the educational standards attained. As in the previous inspection, there is a strong commitment to the care of pupils by teachers, governors and all adults in the school. This is reflected in the support given to pupils to help them settle in and in the way the therapy and care needs of pupils with special educational needs are met. Teachers and classroom assistants effectively support these pupils. Their progress is very well monitored and recorded. Clear routines are quickly established for children who are aged under five and consequently they settle into school happily.

46. The promotion of discipline and good behaviour is now a particular strength. Progress and personal development are monitored well. Attendance is appropriately monitored and encouraged, but there are strengths and weaknesses within the procedures. Similarly, child protection and arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory overall, but although practice is sound some child protection procedures need formalising.

47. The particular strengths of the school's behaviour strategies are reflected in the good climate for learning that is ensured in class and around the orderly school site. The behaviour policy shows a good balance of rewards and sanctions and these are used consistently in all classes. They include stickers given out for good behaviour and 'swans' for good achievement. Adults deal with any misbehaviour calmly and effectively. Support staff have half-termly meetings with the headteacher and these provide a useful forum for supporting the management of behaviour. Parents are very satisfied with the steps the school takes to ensure good behaviour and their involvement. They were consulted and invited to a meeting on the 'home school agreement' last term, for example.

48. Teachers and support staff know the children very well as individuals. This informal knowledge is supported well by the way the school records assessments, in terms of both academic and personal development. It has made good improvements since the last inspection in record keeping, which is now carried out to a common format for most subjects. Overall there are good systems in place: for example the special educational needs register is well maintained with a good level of detail.

49. The registration of pupils' attendance is efficient and timely. The school secretary monitors the registers appropriately, and the follow up of absence is also sound. The involvement of the educational welfare officer and social services is sensitively handled when required. There are some minor weaknesses in recording attendance: for example some confusion between school staff over the cut-off time for recording pupils who are late.

50. The policy for child protection is only in draft form and so does not make clear the role of the headteacher as the designated person holding responsibility. However, teachers are aware of procedures and in practice they are well aware that the headteacher has that responsibility. There has been appropriate training for staff, but at present there is no documentation to support new or visiting teachers. The policy for health and safety is satisfactory and appropriate attention is given to safety in lessons and around the school. Risk assessments are appropriately made and incident books and first aid procedures used well. The school is working to rectify some of the limitations in the premises.

## **Partnership with parents and the community**

51. The last inspection report praised the contribution parents made to the life of the school, and the relationships between school and parents. These are still satisfactory and most parents are well satisfied with what the school does. A minority feel that communication with them could be improved. Importantly, however, all the parents feel their children like school. Whilst parents are generally satisfied with the annual reports they receive, these were criticised at the time of the last inspection and still lack sufficient details of pupils' progress, particularly in the foundation subjects.



52. Overall, parents receive adequate information about the school. The prospectus is informative and accessible, and the Governors' annual report to parents is very well presented in the style of a commercially produced newsletter, with some helpful articles on subjects such as the literacy hour and class sizes. However, not all the statutory information is included. Helpful curriculum information is provided through topic sheets and posters; although parents feel there could be greater detail. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at formal meetings twice a year. There is, however, a strong feeling amongst parents that the timing of information supply could be improved; particularly the insufficient notice of forthcoming school events.

53. Parents of children who are aged under five receive useful information before their child starts school. There are good opportunities for them to visit the school to meet the teachers. A strong feature is the provision for pre-school interviews, where the headteacher, teacher, parent and child meet together. The information shared at this meeting provides a firm foundation for baseline assessment.

54. Parents are appropriately involved in their children's learning. Parent helpers regularly come in to help with, for instance, literacy, numeracy and art activities. There are good arrangements in place to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs at all relevant stages. Parents are invited to attend reviews of individual education plans, for example, and regular parent 'workshops' are held. Parents are invited into school to discuss the needs of their children should this be relevant. Most parents feel that homework is set at an appropriate level, and regularly use the home link books to communicate with the school. Whilst there is no formal parents' association, social events are well supported and the annual summer fair makes a significant contribution to school funds, usually over £2000.

55. Links with the community are sound. The school uses visits to the local vet, bookshop, leisure centre and church, as well as places of interest such as Stanpit Marsh, Mudeford Quay, the lifeboat station and Brownsea Island as a useful supplement to the curriculum. The pupils also benefit from regular visitors such as local clergy, road safety specialists and occasional visitors such as puppeteers and a children's artist during Book Week, and students from local colleges are regularly involved with the school. Pupils also raise money for a number of charities. There are good links with the local junior school, and, particularly, the local playgroups. All of these opportunities enhance the curriculum and make a sound contribution to pupils' development and the continuity of their learning.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

56. The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong and innovative leadership. In the short time that she has been in post, she has achieved much, particularly in the areas of team building, curriculum development and assessment. She has successfully identified key areas for development and is making a positive contribution to an improving school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, who have a good understanding of the demands of their roles and share the same commitment to raising standards. The headteacher and senior staff work hard to develop the expertise amongst less experienced staff. Co-ordination for each subject of the curriculum is satisfactory but although co-ordinators have regular opportunities to fulfil their management roles by monitoring planning documents, their role has not yet been developed sufficiently to enable them to monitor standards and teaching in other classes. Realistic targets have been set in English and mathematics. All staff, including support staff, work hard to ensure the good quality of education provided by the school.

57. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very effective management. She is well trained and is very conversant with recent developments in special education. She maintains close links with all

parties involved. The special educational needs governor is also well informed and, in addition to working alongside targeted pupils from time to time, meets the headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator formally each term to discuss targets and how these are being met, as well as forward developments in provision for pupils. There is a clear and detailed plan for the further development of special educational needs provision.

58. The governors' action plan has successfully addressed most of the weaknesses identified during the previous inspection. Medium-term plans which will eventually become schemes of work have been established for each subject to assist curricular planning, although they are not explicitly linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The school recognises this as a weakness and plans to address this in line with the revised National Curriculum. Assessment procedures are appropriately built into planning and a common form of record keeping is established. Support for pupils with special educational needs has been improved to ensure that they are not denied access to other areas of the curriculum. The school is satisfactorily placed to make further improvement.

