

INSPECTION REPORT

PLAISTOW INFANTS' SCHOOL

St Budeaux, Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113295

Headteacher: Mrs Mary Hatherley

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward
18605

Dates of inspection: 11 - 14 March 2002

Inspection number: 197411

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7 Years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Roman Way
Higher St Budeaux
Plymouth

Postcode: PL5 2DT

Telephone number: 01752 365410

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S Hurley

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18605	Fred Ward	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Design and technology Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11566	Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
18090	Richard Brock	Team inspector	Science Art Music Physical education Equal opportunities	
32095	Julian Thompson	Team inspector	English Geography History Information and communication technology Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Plaistow is an average sized community infant school in St Budeaux in Plymouth. Most pupils come from fairly typical backgrounds but around 20% of families face considerable social and financial challenges. Around two-thirds live outside the immediate locality. There are 216 pupils, including 47 in the nursery attending part time, who generally have below levels of attainment on entry at three-years-old, especially in language skills. Nearly all pupils are white of United Kingdom heritage; none have English as an additional language. 14% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is around average. This is a significant decline on recent years as now more parents claim family working tax credit and are no longer eligible to claim. 17% of pupils are on the register of special educational needs (below average) and four have statements (above average). More pupils left than joined, other than at three and seven-years-old.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is well supported by staff and a committed, but relatively inexperienced, governing body. The school has identified and is successfully tackling most of what needs to be done to raise standards further. Pupils generally achieve well because of the overall good teaching. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards for seven-year-olds are above average in reading, mathematics, science, art and physical education.
- Pupils like school very much, behave well and relationships are very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Overall, teaching is good and consistently very good in the nursery.
- Classroom assistants are very well trained, conscientious and very effective in supporting pupils' learning.
- The curriculum provides very well for mathematics, art and pupils' personal, social, moral, physical and health education; after-school clubs are excellent.
- Pupils are very well cared for; their strengths and weaknesses are known and used effectively to help them improve in reading, numeracy and in their personal development.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in speaking and listening and development and use of writing.
- Provision for spiritual development.
- Range of management and teaching commitments of the headteacher.
- Checking the effectiveness of agreed actions to raise

achievement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in September 1997 and has successfully tackled most of the key issues:

- Assessment procedures are thorough and systematic in English, mathematics and science;
- Curriculum guidance is appropriate and used effectively;
- Pupils achieve well in science and art and as expected in design and technology;
- Multi-cultural provision is good.

There are plans in place to deal with the outstanding issue:

- Standards in speaking and listening

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	A	C	B	B	well above A average B above average
Writing	A	B	C	D	average C below average D well below E
Mathematics	A	A	A	A	average

Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress and nearly all are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1, apart from in developing effective speaking and listening skills for their age. In 2001, results of teachers' assessment of Year 2 pupils in science were above the national average overall, with those reaching the higher level 3 well above average. The inspection found that in the current Year 2, standards are still as high in science. Standards in reading and mathematics are also above average, as they were in 2001. While pupils make steady progress in speaking and listening from a low start, they do not catch up sufficiently and standards are below average for seven-year-olds. This affects pupils' achievement in writing and not enough reach the higher level 3, resulting in overall standards being around average. On the limited evidence available during the inspection, standards of work seen in art and physical education are above average and in other subjects as expected. The school has set challenging targets for Year 2 pupils to reach in reading, writing and mathematics in this year's standard assessment tests and tasks. Pupils are generally very interested in their learning and work hard but do not easily communicate their ideas and thoughts orally and in writing. Apart from this shortcoming, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are very enthusiastic about school, work hard and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils generally behave well in and out of lessons, are courteous and considerate.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are responsible, helpful and growing in maturity. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is around the national average and unauthorised absence is below. No time is wasted.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 - 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The teaching in the nursery is consistently very good and in one instance, excellent. In the reception classes and in Years 1 and 2, there is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy in lessons developing language and mathematics but speaking, listening and writing skills are not reinforced sufficiently in other subjects and areas of learning. The strength of teaching comes from the very good relationships, thorough planning and very effective use of support staff and resources. As a result, pupils feel secure and valued, generally work hard and are well supported and challenged. Teachers are becoming increasingly secure in their use of new technologies through appropriate training. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, particularly in language and numeracy, by teachers and support staff working very effectively together.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy, art and physical education. Effective planning ensures good coverage and interesting and appropriate learning activities in and beyond the classroom, including excellent after-school clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' needs are identified early and learning is organised to ensure activities are appropriate and very effective support is readily available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and	Overall good. Opportunities for pupils to develop socially and morally are very good and culturally are good. Provision for spiritual development is not satisfactory. A strength of the school is the personal and health

cultural development	education programme.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff take very good care of pupils. They know them very well and use assessment procedures effectively to help individuals improve in reading and numeracy and in their personal development.

The school keeps parents and carers very well informed about their children's education and encourages them to reinforce learning at home; the few who help in school are very much appreciated.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very good leader setting high expectations for herself and staff. She is currently over loaded with subject management responsibilities and a full-time teaching commitment in the nursery, caused by recent staff resignations and secondments. Co-ordinators are gaining confidence in monitoring and developing teaching and pupils' learning in English, mathematics, science, geography, history, music and physical education.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Nearly all governors are recently appointed and, therefore, are inexperienced. They are beginning to understand what has to be done to raise standards and have an appropriate committee structure to support their work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Appropriate development priorities have been identified by staff and governors and clear and realistic plans drawn up to raise standards but measures by which to check progress are not specific enough. Actions taken are maintaining above average standards in reading, mathematics and science but have not yet been so effective in improving speaking, listening and writing skills.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body uses funds well and applies the principles of best value when making spending decisions.

Learning resources, including new technologies, are good and are generally used effectively. Accommodation is good although the library is small with inadequate stock.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school very much. • The school is very approachable • Teaching is good • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant issues were raised

Inspection findings confirm these positive views of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

Standards for seven-year-olds are above average in reading, mathematics, science, art and physical education but below average in speaking and listening.