59. The governors are supportive and they are developing an understanding of their roles, the school's strengths and areas for development. The governing body has been established since the previous inspection, when the school shared its governing body with the Junior School. Several governors are recently appointed and their roles are well matched to their own areas of expertise. There is an appropriate range of committees, which report efficiently to the full governing body. In most respects the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and they have been successful in promoting high standards in several aspects of the school. However, National Curriculum requirements are not fully met in information technology, there are some minor omissions from their annual report to parents and reports to parents about their children do not contain all the necessary information.

60. The quality of monitoring of teaching and curriculum development is satisfactory. An appropriate framework for monitoring and evaluation has been established recently. This provides sound opportunities for the headteacher, governors, senior management team and co-ordinators to monitor the curriculum. It includes plans for co-ordinators to monitor standards and teaching in classes this year. Co-ordinators produce their own action plans for the development of their subjects in consultation with the headteacher. A newly developed monitoring policy for governors allows good opportunities for them to monitor the curriculum through planned visits. Recent visits include the monitoring of literacy, numeracy, early years and provision in the mixed age class, which was in operation last year. Results of standardised tests are analysed and used to set appropriate targets. The headteacher and staff closely monitor standards, particularly in reading. This contributes positively to the good progress made by the pupils in reading. Teachers also identify three pupils in each class of different abilities and their progress is tracked in all subjects.

61. The good ethos of the school is underpinned by the good relationships and the commitment shown by the headteacher, governors and staff to raising standards and valuing the efforts of all in a supportive and happy environment. Pupils show positive attitudes and those with special educational needs are very well supported. Equality of opportunity is good.

62. The school development plan is sound and extends over two years. It is an appropriate tool for improvement and identifies a wide range of targets including the development of information technology, the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, raising standards in reading and writing and a review of special educational needs. It identifies targets, priorities, time scale, success criteria and is costed. Governors' committees and curriculum co-ordinators draw up their own development plans and the school development plan is appropriately constructed in consultation with staff and governors.

63. There are clearly stated aims, values and policies, which are well reflected in the work of the school. The school is successful in its aim to provide a warm, welcoming environment where children can develop and learn to the best of their ability and to provide rules and guidance which reflect a high

standard of behaviour through shared spiritual and moral values within the framework of a supportive school community. The way in which these aims are incorporated into all aspects of the school is good.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

64. The school's teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. There is also a reasonable number of teachers, which means that the ratio of pupils to teachers is comparatively low. The small classes mean that it is easier for the teacher to challenge individuals and so support pupils' learning. The school has an above average number of classroom support staff, and this also makes a positive contribution to the success of the teaching, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. There are about the same number of administrative staff hours as in similar schools. All support staff, classroom, administration, lunchtime and premises staff, make a valued contribution to the school's success. A sound programme of professional development supports the staff. The policy and procedures are well written and clear, and literacy training was appropriately arranged. Numeracy training was adequate.

65. The school has sufficient resources such as books, materials and equipment in most areas apart from information technology. A number of areas, including English, music and the work with pupils who are under five, benefit from a wide range of good quality books, instruments and apparatus that have a positive effect on the pupils' learning. In information technology, however, there are not enough computers for the number of pupils. More have been ordered, but at present the limited access for pupils is lowering standards in the subject. There are satisfactory resources available to support pupils with special educational needs. These have recently been audited and are easily accessible to teachers and support assistants. They appropriately include some relevant computer programs.

66. The school's accommodation is good overall. The school buildings and grounds provide a pleasant environment in which to work and are clean and mostly well maintained. Some roofs, however, are not fully watertight, and the library was flooded during the inspection week. There have been some internal improvements since the last inspection when the accommodation was satisfactory but with some weaknesses. Most classrooms are now spacious and an additional corridor has been put in. The spacious accommodation supports the learning of pupils with special educational needs. However, the hall and the under fives area remain a little cramped.

### **The efficiency of the school**

67. Since the last inspection the efficiency of the school has improved. Financial planning is good. The school has established its own governing body, which effectively fulfils most of its statutory obligations, thereby addressing a key issue raised in the previous report. Strategic financial planning is linked closely to the school development plan and financial issues are effectively considered through the governors' finance committee. Governors consider spending priorities carefully, review the previous year and plan for the year ahead by preparing alternative budgets. Where possible, these focus on reducing class sizes and providing generous levels of support staff for pupils with special educational needs. The school is currently operating with a budget deficit agreed with the local education authority. This is due to the school's liability to repay part of the cost of a building extension. The repayments are ahead of schedule due to well co-ordinated fund raising activities and prudent budget management. The governing body carefully monitors the cost effectiveness of budget decisions. For example the information technology and educational support staff budgets are currently being monitored. All committees have appropriate targets.

68. Teaching staff are well deployed. There has been efficient monitoring of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching. However, some foundation subject co-ordinators have insufficient opportunities to monitor their subject. Good use is made of non-teaching staff, both to support pupils with special educational needs and to enhance the

quality of learning in the classroom. Good use is made of funding allocated to support staff and to special educational needs.

69. The school makes efficient use of its learning resources and accommodation with the exception of information technology equipment, which is underused. This has a negative effect on levels of achievement. The new extension is used well to accommodate a school library and there is planned use for a computer suite. The new corridor is used effectively to avoid lesson interruption. Resources and accommodation are effectively deployed for pupils with special educational needs, which successfully enhances their quality of learning and their progress.

70. Financial control and school administration are good. The most recent audit was in 1996 and the minor recommendations have all been fully implemented and maintained. The school's finance officer manages her department efficiently and unobtrusively. She can quickly access budget updates enabling the headteacher and governors to be kept well informed.

71. A judgement on value for money is based on what the school achieves in relation to expenditure. The income the school receives is average for this type of school. The attainments of children on entry are broadly average and standards of attainment at the end of the key stage are average. Pupils' attitudes are very good and the quality of education provided is good. The school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Taking into account all these factors, the school continues to provide good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **Areas of Learning for Children Under Five**

72. Children start school on a part time basis at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. Those who have their fifth birthday during the autumn term become full time in January, those with birthdays during the spring term become full time in February and those with birthdays during the summer term become full time at the beginning of the summer term. They are accommodated in two classes in a double unit, which is purpose built for children of this age. At the time of the inspection, most of the children were in their first week in school. Most children have experienced some form of pre-school provision. Evidence from the baseline assessments of the present five-year-olds and inspection evidence shows that children's attainments on entry are broadly average. However, language and literacy skills are below average for many children. They receive a positive start to school and participate fully in all activities provided. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and have considerably broadened and firmly consolidated their knowledge in all the areas of learning by the age of five. Their overall attainments meet those expected for their age, with the exception of language and literacy, where their attainment is just below expectations, particularly in speaking and listening activities. During the inspection, the good teaching seen enabled children to make good progress in all lessons. The previous inspection made no reference to children aged under five so it is not possible to judge whether improvements have been made. However, the provision for these children has been developed recently and it is a strength of the school.