- 1 Standards for seven-year-olds are above average in reading, mathematics, science, art and physical education but below average in speaking and listening. Pupils generally achieve well because of the predominantly good or better teaching. This is an overall improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
- 2 Three-year-olds make a good start to their schooling in the nursery and by the time they start Year 1 nearly all have reached the early learning goals in their personal, social, emotional and mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development. While children make good progress through the nursery and reception classes in communication, language and literacy, they do not catch up sufficiently in speaking and listening as many entered school with poor linguistic skills.
- 3 In art, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education, there was insufficient evidence available to make secure judgements about standards. However, discussions with pupils and looking at their work indicates that standards are above average in art and physical education and as expected in all other subjects.
- 4 Pupils generally achieve well because teaching overall is good. This is particularly evident in reading, mathematics, science, art and physical education as teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and understanding and plan very interesting and appropriate learning activities. In the nursery, pupils quickly acquire a love of learning and achieve very well because of the consistently very good teaching from the headteacher and assistants.
- 5 National assessment results in 2001 show standards for seven-year-olds were well above average in mathematics and above average in reading when compared to all and similar schools. Standards in writing were average in comparison to all schools but below compared to similar schools. This is because there were fewer pupils achieving the higher level three than in mathematics and science. Overall, results since 1997 have generally increased at a faster rate than the national trend, with those in mathematics rising to well above average. Reading has been more variable but remained above the national average. Results in writing rose rapidly

from well below average in 1997 to above in 1999, since when they have fallen to average. Teachers' assessment of science in 2001 indicates that results were well above the national average when compared to all and similar schools with just over a third attaining the higher level three.

- 6 Challenging targets have been set for reading, writing and mathematics in 2002, as the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than expected in the current Year 2. However, the school is confident that the additional support being provided through small group teaching will enable most of the pupils to reach the expected level for their age.
- 7 Children start school for the first time at three years old with overall attainment below average and a significant number have poor linguistic skills. They achieve very well in the nursery and by the time they move into the reception classes nearly all are at an appropriate stage in their learning, apart from in communication, language and literacy, where they are still behind in speaking and listening. In the reception classes, pupils achieve well and consolidate their learning through a range of appropriate and interesting activities and experiences. Those with special educational need are identified early and helped to participate fully by being given individual support from staff, who know them very well.
- 8 The inspection found that standards of speaking and listening remain below average for pupils aged seven. For while opportunities are provided within literacy lessons to develop linguistic skills, discussion is not sufficiently developed in other subjects Pupils are keen to talk about familiar situations and experiences but have difficulty finding the appropriate words when explaining new thoughts and more complex ideas.
- 9 Standards of reading are above the national average, as they were in 2001 national assessments. Pupils read with enthusiasm and increasing fluency with average and higher attaining pupils coping with most age related texts, which they discuss in detail and are able to predict and summarise events. Lower attaining pupils are benefiting from the intensive reading recovery programme.
- 10 Standards in writing are around the national average and improving. Pupils generally spell words correctly and punctuate their sentences with capitals and full stops. While most are able to construct simple sentences that together convey meaning, few easily write extensively. Handwriting is good when pupils make an effort but can be untidy in independent work, particularly in other subjects.

- 11 Standards in mathematics are above average for seven-year-olds. They have good recall of addition facts up to 20, recognise number patterns and use this understanding well to solve calculations mentally. They use non-standard units to measure and weigh and are beginning to tell the time. Most handle coins and give change correctly. They name and know some of the properties of regular two-dimensional geometric shapes and produce simple block graphs. They think mathematically but sometimes have difficulty explaining situations because of limited language skills.
- 12 Standards in science are also above average for seven-year-olds. They know basic facts about life processes and common living things, everyday materials and their properties and physical processes. They enjoy carrying out simple experiments and do so systematically being careful with their observation.
- 13 Overall, standards in information and communication technology are as expected for pupils aged seven. They are confident users of new technologies and are aware of its use in the home and locality. They are familiar with computers, controlling the mouse in order to access appropriate programs. They can word process and correct simple sentences and use computer assisted design programs creatively.
- 14 Higher attaining pupils generally achieve well as the school has made effective arrangements to ensure they are appropriately challenged. This operates particularly well in literacy and numeracy where high attaining Year 2 pupils are taught as a separate class. In other subjects the provision is good because teachers are adept at planning activities to extend their thinking. The inspection found there are no gifted or talented pupils in the school.
- 15 Generally, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school ensures they are identified early and given individual support both in lessons and in small groups. Classroom assistants are very well trained, particularly in judging the balance between the amount of support and challenge to give. They are helped considerably in this by the effective guidance given by class teachers and their attendance at planning meetings. As a result, pupils with special educational needs fully participate in lessons, retain their interest and concentration and nearly all make sufficient progress to reach the level expected for their age in national assessment tests and tasks in reading, mathematics and science.
- 16 While the school has not yet raised standards in writing to the same levels as in reading, mathematics and science, staff have the commitment and the capacity to remedy this, if actions to tackle deficiencies in speaking and listening are successful.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, generally behave well and have very good relationships.

- 17 Pupils have a very good response to school, are very enthusiastic and involved in their learning. Overall, their attitudes are very good; their personal development is good and relationships are very good. They show concern for each other, their school and the local community. For their age, they demonstrate a high level of personal independence and a mature attitude towards responsibility. Generally, behaviour is good. Attitudes and relationships have improved since the previous inspection while their behaviour and personal development are the same. Attendance is around the national average; this is lower than the previous inspection but improving.
- 18 Generally, pupils have very good attitudes. They are enthusiastic about learning and come happily to school. Overall, they show a very high level of interest and are fully involved in the wide range of activities provided. Older pupils are particularly interested in mathematics, science, art geography, history and physical education. In the nursery, attitudes were consistently very good and on one occasion excellent. This was during a physical development activity where children showed a high degree of involvement and tried extremely hard to do their best. In the nursery where boys significantly outnumber the girls, staff effectively ensure that boys do not dominate any activity or discussion. An excellent example of very good attitudes was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson focusing on multiples and division. Pupils were enthusiastically involved in the oral problem solving and during their independent tasks, all worked hard and conscientiously. Where pupils' attitudes are consistently very good or better, it is because of well-planned, interesting lessons, with work well matched to pupils' prior attainment, consistent high expectations and generally good or better teaching.
- 19 There were some instances when pupils' attitudes were not as high as they could be. In the first part of a Year R creative development lesson, several pupils persisted in calling out their answers as expectations were not consistently reinforced. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, lower attaining pupils and those with special needs became restless for a while because the mental/oral work was too hard for them but their attitudes improved during the practical session when the work was more appropriate.
- 20 In the very caring atmosphere, free from oppressive behaviour, nearly all pupils behave well in lessons, around

the school and outside. The school functions as an orderly community. With few exceptions, pupils respond well to the school's clear routines when moving around. On the playground, they mix happily and play well together and throughout the school generally show a caring concern to others. During a lunch break, a Year 2 boy tripped over while playing football and his friends quickly ran to his aid.

- 21 When there are instances of unacceptable behaviour, these are quickly, sensitively and firmly dealt with and expectations of good behaviour are reinforced. In a Year R personal, social and emotional lesson a lower attaining girl poked another and she was made aware of the inappropriateness of her action and was asked to apologise, which she did immediately. Overall, the standards of behaviour are good with very few examples of unkind and inappropriate behaviour and many examples of very good, and sometimes excellent, behaviour. Generally staff have very high expectations of behaviour and regularly take opportunities to reinforce these expectations and give praise when appropriate.
- 22 All pupils are very friendly and courteous to visitors and to other adults and each other. Nearly all pupils are very confident and greet visitors politely. A Year 2 pupil politely asked, "Are you one of the special visitors?". Throughout the school, pupils talk confidently about themselves and their work. In the nursery role-play area, a boy offered a visitor an imaginary bun that he had mixed and baked. Generally, pupils of all ages demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others. In the nursery, during role-play, a higher attaining pupil helped another to do up the fastenings on a bear costume. Pupils generally show respect for property and handle resources with care. In a reception class, a group of pupils played sensibly with toys while others handled paint-brushes and powder paint with care.
- 23 The personal development of the pupils is good. They are eager to volunteer for, and accept responsibility. They enjoy opportunities to be involved in the daily routines of the school community and fulfil their duties with pride. They particularly enjoy their turn to be the dinner and attendance register monitors. Teachers provide many informal opportunities and pupils are aware of their particular duties within class and conscientiously tidy up and clear away resources. Throughout the school, pupils spontaneously show initiative, as seen at the start of a very windy day when a higher attaining Year 1 boy opened and closed the door for other children. Another Year 1 boy wrote pupils' names on a piece of paper as they entered; he was observed by the teacher who allowed him to extend this role-play by calling out the names for registration.

- 24 From the nursery onwards, pupils are encouraged to be independent and take responsibility for their needs; even the very young are able to use the toilet, wash their hands, dress and undress quickly without adult help and move independently between free choice and directed activities.
- 25 Through assemblies, circle time and the emphasis on personal, social and health education, pupils have opportunities to reflect on their own experiences, express their feelings, learn to respect, understand and empathise with the feelings and beliefs of others. The provision for their personal development has had a significant positive effect and, during discussions, they demonstrate a high level of awareness of the effect of their actions on others.
- 26 The inclusive ethos means that all pupils are welcomed into the life of the school and made to feel valued. Pupils and staff relate very well to each other as all staff provide very good role models; these very good relationships are a strength of the school. Staff sensitively guide and encourage pupils of all abilities to take part in discussion, as seen in a Year 1 English lesson when a boy with a speech difficulty was allowed time to enable him to give his answer in full. Consequently, pupils are happy to answer questions, despite a generally below average standard in speaking and listening.
- 27 Younger pupils are helped and guided by the teachers to understand the effect of their actions on others. In a Year R mathematical development lesson when a girl called out, the teacher gently but firmly reminded pupils to be respectful and she responded very positively. Teachers and learning support assistants readily give praise and effective help to pupils and there is a common feeling of encouragement between pupils. They readily give spontaneous applause for the achievements of others. Pupils willingly help and support each other's learning, collaboratively in groups or in pairs and offer to share information and resources. In a Year 1 science lesson, a group of higher attaining pupils happily shared and discussed their ideas and then worked well together.
- 28 Compared with other schools for 2000/2001, the attendance rate is around the national average. This indicates a decline since the previous inspection, when attendance was good. There was an improvement for the autumn term when the rate was 96%. There have been no exclusions. Lessons begin promptly and no time is wasted.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

Teaching is good overall and very good in the nursery.

- 29 Teaching is generally good as teachers plan very thoroughly and make very effective use of resources and classroom assistants to provide interesting and well thought out learning activities.
- 30 Overall, teaching is good throughout the school and consistently very good in the nursery. During the inspection, 74% of the teaching was good or better and 35% very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection as the amount of higher quality teaching has nearly quadrupled and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. 80% of the teaching in the nursery and reception classes was good or better and in one instance excellent. In Years 1 and 2, 70% of the teaching was good or better. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics is good.
- 31 The good or better teaching in the nursery and reception classes is because most teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of early years education and so plan a very interesting and rich programme. They also work very effectively with classroom assistants and, together, have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their children.
- 32 In the nursery, children settle quickly because staff make them very welcome and they feel very secure. They develop very positive attitudes to learning because of their enjoyable experiences and the sensitive encouragement they receive. As a result, they work hard and sustain concentration. When using a floor map to show the relative positions of the houses of the three little pigs, the teacher fully involved children in placing the models of the homes and finger puppets. She kept their attention by pretending to forget things and they eagerly helped her by providing sensible suggestions.
- 33 In the reception classes, there is more emphasis on helping pupils acquire literacy and numeracy skills while still linking this work to interesting topics. While teachers' expectations are generally high, on occasions, pupils are not encouraged enough to concentrate and respond to instructions. This happened in a Year R creative development lesson, when some pupils kept on playing with musical instruments as the teacher did not follow up her reminders.
- 34 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is also generally good because of the very effective planning and teamwork with assistants. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and work hard. The weekly review and planning sessions undertaken by year group teachers ensures that teaching is very well matched to the stage and rate of learning of classes and groups. This is particularly effective in literacy and numeracy in Year 2, where classes are organised by prior-attainment.

- 35 Teachers are very secure in art, geography, history and physical education. Their knowledge and understanding is good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Some are less confident in aspects of design and technology, music and religious education and training sessions are planned as part of the school's improvement programme.
- 36 While teachers place an appropriate emphasis on basic skills in literacy and numeracy lessons, there is still insufficient attention being given to helping pupils develop speaking and listening in all subjects. Teachers' expectations in this area are not consistently high enough although there were occasions when staff sensitively helped individuals to pronounce common words correctly and rephrase sentences to make them clearer.
- 37 Teaching methods are good as staff are very alert to pupils' reactions and quick to adapt and amend learning activities that are not as effective as they could be. In Year 1 numeracy lessons on estimating weight, the teacher who first taught the unit discovered that pupils needed more hands on experience comparing different objects before making a calculated guess. He informed his colleague, who was teaching the same unit later, and she included appropriate activities in her lesson.
- 38 Teachers manage pupils well in every class. From the nursery upwards, pupils are expected to follow established routines and show initiative. As a result, pupils are quick to settle and move from one activity to the next without fuss enabling staff to concentrate on teaching. In Years 1 and 2 literacy and numeracy, pupils sit in rows on the carpet according to their prior attainment without being asked and, in other subjects, quickly form circles or go to designated tables as requested.
- 39 In all classes, teachers and assistants are very well prepared before lessons start as plans are shared and appropriate resources readily available. This ensures no disruption to teaching and pupils' learning. During the lesson, assistants are fully involved at all stages. In class sessions, they sit on the floor by the side of one or two pupils with special educational needs and make sure they can join in activities. For individual and group work, all adults have specific tasks, with the teacher checking progress and making teaching points when appropriate. Staff have recently been trained in the use of new technologies and are trying out new approaches but are limited by the availability of suitable programs for younger pupils.
- 40 Teachers are well aware of the individual strengths and weaknesses of their pupils as they continually check progress through effective questioning, particularly in the

final review sessions of lessons and through tests at the end of teaching units. This information is effectively used in Literacy and Numeracy to set class and individual targets. Marking is overall satisfactory but in English does not always give pupils sufficiently clear guidance on what they need to do specifically to improve.