73. Children develop their personal and social skills well, through very good opportunities to work and play together in small groups, and they make good progress overall. Children in their first week in school are already secure in the unit routines. They take responsibility for themselves when they choose their tasks during 'planning time' and happily accept a second choice when their chosen activity area is full. They show interest and concentrate on their tasks until they are complete. Children are very well behaved, even when not under the direct supervision of an adult. This is particularly evident when the teachers are working with groups for literacy and numeracy. During these times, other children are engaged on their chosen activities, competently supervised by able classroom assistants. Very good relationships, already established, allow children to be secure and confident with all the adults in the unit. 'Review time' at the end of each session, gives very good opportunities for children to develop their language and social skills as they show their work to the class. Children respond well to the praise, which all adults give them, and co-operate with each other when taking turns to be Goldilocks in 'The Three Bears House'. They show feelings of awe and wonder when using a tablecloth, which their teacher has borrowed from the three bears. Most children take responsibility happily for themselves when changing for physical education. The very good organisation of the curriculum, the well established routines, the consistent expectations of behaviour and the caring attitudes of all adults make a significant contribution to the sense of security felt by the children.

74. Children make good progress in the development of language and literacy skills from their below average attainment on entry at four. They firmly consolidate and develop their skills, particularly in reading and writing. However, their attainments at the age of five are just below those expected nationally, particularly in speaking and listening, where many children have poorly developed speech and show difficulty in following instructions. 'Review time', at the end of each session and role-play in 'The Three Bears House', where children act out the story, give good opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. During the inspection, children made very good progress in a language and literacy lesson because of the very good quality of the teaching and the many opportunities provided for them to practice their skills in small groups. For example, children match words from the story 'This is the Bear' to cards, which their teacher has made and make marks on paper in the writing area, showing that they know the difference between pictures and text. In their first week at school, few children can write their name correctly, although most can recognise it and make a good attempt to copy it. Good emphasis is placed on literacy, and this is supported by parents,

who share books, which the children take home regularly. Most children use and enjoy books and can tell a story with encouragement, using the pictures to help them. High attaining children can read simple words and know some initial sounds. The quality of teaching of literacy skills is good and this contributes positively to the good progress made. All adults take every opportunity to extend and enrich language and activities are very well planned to meet the needs of all abilities. Very effective use is made of singing and the teachers often sing instructions to the children, which include their names. This encourages them to listen carefully and respond. The good organisation of the unit, which allows the children to be taught in both class and small groups, contributes positively to the good progress made.

75. Attainment in mathematics meets expectations for children of their age. Most children count and use numbers to 10. Children develop their mathematical skills well when they count out fruits onto plates for the Three Bears and match the bears to their beds. Measuring skills are developed through making hats to fit their teddies. Mathematical language is less well developed and few pupils understand language such as 'more' and 'less' when discussing the plates of fruit or name the 'corner' when spreading a tablecloth. Teachers take every opportunity to develop mathematical language through song and the children know a wide variety of number rhymes. Children recognise circles, triangles and squares and make patterns using a wide range of equipment. High attaining children add and subtract using apparatus to help them. Some children form numerals correctly and most recognise numbers to at least five. Through their play in the water tray they understand when objects such as bottles are full or empty. The children make good and sometimes very good progress in mathematics lessons, particularly in the development of mathematical language, as a result of well focused teaching, an exciting range of attractive resources which motivates them and well chosen songs to extend and reinforce mathematical language. For example, children learn 'huge', 'tiny' and 'small' when they sing a song about Goldilocks visiting the bears.

76. The children's physical development meets expectations for their age. They gain confidence in using space through regular opportunities for physical education in the hall. They hop, skip, crawl and jump, showing an awareness of others. They respond promptly to signals on a tambourine and copy their teacher's movements when dancing. In their outdoor play, they play sociably together and use equipment such as tricycles, wheeled toys and climbing apparatus to develop their skills. Children handle small toys and scissors regularly to develop their manipulative skills. They make good progress. In the one physical education lesson seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was good. This was the first physical education lesson for many of the children and it was characterised by a very good understanding of the needs of young children and the activities were well matched to their span of attention. The teacher created a good sense of fun and enjoyment, which encouraged all children to join in.

77. The children's creative development meets what is expected for their age and they make good progress overall. They use paint effectively to paint self-portraits, showing basic features. They develop their skills in mixing paint appropriately when depicting the patchwork on their pictures of 'Elmer the elephant'. They show developing hand control and close observational skills when drawing flowers in pastels. Children print using potatoes and leaves and make hats for their teddies using paper and glue effectively. Musical skills are well developed. Teachers sing regularly between activities and the children are encouraged to join in. They develop their sense of rhythm effectively each morning when they sing and clap a 'weather song'. It was not possible to see any teaching in music or creative activities during the inspection.

78. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world meets expectations for their age and they make good progress. Activities provided help children to develop an understanding of the world around them. For example, the 'tinkering table' gives opportunities for children to explore a range of activities. During the inspection, children were able to use magnifying glasses to look closely at a globe and to explore the different textures of a range of model bears. Most identify the sea and the land on the globe. Some children talk confidently about where they live, their families and the immediate

environment, but many lack the language skills to do this. They know that honey is sweet and sticky and that a china pot will break if you drop it. Children use construction toys and small world toys well to develop their own ideas and their manipulative skills. They experiment with sand and water and learn about the differences. Children use a tape recorder successfully to listen to stories. They use the basic keys on a computer and match letters to objects using the 'mouse'. The teaching in this area of learning is good. Resources are attractive and well prepared and the activities are well matched to the needs of the children.