41 Homework is effectively used to reinforce the learning of spelling and number facts and develop reading. Again this is an established and well-supported routine and pupils take tasks home regularly. Parents are appreciative of this help although not all consistently give support to their children at home. Homework makes an important contribution to ensuring that few pupils fail to reach the expected level of attainment for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

42 The generally good or better teaching ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave at seven-years-old.

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

The curriculum for the nursery and reception, in mathematics, art, physical education and pupils' personal, social, moral and health development is very good.

43 The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all pupils, both within and beyond the school day; the quality of out of school activities is excellent. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good throughout the school and very good in the nursery and reception classes. Since the previous inspection, improvements in the allocation of time given to each subject and in the quality of long and medium term planning have led to a better balance in the curriculum. There is now an appropriate focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The provision for mathematics, art, physical education and pupils' personal, social, moral and health development is very good.

44 The Numeracy Strategy has been very well integrated into the existing mathematics curriculum and ensured that teachers have been able to take on board new ideas to further improve opportunities for pupils. The Literacy Strategy has been beneficial but has taken longer to implement as staff have had to become familiar with new practices. In particular, the development of writing strategies to take into account the below average speaking and listening skills has not yet been fully effective. However, both planning for Literacy and Numeracy has been adjusted to allow for lessons to be more focussed on pupils with different prior attainment. In Year 2, while year group teachers plan together, lessons are

taught separately to higher attaining and lower attaining pupils. In the summer term, similar arrangements will be introduced for Year 1 classes. The school reports, and inspection findings confirm, that learning activities are more effectively matched to the style, stage and rate of learning of pupils in these narrower ability ranges and they achieve well.

- 45 Curriculum planning is well thought out and carried out effectively at all levels. Long term planning ensures pupils encounter a wide range of appropriate learning opportunities from the nursery until they leave at the end of Year 2. Under the guidance of the headteacher, topics and themes are discussed by all staff with curriculum leaders checking to see that while curriculum requirements are met, strong links are maintained between subjects. While national guidance is used, successful programmes have not been abandoned but amended in the light of new information. This is apparent in the way the new locally agreed syllabus in religious education has been adapted to provide coverage of aspects of world religions that would not otherwise be included. Medium and short term planning is carried out by year group teams and subject co-ordinators, with the headteacher having an over view of the process.
- 46 A particular strength of the school is the range of activities available to children beyond the school day; these include music and drama, science, mathematics, physical education, art and football clubs. Regular educational visits that support particular aspects of the curriculum also take place.
- 47 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school. Teachers and learning assistants work very well to plan activities and provide resources that are interesting and well matched to pupils' needs. Individual education plans are detailed and realistic with an effective support and monitoring programme in place. These are effectively used by class teachers when planning additional work for pupils.
- 48 All pupils have very good access to learning opportunities in the classroom and beyond. The school makes a great effort to ensure every pupil is aware of what is available and is helped to participate fully. Work for lower and higher attaining pupils is generally very well planned. The organisation of Literacy and Numeracy lessons by prior attainment is a further indication of the school's endeavour to give every pupil an appropriate educational experience. Teachers and learning support staff use their knowledge of children to match learning to the stage and rate of learning of pupils.
- 49 The curriculum meets requirements in all subjects, including religious education. The provision for sex, drug and health

education is very well integrated into all subjects, with the attention given to promoting pupils' health being a strength. The school meets the requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

50 The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is good and effectively extends and supports the curriculum. The school has been successful in establishing links with a branch of a national supermarket chain, which currently displays examples of pupils' art. Local tourist attractions support the school by providing prizes for fund raising. Through the Education Action Zone initiative, an employee from a local business visits to hear pupils read, free entry is provided to an aquarium, and musicians visit to perform to the school. Annual visits are made to a local farm; staff from the library visit to present book awards. The army provides help to the school and has played a significant part in the development of the school grounds. These and the immediate vicinity are used well to support the curriculum. The school receives visits from a group of mixed denominational ministers who sometimes lead assemblies; they provided Bibles and presented each child with a book to mark the millennium. Visits are made by the fire service, road safety officers and the police, who help support the personal, social and health programme by talking to pupils about "Saying No". The elderly are invited to the harvest service and Year 1 and 2 deliver gifts in the community. There is an annual arts week and the school has benefited from visits by a local artist. Year 2 pupils enjoy an outdoor education programme in the summer. There is limited use of the internet and the pupils have no e-mail links with other schools as yet.

51 Links with the wider community also provide enriching experiences for pupils, which help them to recognise their own worth and to see their place in the community. Specific areas of the curriculum and assembly themes provide effective support for their personal development, which is reinforced consistently within the classroom and around the school. Pupils are also being helped to recognise and become aware of the importance of caring for the environment. During discussions with Year 2 pupils, they expressed interest and concern for the local environment. They thought that litter makes a place look untidy, that it should be picked up and that recycling was important. They had a clear understanding on why class rules were necessary, "We would be silly and then some-one could get hurt". All pupils are involved in the formation of class rules and these are discussed with teachers at the start of each term. They know there are rules for adults but are unclear how they are formed. One suggestion put forward by Year 2 pupils was that God or Tony Blair made them. They are very aware about the importance of a healthy diet and life style and that without this they could get ill or die. Those elected to the newly

formed school council are very keen to talk about their role, report that other pupils have already approached them and are looking forward to their first formal meeting. These opportunities are helping pupils develop an understanding of rights and responsibilities within a community; they also are very clear about the difference between fact and fiction.

- 52 The school has good links with its partner institutions. There are close links with the nearby junior school and pupils are able to use its playing field. Year 3 pupils are invited back to watch rehearsals of Christmas productions. The head teachers of the junior and secondary school are invited and regularly attend events such as harvest festival. There are good links with other primary schools through the academic council. There are also close links with the secondary school. Year 2 pupils make use of its grounds for orienteering and team building activities during the outdoor education programme. Pupils from several secondary schools spend a week at the school on work experience and nursery students spend time at the school in support of their studies.
- 53 Arrangements for preparing pupils to transfer to the adjacent junior school are well established. There are introductory visits for Year 2 pupils and visits by staff to observe them in literacy and numeracy lessons; the transfer arrangements for pupils with special needs are particularly good.
- 54 The school successfully cultivates the personal development of pupils. The provision for moral and social development is very good, and for cultural development is good; these aspects show an improvement since the previous inspection. However, provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory. This indicates a decline since the previous inspection.
- 55 The promotion of spiritual development is not satisfactory. There is, however, a caring ethos that pervades the school and specific areas of the curriculum, such as discussion time, are used well to promote many aspects of personal development. The lack of a school strategy towards spirituality results in the provision being inconsistent, with many missed opportunities and very few moments of quiet reflection at appropriate times. In a Year R class assembly on the theme 'Being Friends', the story and subsequent discussion helped pupils develop strategies to make things better after 'falling out,' but lacked those few moments for the pupils to be still and silent and to have their own private thoughts about their own experiences.
- 56 However, on occasions appropriate opportunities are taken. In a Year 2 personal, social and health lesson, the positive effect of giving time for reflection was seen in the

thoughtful points made by pupils during discussion about the events in a story that had made a character happy or sad. The general use of discussion in lessons and the many well-presented displays reflect the value teachers have for their pupils. Some displays are used effectively to promote spirituality, as seen in the hall where labelled photographs encourage others to appreciate the expression of feelings such as 'anger' and 'sadness' through dance. There are however many other displays where the opportunity to promote this reflection has been missed. Religious education and assembly themes are helping the pupils to have an understanding about the values and beliefs of their own and other cultures. However, curriculum and lesson plans in other subjects do not highlight opportunities for supporting spiritual development. The promotion of pupils' self-esteem is given a very high priority and the constant and generally consistent use of praise and other rewards by staff is considered a vital part of boosting pupils' self esteem.

- 57 Pupils' moral development is very well promoted and is fundamental to the school's aims and practices. Guiding pupils in the recognition of right and wrong is given a very high priority by all staff. The curriculum aims and objectives, published in the prospectus, reinforce the importance of respect for oneself and others, an appreciation of other races, religions and cultures and a responsible attitude towards the environment.
- 58 Opportunities are regularly and sensitively taken by staff, in lessons and in and around the school, to foster such values as caring and respect for each other, courtesy and fairness. All staff, regularly guide and encourage pupils to understand the effect of their attitudes and behaviour on others. The school actively involves all pupils in the termly discussion for forming class rules. There are limited opportunities for pupils to be involved in team games but, for those who are, the rules governing sporting activities help give them an understanding of fair play.
- 59 Personal, social and health education is woven into many areas of the curriculum and assemblies. Themes, such as co-operating and sharing, provide very good opportunities for all pupils to extend their personal and social understanding. Science, history and geography help pupils look at ways of caring for the environment and provide very appropriate opportunities for the pupils to develop and express moral values. Pupils are taught to respect themselves, each other and helped to become aware of issues such as pollution. The expression of moral values can be seen in the good support of an annually chosen charity.
- 60 There are very good arrangements for promoting pupils' social development. There are very many opportunities provided for all pupils to develop an understanding of

living in a community; and there are formal and informal tasks and duties that help promote a growing sense of the importance of responsibility. The headteacher and all other adults provide very good role models by treating pupils, visitors and each other with respect.

- 61 All staff are very aware of the need to promote social development and throughout the curriculum all pupils have many opportunities to learn how to relate to each other by working in pairs and in small and large groups. In the nursery, all children have the opportunity and are encouraged to co-operate, share and take turns. For their age, they have well developed social skills showing an appreciation of fairness when using resources and of the needs of others. In the other classes, staff regularly and consistently ensure that pupils benefit from opportunities to work together.
- 62 The school provides a wide-variety of other activities that very effectively promote social development. A range of visits supporting the curriculum offer very good opportunities for social interaction in the wider community. It is unusual for pupils of this age to have so many out of school clubs and pupils are very fortunate to benefit from the excellent range, variety and enriching extra curricular activities, which include clubs for dance, art and craft, fun with mathematics, science, gymnastics and football.
- 63 Lunch times, play times, school assemblies, the celebration of Christian festivals, school productions, good links with the local community and visits help pupils develop their social skills when working with large numbers of people. Pupils have the opportunity to voice opinions through discussions in lessons and formally through the recently formed school council.
- 64 The promotion of pupils' cultural development is good. The school actively supports and teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through curricular provision and a range of extra curricular activities. Positive contributions to pupils' cultural development come from aspects of English, art, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education, religious education, assemblies and through the provision of some traditional playground games. There are also appropriate opportunities to compare aspects of other religions and cultures.
- 65 Art plays a significant role in raising pupils' awareness. Well-presented displays of pupils' work provide a stimulating learning environment. Pupils have the chance to study the works of a wide range of artists and other cultures and they are developing an understanding of the contributions of individuals and different peoples to

current society. For example, Year 2 study the work of artists, such as Henri Rousseau and Andy Goldsworthy, and have produced paintings in the Aboriginal style following a geography focus on Australia. In religious education, they are studying Hinduism and Judaism. In school assemblies, pupils have the opportunity to appreciate festivals and celebrations such as Holi and the Chinese New Year. The school holds an annual arts week and music workshops take place at the same time.

- 66 Pupils' learning is enriched by appropriate visits in support of topics. Children in the nursery visit Paignton Zoo. Year R visit a local farm, an aquarium and a national park. Year 1 visit a coastal area for comparative studies in geography and beach studies for science and Year 2 pupils visit Morwhellen Quay in support of their Victorian topic. Older pupils have the opportunity to visit a local ski centre in support of their outdoor education programme. Visitors have added to the programme provided by the school. These have included theatre groups, story tellers and music groups.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Overall, the school takes very good care of pupils and staff know pupils very well, using assessment information effectively to help them improve.

- 67 Overall, the school takes very good care of the pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was good. The school strives to ensure the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils, doing what it reasonably can to protect them from harm.

- 68 Very good relationships have been developed between staff and pupils and the needs of pupils are put first. This has created a very supportive and caring community. The headteacher's and class teachers' knowledge of pupils is very good. They are aware of their pupils' various needs and respond to them in a very positive and supportive way. Prompt informal support is consistently given to any pupils showing distress during daily routines and lessons. Consequently, pupils feel they are very well cared for and have confidence in all adults in the school community for advice and support. The school takes very good care of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Staff work closely with parents and carers, and other agencies when appropriate, to support these children, ensuring they are fully included in the life of the school.

- 69 Very good child protection measures are in place, staff discussions take place regularly and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. The school recognises the value of personal and social and health education; they also ensure

that aspects of this are covered in other curriculum subjects.