79. The quality of teaching is never less than good and it is consistent across both classes. Two lessons were very good. Very good teaching is characterised by a very good understanding of how young children learn and very well planned activities, which ensure that all children are offered the same curriculum. Children are very well managed and assessment is used very effectively to ensure that activities meet the children's needs. The organisation of the unit, where children learn literacy and numeracy skills in small groups, enables teachers to assess children very effectively. During the inspection, teachers were competently undertaking their baseline assessments during their group time. Well-qualified and well-prepared classroom assistants make a positive contribution to the good quality of education provided for children aged under five and the good progress made.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

80. Overall standards in English are average at the end of Key Stage 1. The 1998 National Curriculum tests also show that by the time they leave the school, the number of pupils who reach the national expectation in reading and writing is broadly average, while teacher assessments indicate that standards in speaking and listening are below average. The proportion of pupils who exceeded these standards was below average in writing. Over the last three years, results show an improvement in 1997 and a slight decline since, particularly in writing. The cohort of pupils taking the tests in the last two years was untypical and included an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. Results for 1999 show that a similar number of pupils reached the expected levels in reading but that the number reaching this level in writing was slightly lower. There is currently no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls. The school has successfully improved the attainment of boys by examining teaching strategies in terms of gender.

81. Standards seen during the inspection reflect these results. A significant number of pupils enter school with poor literacy and oracy skills. As they move through the school, however, most pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening but good progress in writing and particularly in reading. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in literacy by teachers and by effective support assistants and most also make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for literacy and evidence from the inspection suggests that it is on course to meet those targets. Standards in English overall were also close to the national average at the time of the last inspection.

82. Recommendations within the National Literacy Strategy and the introduction of a daily literacy hour are firmly established and a well-structured approach is in place. However, work in literacy is not confined to the set hour and pupils' vocabulary is effectively extended, for example, through work in science where pictures are labelled and reports written. In a religious education lesson, pupils wrote in speech bubbles to express their feelings and read a beginners' Bible. Conversely, the literacy hour itself provides a venue for the delivery of aspects of other subjects such as history, geography and science. For example, in a Year 1 literacy hour, the shared text was 'Your Amazing Body' by Roderick Hunt, while in a lesson at Year 2, the text was a book on arts and crafts from around the world.

83. When they enter Key Stage 1, many pupils are familiar with books and recognise common words in simple texts. Most are able to express their likes and dislikes in stories and some are already able to read fluently. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils use a range of strategies, including well-developed phonic skills, to decipher text and obtain meaning. Some have become expressive readers. Most pupils in both Years 1 and 2 have a good knowledge of the alphabet and distinguish accurately between different genres such as poetry, fiction and non-fiction. They also understand the use of contents and index pages as means to retrieve information. Pupils throughout the key stage make good use of the attractive library to enhance their reading and research skills. There are challenging books available for higher attaining readers. These have a positive effect on progress.

84. The school has responded to its own concern that standards in writing were not as high as those in reading by placing extra emphasis and resources on the former area. Extra adult support is provided for pupils during Year 1 literacy activities and there is a regularly additional weekly focus throughout the school on independent writing. Group and individual targets for improvement have been set. These are enthusiastically worked towards by pupils under the guidance of their teachers and support staff. These strategies have already had a positive effect on progress and the school is well on line to have significantly raised pupils' standards in writing by the end of the current academic year. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 write in appropriately constructed sentences, some of which are descriptive and others imaginative. For example, a good attempt was made to write a poem about a dragon under a bed or when writing a postcard to a pig from a duck with a simple holiday message. Many lower attaining pupils at Year 1 can write simple sentences without adult aid by the end of the year. Many Year 2 pupils write clearly for a range of purposes including reports, poetry, opinion and stories. By the end of the key stage some pupils can use speech and exclamation marks accurately and write fluently and neatly with a good variety of connectives for joining up sentences. Others understand the relationship between verb endings and tense. Average attaining pupils have a good range of writing skills, use simple punctuation correctly and have a developing sense of awareness of the reader. Lower attaining pupils are well supported in lessons and are making good progress in developing appropriate writing skills. Standards of handwriting are sound, although at the time of the inspection few pupils were yet using joined up script. Standards of spelling are at least sound and sometimes good.

85. There is a range of opportunities in place to support the development of speaking and listening skills. These include drama, discussion and role-play, but the lack of a cohesive and progressive programme to develop these skills has an adverse effect on pupils' attainment and progress in this aspect of English. In a Year 1 literacy hour, for example, pupils of all abilities could name characters in a story but found it difficult to understand and communicate their feelings. There are examples of successful speaking and listening in personal and social education when pupils discuss the reasons for the happiness of a character in a story, in physical education when the organisation of a sequence of movements is explored, and during circle times. There is also some effective structured role-play. An example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils, with the assistance of a support assistant, played the parts of doctor, receptionist and patient with empathy and enthusiasm. Another was in a religious education lesson, where the Creation story was dramatised. Frequently, however, pupils' oracy skills are below average and their response to questions sometimes indicates underdeveloped listening skills.

86. Pupils' response in English lessons is good overall and frequently very good. They are attentive and prepared to listen to their teachers and to one another. For example, while enjoying the story of 'Farmer Duck' most joined in discussion and successfully predicted what would happen next, although some called out inappropriately because of their very enthusiasm. Behaviour in lessons is very good. The pupils settle very quickly to follow up activities and focus on these with a good level of sustained concentration. They are keen to achieve agreed individual and group learning targets and co-operate well when appropriate. They are able to work independently when given the opportunity.

87. The quality of teaching is always at least sound. It was good or better in the majority of lessons inspected and very good in a quarter. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous



inspection. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and a clear appreciation of the implications of the Literacy Strategy. Their detailed planning and methodology reflect this well. Expectations of work and behaviour are generally high with higher order questioning frequently used to challenge pupils and enhance their progress. Work set is well matched to the needs of different groups and individuals within classes. Pace is frequently good in lessons, but lack of it is sometimes a relative weakness. Otherwise resources are used well to support learning. Marking is mostly constructive and other on-going assessment strategies are used regularly.

88. There are appropriate planning structures in place for reading and writing but no up to date or comprehensive policy for English, which is unsatisfactory. Comprehensive assessment procedures include effective tracking of the progress of a cross section of pupils across the ability range. These are currently in the process of further development and formalisation. The assessment and recording of the progress of pupils with special educational needs by teachers and support assistants is very effective. The headteacher and other members of the senior staff regularly monitor the development of different areas of English through sampling pupils' work. The English co-ordinator, who is currently being supported in her professional development by the headteacher, is fully aware of both the considerable strengths in the school's delivery of the subject and of the areas where it needs to be developed further. Resources to support the teaching of English are generally sound, but the quantity and quality of available books is good.

## **Mathematics**

89. Standards are broadly in line with national averages at the end of the key stage. The inspection findings reflect the results of the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1998, the latest for which national comparisons are available. These indicate that pupils' attainments are not significantly different from the national average. The number of pupils attaining expected levels was slightly above average and for pupils reaching higher levels it was close to average. Results for 1999 show that similar numbers of pupils attain the expected levels. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls. Overall standards are not significantly different from the last inspection.

90. By the age of seven, pupils are confident when using addition and subtraction. They develop a range of mental calculation strategies, such as identifying double numbers and numbers which are nearly doubles. They find a pair of numbers totalling 10 and re-order them to put the largest number first. Many pupils can halve and double numbers to 20 mentally, they have a sound understanding of odd and even and they recognise patterns in number. They understand the operation of multiplication as repeated addition although they are less confident at interpreting multiplication charts. They begin to understand division, although many find division difficult and need practical aids for support. Pupils explain their thinking and find different ways of recording their calculations. They recognise coins, find totals and give change, often in practical situations.

91. Pupils attain sound understanding of the use of appropriate mathematical language. They describe the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They use a ruler to measure a template of their foot. Most read the time to the hour, half-hour and quarter hour on analogue and digital clocks. They finish incomplete shapes and pictures to demonstrate an understanding of line symmetry. They are competent when constructing block graphs to communicate their findings, such as to show their favourite colours. They explain their results and some are able to pose their own questions.

92. Pupils make sound progress overall in mathematics. They gain an improved understanding of the number system, developing quicker mental recall and the skills of reading writing and ordering numbers to 100, with some pupils extending their understanding to numbers up to 1000. They develop their knowledge of solid shapes in order to relate them to pictures of the shapes. Pupils develop a sound understanding of measurement from the use of non-standard measures, such as interlocking cubes, in Year 1, to the skills required in Year 2 when they use a ruler to draw and measure lines to the nearest centimetre. Progress is adversely affected on occasions when they are given tasks which are too

easy for them, and when they lack involvement in the oral session. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment because of the good support they receive. There is no significant difference in attainment or progress across the strands of the curriculum.

93. Pupils' response in mathematics is good. They listen well and are keen to contribute their ideas and answer questions. Behaviour is good and pupils persevere well with their tasks. They enjoy co-operative opportunities, such as working with a partner or in a small group. For example, a group of Year 1 pupils were very excited when they successfully completed a 'magic square' of digits with a total of six. They could scarcely wait to share the results with their peers in the plenary session.

94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have recently implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this is still bedding down. Their planning is thorough and their learning intentions are clear. Teachers manage pupils very well and relationships are good. Teachers' introductions are sometimes too long and some pupils are insufficiently involved in the oral and mental session. When pupils are kept sitting on the floor for too long they lose interest and there is a lack of time for them to complete individual or group tasks. Teachers match tasks to learning intentions very well and make effective use of games, challenges, apparatus, real money and practical applications in mathematics lessons. The quality of marking is good and teachers' day-to-day assessment is effective.

95. The school has made a good start at implementing the National Numeracy Strategy with well-planned daily lessons. Most teachers plan together effectively to ensure that pupils in the same age group have similar experiences. However, the scheme of work is now outdated and there are no samples of work which are matched to National Curriculum levels, which have been agreed by all staff, to ensure consistency in teacher assessments. There are sufficient resources although these are basic. Numeracy skills are practised in science lessons, for example, when timing how long it takes for a candle to go out, and in geography when using co-ordinates to develop map reading skills. Information technology supports mathematics learning. Pupils use mathematical language to describe position such as to the left or right, clockwise or anti-clockwise when giving instructions to a programmable toy.

96. Mathematics is the subject priority on the school development plan. The school has highlighted the need to review its scheme of work, assessment procedures and the level of resources to meet the demands of the Numeracy Strategy. Staff training is planned over the next two terms.

## **Science**

97. Results of the National Curriculum teacher assessments for 1998 show that the percentage of pupils reaching the national standard is above average. However, the number of pupils exceeding this standard was well below average. Results for experimental and investigative science are below average and there is no difference in the attainment of boys or girls. Results for 1999 show a slight decline in the percentage reaching the expected levels. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards overall are in line with national expectations, although standards in experimental and investigative science are lower. Standards have declined since the previous inspection, where they were judged to be above average.

98. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils name parts of a flower and know the difference between living and non-living things. They understand the properties of materials and know which materials are waterproof. They understand the basic conditions needed by plants and animals for survival. They know about the dangers of electricity and have a good understanding of which items are powered by electricity in their homes. After experimentation, most are able to construct a simple circuit and record it diagrammatically. Higher attainers construct a circuit to light two bulbs. Pupils in Year 2 discover whether washing up liquid makes better bubbles than washing powder through their investigations and record their results using their developing literacy skills. However, all pupils, and particularly higher

attainers, have insufficient opportunities to plan their own experiments and devise their own methods of recording the results and this contributes to the lower standards attained in this aspect of the subject.

99. Pupils make sound progress overall. They develop their skills appropriately as they move through the school. Higher attaining pupils sometimes make unsatisfactory progress, particularly in Year 2, where some activities provide insufficient challenge. Although pupils learn how to conduct a fair test and record their findings in Year 1, this aspect of the curriculum is not sufficiently developed in Year 2. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils throughout the school to plan, carry out and record their own investigations and this contributes to the slower progress in this aspect of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their progress is closely monitored to ensure that they are offered appropriate activities and effective support.

100. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are interested in science and keen to learn. They work well in pairs and show pride in their work. They are keen to answer questions and readily take responsibility for resources. Behaviour is generally good, although in some lessons, where introductions are too slow, pupils lose interest and become inattentive.

101. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and this is a similar picture to the previous inspection. The weaknesses lie in the balance between teacher direction and practical work, where introductions are over long, and a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Teachers' plans often include extension activities for pupils of higher attainment. However, because the pace of the introductions to activities is often too slow, there is insufficient time for higher attainers to complete their extension tasks. There is also insufficient emphasis on experimental and investigative activities and teachers over-direct most lessons. These weaknesses were also identified in the previous inspection. The strengths lie in the management of pupils where pupils respond positively to the teachers' high expectations of behaviour.