- 70 The school has established very good working relationships with appropriate agencies. The school nurse is a regular visitor and during their first year every child and their parents are offered the opportunity of a health interview. The dentist and a dental hygienist are regular visitors. The education psychologist visits twice a term and at other times if appropriate. The school also has close links with other support agencies.
- 71 Generally, the day-to-day work of the school, in terms of supervision and awareness of hazards within and beyond school, shows a very good level of responsibility for the health and safety of pupils. Special security locks have been installed and all visitors are required to sign in and out, and have to wear visitor badges. Occasional visitors receive basic safety advice. Very thorough risk assessments, verified by the headteacher, are carried out prior to off site visits and lesson plans also indicate when safety warnings need to be given. Learning support assistants, nursery nurses and mealtime assistants all report that they receive appropriate training in health and safety, child protection and behaviour procedures.
- 72 Regular health and safety inspections of the buildings and grounds are carried out. Staff regularly stress safe working practices to children in order to avoid hazards, and they emphasise the need to be careful when handling resources. In a Year 2 science lesson, an excellent health and safety warning was given to pupils when handling seeds and equipment.
- 73 There are good, consistently applied formal and informal procedures to monitor and support attendance. The registers are accurately kept and monitored almost daily by the administrator and formally by the headteacher. If a pupil does not arrive at school and no message is received, the administrators always telephone the parents to establish the safe whereabouts of the pupil. The prospectus clearly promotes the importance of regular attendance and punctuality; the school takes a firm line on authorising absence and holiday absence. There were no unauthorised absences and no exclusions in the previous school year.
- 74 There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Generally, all teachers have very high expectations, which are consistently and sensitively enforced so pupils clearly know what is expected of them. There is a climate of good behaviour in this orderly community with clear routines and class rules agreed between pupils and teachers. Class teachers regularly and

consistently give praise and thanks to pupils for their good and often very good, attitudes and behaviour.

- 75 Mealtime and learning support assistants receive regular formal and informal training on the behaviour policy and its application; they are well-trained in intervention techniques. Mealtime assistants have also received training to help them encourage children to use the range of games equipment provided to make playtimes a positive experience.
- 76 Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. If incidents of aggressive behaviour occur, they are dealt with immediately, using a quiet, sensitive but firm approach. There are good formal and informal procedures to follow up any incident. Pupils and parents are encouraged to share concerns with staff, which they report they can with ease.
- 77 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good and begin when children first start school. The school believes that personal development is as important as academic progress and therefore both are celebrated and recognised by awarding 'Star of the week' and 'Player of the week' certificates. Pupils' achievements for effort, attitude and behaviour are acknowledged. Those, who experience difficulty with a specific area of personal development, are encouraged to improve and rewarded when they are successful. Teachers and assistants support these pupils very well and help them set their own targets. The inclusive ethos ensures that all pupils are valued as individuals and for the part they play in the life of the school.
- 78 Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance are very good. Teachers are well aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses through day-to-day assessment of their work and use assessment procedures effectively to help them plan appropriate teaching and learning activities each week. Teachers meet regularly to assess pupils' work. Consistency is also improved by comparing their judgements with a portfolio of previously assessed work and national examples.
- 79 The school has developed comprehensive, thorough and rigorous systems for recording and analysing baseline assessment and the results of other statutory and standardised tests. This information is used to establish a reliable level of attainment for individual pupils at the start of the school year and to set challenging class targets. Teachers also assess pupils termly against National Curriculum attainment levels. In English and mathematics, pupils are given specific learning objectives, which are recorded in their English and mathematics books and shared with parents twice each year. As these are written in

language appropriate for pupils, this enables older pupils to have more knowledge of their own learning.

80 Analysis of the performance of pupils has been broken down to consider the progress of different groups of pupils and identify where additional support may be required. For example, analysis of the 2001 national assessment results revealed under-performance in the higher levels of writing. A more able writers' group has been established to target 12 pupils with the aim of raising standards in this area.

81 Class teachers work collaboratively with classroom assistants to check regularly the progress of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. As a result, individual education plans are kept up to date and helpful notes made to share with other professionals and parents. Annual review procedures are carried out effectively with the involvement of parents and outside specialists when appropriate.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Parents are very appreciative of the school and feel very well informed and involved.

82 The school has very good links with parents. The school works very closely with all parents, informal contact is encouraged and views sought and valued. Parents have very positive views of the school. There is very good formal and informal contact with parents. Overall, the quality of information provided by the school, particularly about pupils' progress, is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

83 The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home is good. This broadly reflects the findings of the previous inspection. All parents are supportive of the school and very satisfied with what the school achieves and provides for the children. Parents find the school very approachable and welcoming and willing to listen to their views or concerns. The partnership with parents is a strength of the school.

84 Parents appreciate the regular newsletters, and other correspondence when appropriate. The school prospectus is well presented and provides useful information for parents. The governors' annual report to parents is informative but has some minor omissions. Appropriate curriculum meetings are regularly held and the school reports that they are well supported. The school provides many formal opportunities for parents to visit and receive information, such as termly coffee sessions where teachers explain what the pupils will be learning and parents have the opportunity to ask

questions. There are also open mornings when parents are invited to observe literacy or numeracy lessons.

- 85 There are termly open evenings for parents and two written reports. The spring meeting is to review progress and set targets and parents' and pupils' views are taken into account in this process. The quality of the end of year reports has improved and now gives information about achievement and the areas that need to be developed. The school reports that these evenings are very well attended by between 97-100% of parents. Parents value the informal daily opportunities to speak with the staff. Festivals, performances, end of year assemblies and the annual family picnic and sports day are all well attended.
- 86 The school and home work well in partnership, sharing information about pupils, their learning and how they feel. This partnership starts with the very good induction procedures. Effective provision is also made for pupils who start other than Year R through 'buddy' support from a learning support assistant until friendship groups are established. The partnership between home and school continues through a good range of formal sharing of information and parents value the 'open door' policy operated by the school. Parents find the school very approachable and know that concerns will be dealt with promptly.
- 87 The school has a good range of productive and consistent links with parents that help pupils learn. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is actively sought and welcomed. Some parents contribute directly by listening to pupils read and they report there is good informal communication with staff. Parents support their children's learning at home and home/school link books are used well by parents who value them as another useful means of communication between school and home. However, a small minority do not give consistent help with homework.
- 88 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved from the earliest stage. They appreciate the quick response of the school when a specific concern arises and report that they value and appreciate the advice and the additional support given.
- 89 The views of parents are sought formally and informally, including meetings and questionnaires. Parents' views were taken into account when the school was formulating its healthy school action plan; as part of this consultation, a questionnaire was issued to parents about the care provision for pupils and the effectiveness of communication.
- 90 This good level of parental involvement has a positive effect on the learning and development of pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

The leadership of the headteacher is very good although she is over-loaded with subject management responsibilities and a full-time teaching commitment.