102. The curriculum is broad but not balanced because there is insufficient emphasis on experimental and investigative activities. There is a sound policy for science, which includes aims and guidelines. The curriculum is appropriately planned using a national scheme of work, together with the school's own medium-term plans which are linked to topics. However, the school's plans do not include explicit reference to the National Curriculum programmes of study and this contributes to the lack of emphasis on experimental and investigative science as it is not clearly identified. The subject is satisfactorily managed by the co-ordinator who has already identified the weaknesses. She provides support for her colleagues and fulfils her management role by examining the planning documents. She has drawn up a clear action plan for further improvement. Although there are no regular opportunities for her to monitor teaching through the school, she has had the opportunity to swap classes with a colleague in another year group to monitor standards. Assessment arrangements are good. Teachers make detailed assessments of three pupils of different levels of attainment throughout the year to track their progress. The co-ordinator and the headteacher monitor these assessments. Appropriate record sheets are maintained for all pupils. These have recently been revised and are closely matched to the programmes of study. Whole school target setting does not yet include science so there is no clear idea of the school's future targets. Resources are of satisfactory quality and are accessible to the pupils. Visits to the nearby Electricity Museum and the school grounds, which include an attractive pond, are used appropriately to support the curriculum.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

103. Standards in information technology are below the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1. Since the previous inspection, where standards were in line with the national expectation, the National Curriculum and the criteria for inspecting information technology have changed. However,

the school's provision and the pupils' attainment have fallen behind in this area of the curriculum. The school has already recognised this as an area of weakness. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use the 'mouse' to move the cursor around the screen, and type simple text but have insufficient opportunities to develop higher order word processing skills. There was insufficient evidence to show that pupils use computers regularly to produce or edit their own text. They load, save and print their work with support. Pupils use graphics programs confidently to design attractive pictures. For example, pupils in Year 2 use Mondrian's work effectively as a stimulus for their own designs. Pupils in Year 1 use word processors appropriately to write lists, stories and labels. They use computers to support their mathematical skills when they handle data about favourite pets. Pupils use simulation programs appropriately to explore imaginary situations. They enter instructions to send a programmable toy along a track. Little evidence was available during the inspection to show that pupils in Year 2 use information technology sufficiently. Samples of work from pupils who were in Year 2 last year contained little evidence of its use. Discussions with pupils currently in Year 2 confirm that computers are used regularly in Year 1 and that all aspects of the curriculum are appropriately covered.

104. Progress is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils in Year R and Year 1 make satisfactory progress. However, in Year 2, progress slows and consequently progress is unsatisfactory overall. This is because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop an appropriate range of knowledge, skills and understanding in the use of information technology. The school has experienced difficulties during the past year with computer faults and this has contributed to the slow progress made in Year 2 and impeded development of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when classroom assistants support them.

105. Most pupils use a range of programs designed to improve spelling, reading and number work. However, the use of information technology during the literacy hour is underdeveloped and pupils rarely use these programs as part of their group work. A promising start has been made in using a number-patterning program to support numeracy. Use of information technology to support other areas of the curriculum is underdeveloped. Examination of pupils' work shows little evidence of the use of word processing skills to support topic work.

106. Pupils show positive attitudes to the subject. Few pupils were observed using the computers during the inspection. Those observed worked well in pairs and treated the equipment carefully. They took turns willingly and helped each other. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. No teaching was seen during the inspection and very little use was made of computers. Teachers' plans include references to information technology, but specific teaching of skills is not regularly timetabled.

107. The recently appointed co-ordinator has already identified areas of weakness and has a clear view for the development of the subject. A sound development plan has been drawn up. At the time of the inspection, the organisation of the curriculum was under review and the school was waiting for delivery of several new computers. The existing computers are due to be networked and arranged together in the corridor to facilitate some class teaching. The current policy is unsatisfactory and is due for review. The school has recently adopted a national scheme of work to supplement its own scheme. The school has identified the need to link these schemes to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are fully covered and to ensure that pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically. All staff, including non-teaching staff, have received training in word processing recently and more training is planned for next term. The co-ordinator examines planning and provides good support for her colleagues but she has insufficient opportunities to monitor standards and teaching in the subject. Satisfactory assessment procedures have recently been developed for use from Year 1. These have not yet been introduced in Year 2 and this contributes to a lack of challenge as pupils consolidate skills which they already know and this leads to unsatisfactory progress. The school does not meet statutory requirements because information technology is not taught sufficiently, particularly in Year 2.

108. Resources are currently unsatisfactory, although the new computers already ordered will improve this. New machines will allow each class shared access to up to eleven computers. There is an appropriate range of software and equipment, such as a programmable toy and tape recorders. The school is to be linked to the Internet next year.

## **Religious education**

109. Standards of attainment by the end of the key stage exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, on which the school's policy and scheme of work are based. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are well linked to the expressive arts, teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and there is effective leadership of the subject. Teachers use a wide range of learning activities. These factors have had a positive impact on standards.

110. By the age of seven, pupils are familiar with some of the stories from the Bible such as Joseph, Moses, David and Jonah. They know that the Bible is a special book for Christians and they reflect with empathy on the feelings of Mary Jones at different milestones in her life. They pass a Welsh style traditional hat to each pupil in turn during 'circle time' and explore and reflect upon their own feelings about being happy, excited, tired or disappointed. They know the basics of the Creation story as depicted in the Old Testament and they know that Christians believe that it is important to take care of our planet. They dramatise the story with readings from a simplified Bible and musical accompaniment from percussion instruments such as tambourines, castanets and wood blocks. They reflect on the wonders of our natural world and marvel at the changing colours of leaves in autumn. They handle the leaves with awe and wonder. They visit a church and understand that it is a special place for Christians. Pupils identify the key features of Christianity and Judaism by relating celebrations, festivals and key beliefs to their own experiences. For example they think about the reason for rules in a game and class rules, as they learn that Jews try to live their lives based upon The Ten Commandments.

111. Pupils make good progress in learning about religion and human experience. They learn from religion to share their own responses, recognise the importance of feelings and emotions and begin to consider how people's beliefs affect their actions. For example, they consider their relationship with their friends and identify the things they like to do together such as talking, playing, helping, listening and working. They develop knowledge and understanding of the relationship between Jesus and his disciples by considering the events of Easter Week, such as the Last Supper and the betrayal by Judas. They identify occasions when their friends have disappointed or saddened them such as being excluded from a game.

112. Response to religious education lessons is very good. Pupils listen attentively to stories and re-tell them accurately. They enjoy their lessons and are eager to take part in role-play opportunities. They empathise with people and characters in a story, such as being lost as portrayed in the parable of The Lost Sheep. They enjoy discussions where they contribute their ideas, such as ways in which people can protect the environment. They respect other pupils' contribution to discussions and take turns to speak.

113. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are varied, motivating and well organised. For example, pupils made a flap booklet to re-tell the story of The Lost Sheep using a question and answer technique. They made decorated bookmarks with a thank you prayer and posters to raise awareness of environmental issues. Quiet reflection is used well for pupils to think about their own response to any topics raised in the lesson. Teachers use good questioning skills and they respond with sensitivity to pupils' responses. Planning is good. Teachers use an effective planning grid for each learning module, which forms the basis for the developing scheme of work. Teachers have good expertise for teaching about Christianity but some lack confidence in their teaching of Judaism. A helpful assessment sheet for each module of learning provides information on pupils' attainment and progress in the subject.

114. Religious education makes an important contribution to literacy. For example, pupils practise the skills of writing when they use speech bubbles to write an imaginary conversation between Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Daily assemblies meet statutory requirements and are well followed up in class lessons. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

## **Art**

115. During the inspection there were few opportunities to observe lessons in art. Further evidence was gathered from displays, photographs, collections of work and discussions with pupils and teachers.

116. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils acquire effective skills in using a wide range of materials to design pictures and patterns. They steadily develop their observational skills and demonstrate improved control when using art equipment. Pupils in Year 1 use chalk and pastels carefully for their observational shell drawings. They observe and talk about portraits by famous artists and compare the different ways the artists represent the subject. They draw and paint self-portraits with close observational drawings of features, for example their ears. A range of fabric collage and textured pictures illustrates sound progress in three-dimensional work. Pupils in Year 2 develop an understanding of the impressionists' style by looking carefully at Monet's paintings and painting their own pictures in a similar style. This contributes positively to their cultural development. They made good progress in a lesson using chalks and pastels to produce recognisable sunflowers, showing details such as petals, using shade and tone in the centre of the flowers. They improve their observational skills with charcoal drawings of fir cones and careful line drawings of historical artefacts such as a Victorian flat iron. They explore and use three-dimensional media to make artefacts such as pebble patterns and clay models of a church baptismal font.

117. Pupils enjoy art. In the lesson seen, pupils displayed very good behaviour. They settled quietly and were absorbed in their task. Teachers provide good cross-curricular links with work done in other subjects such as sponge printing which resulted from the stimulus of a poem in a literacy lesson and Brownsea Island textile and paper collages. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching because it was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection.

118. The curriculum is broad and well balanced, with a developing scheme of work to cover all aspects of the subject. The curriculum is enriched by promotions such as an Arts Week and a planned artist in residence. Assessment of pupils' work is appropriately targeted at a selection of pupils from each class, which covers attainment and progress across the ability range. Pupils' work is valued by careful display, such as the Arts Week work in the school entrance and the collage pictures of the Creation story. Parent helpers are a valued resource, providing support in art lessons.

## **Design technology**

119. During the week of the inspection, no lessons in design technology were seen. However, work from previous lessons was sampled and staff and pupils were interviewed. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained reasonable coverage of the subject, whilst prioritising literacy and numeracy.

120. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall in developing their design and making skills. This is a similar picture to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 2 design and make hand puppets. A puppeteer provided a good stimulus with a puppet show presentation using hand and marionette puppets. Pupils design and make a puppet for a purpose. They look at a selection of puppets to help with the development of ideas, list the resources needed and model their design by making a paper sample. They select and use a good range of fabric, tools and equipment. They develop the skills of marking out, cutting and joining fabric pieces to make the main part of their puppet. They make decisions about finishing techniques when adding features to capture particular characteristics. They learn to evaluate their finished product by identifying how well the puppet works and suggesting any improvements they would incorporate in a second attempt. Year 1 pupils design and make playground equipment. They visit a local playground to observe simple features before using construction kits to model their chosen item such as a slide or roundabout. They investigate different materials such as flexible, rigid and recyclables and explore ways of joining and combining materials using a variety of methods. They develop an understanding of how things are assembled.

121. Pupils enjoy making things and discuss their projects with enthusiasm. They take pride in their work and are frequently motivated to design and make things at home. For example, one pupil decided to make a wheeled vehicle similar to her school model with the addition of working lights. Design technology lessons provide a good opportunity for pupils to work co-operatively in small groups. For instance, pupils made a group marionette puppet and some biscuits in a food technology lesson.

122. Design technology is effectively co-ordinated. There is a sound policy and a developing scheme of work using teacher's medium term planning sheets. Tasks are well related to other areas of the curriculum such as religious education and mathematics. For example, pupils created a design for Joseph's coat employing geometric patterning. There is a good design technology record and assessment sheet, which has been trialled very successfully over the past year. Tasks are evaluated by pupils and levelled by teachers with helpful advice for improvement. Resources are sufficient and mainly centralised. However, there are no mobile trolleys to facilitate access to equipment and tools and a lack of construction equipment for the older pupils to generate ideas. Documentation contains relevant advice for staff on health and safety issues.

## **Geography**

123. It was not possible to see any geography lessons during the period of the inspection. Judgements for the report are based on a scrutiny of previous work and discussions with staff and pupils, as well as the examination of documentation and the work exhibited around the school. Together this indicates that pupils are provided with an appropriate range of geographical activities and that they make satisfactory progress in gaining relevant knowledge and skills. There is no significant change from the last report.

124. Pupils in Year 1 use globes and atlases successfully and can construct simple maps and plans. They are beginning to gain an understanding of simple grid references. Pupils in Year 2 also use grid references and can compare and contrast different types of locality. For example, they accurately compare weather in West Africa with that in Antarctica, quoting relevant sources of evidence. They also have an appropriate knowledge of the local area and can describe the key differences between towns and villages. A sample of pupils were able to identify strengths and some weaknesses in their local environment. Most could locate the approximate position of their town on a map of the United Kingdom.