- 91 Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher, well supported by staff and inexperienced but committed governors, are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
- 92 The headteacher is a very hardworking and dedicated leader who sets herself and others high expectations. She has a very clear vision of the school and its future. Together with governors and staff, she has created an ethos where everyone wants to do their best and efforts and achievements are appreciated and celebrated. This has resulted in above average standards in reading, mathematics, science, art and physical education for pupils aged seven and very professional staff who work most effectively together. However, leadership and management have been less successful in tackling some important areas they have identified as priorities. Pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills are still generally below average; provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory; the headteacher has taken on too many responsibilities to cope with recent staff resignations and secondments; and, measures to check the effectiveness of planned actions are not specific enough.
- 93 The senior management team is currently depleted following the secondment of the Foundation Stage leader to the local education authority at the end of the autumn term. The Key Stage 1 leader is temporarily holding the post of senior teacher. The intention is to resort to a senior management team of the headteacher, Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage leaders from the beginning of the next school year. The team meets fortnightly for a formal review and discussion about development but liases more frequently to ensure the day-to-day management runs smoothly. These temporary arrangements are proving satisfactory.
- 94 Subject co-ordinators are developing their role under the guidance of the headteacher. She regularly meets with individual managers to check progress and consider what needs to be done next to raise standards further. Co-ordinators carry out an audit of their subject annually and are well supported in carrying out monitoring and development of teaching and provision in their subject. They are becoming more involved in monitoring pupils' learning through classroom observation. Currently, the headteacher is co-ordinator for art, design and technology, information and communication technology, religious education, special educational needs and the Foundation Stage. In addition, she is teaching full-time in the nursery. While these are

temporary arrangements pending the appointment of additional staff, such an overload of responsibilities places undue demands upon her.

- 95 The governing body is mainly inexperienced as only a few have been in post longer than a year. However, they have been effectively inducted into their role by the supportive and long serving chair and are becoming more aware of what they can do to help the school improve. There is an appropriate committee structure and governors are well informed by the clear reports from the headteacher and co-ordinators. Some non-staff governors have undertaken classroom observations to further their awareness of how the school operates day-to-day. The chair regularly meets with the headteacher, who finds these discussions both challenging and supportive.
- 96 The headteacher has successfully ensured that continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of agreed actions takes place as part of a well thought out school improvement strategy involving governors and staff. Assessment information is rigorously and systematically analysed termly in English, mathematics and science and weaknesses identified, appropriate plans drawn up and actions taken. Assessment procedures in other subjects are based upon teachers' judgements and appropriate management plans drawn up annually. These and other development priorities to improve the quality of teaching, pupils' learning and provision are brought together in a manageable school improvement plan for 2001/02, which also contains a two-year over view to 2003. In addition, the school community, including parents and pupils, are given the opportunity through informal and formal discussions to contribute suggestions. The resulting action plans are realistic, clearly identify what has to be done, at what cost and by when. However, they do not include specific enough measures to enable governors and managers to evaluate the effectiveness of their spending decisions.
- 97 The headteacher and senior managers very effectively carry out an annual performance review with all teachers when objectives linked to the school improvement plan and a programme of training, monitoring and evaluation are agreed. Teachers are given very good support for their professional development and regularly share their expertise with colleagues through staff training. This term, topics covered include using information and communication technology to support learning in literacy and mathematics and improving the teaching of music.
- 98 The deployment of classroom assistants is very effectively managed and they are fully involved in all aspects of the school, including training and staff meetings. They meet regularly with class teachers to share lesson planning and

with the head teacher for training and administrative matters. As a result, support staff are very well trained and work very effectively with teachers. This ensures they make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly to those with special educational needs.

- 99 Induction of new staff is very well organised with the use of non-contact time and mentoring by experienced members of staff. The school had a newly qualified teacher last year and she reports that the school made her very welcome and gave her valuable advice and support. The school's induction programme received a very favourable review from the local education authority.
- 100 The school has not taken initial teacher training students recently but has frequent nursery nurse placements from the local college of further education. During the inspection, such a student was deployed in the nursery unit and was very well supported.
- 101 Over the previous three years, five teachers have left the school, three to work for the local authority's early years team and two to promoted posts. Those working for the local authority were first seconded, making it difficult to appoint permanent replacements. As a result, it has been difficult to provide continuity in teaching and management in key areas. In addition, an unexpected resignation of the nursery teacher in December 2001, created further pressure. The school was not able to find an appropriately qualified and experienced replacement at such short notice. As a consequence, the headteacher took on the full time teaching responsibility in the nursery unit, pending the appointment of a permanent post holder from September 2002. While this ensures teaching in the school is not disrupted and remains good overall it has not been possible for the headteacher to provide the same level of support to the development of teaching and pupils' learning in all areas.
- 102 The school is introducing and using new technologies more as teachers gain in confidence from their recent training. A new information and communication technology suite has been created and classroom assistants are currently following appropriate courses. Staff make good use of new technologies to support their lesson preparation, in the production of learning resources and labelling displays. The headteacher reports that communication through new technologies has reduced her workload but consultation on local and national initiatives has caused an increase in bureaucracy for her and staff, particularly in the duplication of requests for information.
- 103 The governing body has ensured pupils with special educational needs are very effectively supported by allocating funds to increase the number of classroom

assistants. As a result, these pupils make good progress. Support from the Plymouth Education Action Zone has been particularly beneficial in funding staff to organise the excellent programme of after-school activities that are very well attended and much appreciated by parents.

- 104 The school is situated on one of the highest hills in Plymouth and has to cope with severe weather conditions, particularly rain and wind. While the external state of the building is satisfactory, it is subject to considerable wear. However, internally, there is a very welcoming environment that is well maintained by the site manager and cleaning staff. Classrooms are spacious with good facilities and easy access to outside areas. Corridors are wide and suitable for small groups work. The layout of the building allows for the Year 1 and 2 classes and Reception classes to be on separate wings and the purpose built nursery unit to be self-contained. The hall is large, well illuminated and has excellent flooring. The library is too small but long-term plans indicate how the current site can be extended. The school is fully accessible to adults and pupils with mobility challenges.
- 105 The grounds are well laid out and include a small grassed space for games and an environmental area. Grant aid has been acquired to create an adventure play area for the Foundation Stage. The playground is small but plans are in hand to redesign the large car park to create an additional paved area for play. Pupils have been involved in making the playground more interesting by providing more opportunities for constructive play.
- 106 Resources are generally of good quality and sufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. The library has limited stock and the school is planning to enrich further the curriculum by the purchase of additional resources in information and communication technology, art, music, personal and social education and religious education. Although the library is regularly used, the small size only allows small groups to visit. However, teachers make effective use of books, artefacts and other material to make attractive displays in their classrooms.
- 107 Efficient and effective use is also made of resources by identifying one classroom in each of the year groups for literacy and the other for numeracy lessons. At the appointed time, pupils move rooms and have the appropriate resources readily available as well as working in an environment to promote and celebrate the specialist area being taught. In addition, pupils' learning is further enhanced by the management of teaching groups in literacy and numeracy. Pupils are organised in two classes by prior attainment for all of Year 2 and for the summer term for Year 1. This enables teachers to pitch learning activities

more appropriately and provide more effective challenge and support. As a result, pupils in these classes generally achieve well.