125. There is a policy in place for geography and the planning for the subject is appropriately based on nationally produced materials. Suitable links are being developed with the literacy hour. The co-ordinator has carried out some monitoring of teachers' plans and pupils' work to ensure that the expected curriculum is being delivered. She has a good understanding of the developmental needs of the subject. Assessment strategies are currently informal and assessment results are not always used to inform the work that pupils are set in lessons. Resources available to support geography are satisfactory and effective use is made of the local area to enhance these.

## **History**

126. Only a small number of lessons were seen during the course of the inspection. Evidence for the report, therefore, is also drawn from a scrutiny of pupils' previous work, documentation and discussion with the co-ordinator. This indicates that pupils are provided with a good range of historical activities and that they make good progress overall. This is a slight improvement on the judgements of the last inspection.

127. Pupils in Year 1 successfully use primary sources of evidence to identify similarities and differences with the past. For example, they accurately compare old toys with modern ones and can provide a series of valid reasons why some can be judged as 'old'. Some are able to distinguish



successfully between the past and the present in their own lives. Pupils in Year 2 also compare artefacts effectively. They can describe the difference between items such as flat and electric irons or oil lamps and torches. They have good observational skills and are able to give valid reasons for their judgements. By the end of the key stage many appreciate changes in people's life styles over a number of years.

128. In the lessons seen pupils' response was consistently good. They showed much enthusiasm for the subject and were keen to contribute sensibly to discussion. Most settled quickly to follow-up tasks and worked on these with an appropriate level of concentration. The quality of teaching is good. There are high expectations of behaviour and achievement, with some written work matched well to the abilities of different pupils in the class. Teachers have a good understanding of the aspect of the subject that they teach. Lesson planning is effective. Resources are used effectively to promote learning and stimulate the pupils. Pace is sound.

129. Planning for history is based on nationally produced materials and is appropriate. The co-ordinator, who has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the subject, has carried out some monitoring of standards and coverage. Appropriate links with the literacy hour are being developed. Resources to support history are satisfactory and are enhanced by project loans and out of school visits.

## **Music**

130. In addition to class music lessons seen during the inspection, evidence was drawn from recorder tuition, singing during assemblies and extra-curricular choir. This indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in music overall. However, they have frequent opportunities to practice singing from an early age. This results in good progress being made in this area of music, as was noted in good quality rendering of songs such as 'Kumbaya ' during whole school assemblies. There is no significant difference from the judgements of the last inspection.

131. Most of the younger pupils are able to identify the qualities of different untuned percussion instruments in terms of duration and dynamics and play these with some success. They sing previously learned songs with an appropriate control of pulse. Pupils in Year 2 are able to clap long and short notes and can maintain rhythm. They successfully use symbolic notation to record simple rhythmic compositions.

132. Pupils' response to music lessons is always at least good and is sometimes very good. Behaviour is mostly very good and relationships are very positive. Pupils are interested in the instruments provided for them and are keen to persevere and improve their skills. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the majority of lessons and good in the remainder. Planning is clear. Expectations are appropriate and sometimes high. Subject knowledge is generally sound and in some lessons it is good. Occasionally, however, the pace of a lesson is too slow.

133. There is a good range of instruments available to support teaching and learning in music. These have recently been audited and minor deficiencies identified. Planning is currently based on local authority guidelines, but a new scheme of work for the subject is currently in the process of being introduced. The co-ordinator takes other classes for music from time to time and also monitors standards and coverage through examining other teachers' plans. There are no formal strategies in place at present for assessment or record keeping in music.

## **Physical education**

134. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress overall in physical education. This is a similar picture to the findings of the previous inspection.

135. In gymnastics, pupils show good control of movement on and off the apparatus. Pupils in Year 1 practise the skills of rolling in tucked and stretched shapes using body tension to maintain the position. In Year 2, pupils plan and perform a series of simple sequences of movement. They use their hands and feet to link and repeat a series of jumps, rolls and balances with increasing control. They observe and evaluate the movement of others and improve their own performance by identifying good practice. They transport the apparatus sensibly and safely.

136. Pupils' response to physical education is always satisfactory and sometimes good. They enjoy the subject. Pupils respond willingly to instructions and try hard to improve their skills. They change into suitable clothing quickly and quietly. Most behave well, although in a few lessons, where the pace slackens, behaviour is less reliable during this part of the lesson.

137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. One lesson was very good. This was typified by the good warm up and cool down, the good pace throughout the lesson and very high teacher expectations of behaviour and movement. In this lesson, whilst pupils were changing within their classroom, possible movement sequences were discussed, contributing positively to the development of speaking and listening skills. Lessons were less successful when pupils were queuing for their turn on the apparatus or inattentive during pupil demonstrations. All teachers plan lessons carefully with clear learning intentions, which they communicate well to pupils. They use praise and encouragement appropriately. In all lessons, teachers were suitably dressed. Teachers gave good demonstrations, which together with effective use of pupil presentations stimulated the performance of all pupils.

138. The subject is well managed. The curriculum appropriately covers dance, gymnastics, games and athletics and a detailed scheme of work is developing to cover these aspects. There is a wide-ranging, newly developed assessment programme, which is being trialled this year. Physical education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the elements of dance and the opportunities which pupils have to work co-operatively.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

139. Four inspectors spent a total of 12 days inspecting the work of the school. They made a total of 40 observations of lessons or parts of lessons and other work and held discussions with members of the teaching staff, members of the support staff, parents and governors over a total of 48 hours. They scrutinised a complete sample of the work of about ten per cent of the pupils and talked to many more about their work. All policies, registers, teachers' plans and records were examined, as were the minutes of meetings of the governing body and their annual report to parents. Before the inspection, eight parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector to express their views about the work of the school and responses were received from 45 parents to a questionnaire on the same subject.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y2	181	3	35	3

### Teachers and classes:

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22.6

#### Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff:	12
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	162

### Financial data

Financial year:	98/99
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	£
Total Income	295759
Total Expenditure	290975
Expenditure per pupil	1564.38
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5525
Balance carried forward to next year	-741

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	190
Number of questionnaires returned:	45

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	64	32	0	5	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	58	36	4	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	23	50	25	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	27	55	9	9	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	30	50	9	11	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	45	50	2	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	23	57	14	7	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	32	55	5	9	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	64	30	5	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	59	36	2	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	71	29	0	0	0

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents praised the good links with both the playgroups and the Junior School.

Children are very happy and look forward to going to school.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views.

Some concerns were aired by parents over the short notice given for meetings and the team found that to some extent parents' concerns are justified.