- 108 The headteacher and governors are very aware of the principles of best value. They apply them when making major spending decisions, such as in the creation of the new computer suite last summer and in the plans to extend the library. Governors compare their assessment results with other similar schools that indicate they do well. They use competitive tendering to gain value for money, following local education authority guidance, and account appropriately for their financial decisions. Financial plans show that raising standards and improving provision are a priority. Fluctuation in the school roll, caused by more pupils leaving than joining other than at expected times, has resulted in budgetary challenges. These are being managed sensibly with due consideration being given to available options. Financial control and administration are very efficient. This was confirmed by the external audit in June 2001, when a few minor recommendations were made that have been fully implemented. The headteacher has very efficient support from administrative assistants. This is proving invaluable under the temporary arrangements when she is teaching full time.
- 109 Considering the generally below average attainment of pupils on entry at three-years-old and the above average attainment in reading, mathematics, science, art and physical education on leaving at seven-years-old, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors and the headteacher should:

- (1) Raise standards in speaking and listening and develop the use of writing by
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to express, discuss and write their ideas and thoughts;
 - raising teachers' expectations about the qualities of spoken and written English;
 - developing teaching strategies for improving speaking, listening and writing;
 - creating a climate in which high standards of speaking, listening and writing are valued and celebrated.(Para. 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 36, 110, 112, 122, 123, 124, 126, 130, 132, 133, 144)
- (2) Extend the provision for spiritual development by planning and providing opportunities for pupils to:
 - acquire insight into their personal experiences;
 - explore and appreciate different values and beliefs;
 - gain respect for themselves and others.(Para. 55, 56)
- (3) Reduce the range of management and teaching commitments of the headteacher by:
 - reviewing the range and distribution of subject management responsibilities;
 - considering and evaluating the options for teaching in the nursery.(Para. 94, 101, 118)
- (4) Devise ways of checking the effectiveness of agreed actions to raise achievement by:
 - being more specific about the measures that indicate that targets have been reached;
 - monitoring and reporting regularly on progress towards these targets;
 - adapting targets, plans and actions in the light of these findings.(Para. 96)

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

Handwriting (Para. 10, 127)

Marking (Para. 40)

Governors' annual report (Para. 84)

Library and stock (Para. 106, 140, 155, 165, 194, 229)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	18	19	14	0	0	0
Percentage	2	35	37	27	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents 1.88 percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	37.5	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	129

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR] - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	66

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	26	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	26	27
	Girls	25	25	26
	Total	51	51	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (92)	94(94)	98 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	27
	Girls	25	26	26
	Total	51	53	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (95)	98 (98)	98 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black - Caribbean heritage	0
Black - African heritage	0
Black - other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	216
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes:
YR - Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.2
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR - Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	163

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	453,207
Total expenditure	464,938
Expenditure per pupil	2,095
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,338
Balance carried forward to next year	-2,393

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	216
Number of questionnaires returned	55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	93	7	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	76	22	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	28	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	35	2	2	2
The teaching is good.	91	9	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	81	17	0	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	93	7	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	80	19	0	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	89	11	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	87	11	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	19	2	0	11

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

110 There are 107 children in the Foundation Stage, accommodated in a purpose built nursery and two reception classes. Children make a very good start to school through an effective induction programme and, currently, 47 attend part time, either in the morning or afternoon. They enter school at three-years-old with overall below average attainment and a significant number have poor linguistic skills. Children achieve well through the nursery and reception classes because of the generally good teaching they receive. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. As a result nearly all children attain the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1, apart from in communication, language and literacy where speaking and listening remain below average. Children are caring, very supportive of each other, respectful and enthusiastic learners.

Personal, social and emotional development

111 Children develop their personal, social and emotional skills well as appropriate activities are included in programmes covering each area of learning. Staff know their children very well and successfully help them to begin to develop self-esteem and confidence, so they are not afraid to make mistakes. In the nursery, when a low attaining three-year-old boy had difficulty using scissors to cut out the pig's eye when making a mask, the assistant encouraged him to keep trying and after several inappropriate attempts he succeeded. Children's efforts are consistently and frequently praised and rewarded by staff. A young high attaining five-year-old girl was very proud of a story she had written about a bear when she was asked to read it to the class. Children develop a sense of right and wrong as staff make expectations clear and are consistent in reinforcing the message. In a reception class, the teacher overheard two children arguing about whose turn it was in a mathematical game and quietly but firmly reminded them to be polite and take turns. Generally, relationships are very good and the staff provide very good role models. In both the nursery and reception classes, children show increasing independence as they move between adult directed activities and those they choose for themselves. In the nursery, groups enjoyed playing happily together, dressing up in bear costumes to act out the story of Goldilocks. Many opportunities are provided to give children and appreciation of other cultures and values, as they did recently in the nursery when making African beads and masks. Children with special educational needs are very well supported by staff and are included in all activities. The nursery has built up

a well-deserved reputation for the very effective provision given to individuals with specific needs to enable them to feel included and good about themselves. As a result, all children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage of their personal, social and emotional development and nearly all those in the reception classes are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

112 In recognition of the poor language skills of many of the children, staff ensure learning activities include many opportunities for talking and listening. While individuals are generally keen to engage with staff and visitors initially, they find it difficult to develop a conversation when describing their thinking. Three average attaining four-years-old boys and a girl needed considerable help from the assistant to find words to describe the actions of three finger puppet in retelling the traditional story about the three little pigs. However, staff are very good at constructing and adapting questions to take account of the stage and rate of learning of individuals, particularly those identified as having special educational needs. A low attaining four-year-old girl, after such help, imaginatively described what would happen to the wolf when he fell down the chimney in the brick house of one of the three little pigs. She said, *"He'll burn his bottom on the fire."* While nearly all children enjoy looking at books and handle them carefully, a significant minority in the nursery are not very familiar with printed words as they have limited opportunities to practice at home. In the reception classes, most enthusiastically join in following the story in large well-illustrated books to explore plot and characters and introduce new words. In one reception class, high attaining pupils were stimulated to write quite extensive stories about animals as a result. Older pupils are developing a positive attitude to reading and are acquiring an appropriate knowledge and understanding of sentence and word construction. However, they do not read widely outside of the well-organised reading scheme. Children in the nursery and reception classes have appropriate opportunities to develop early writing skills in play and through structured exercises. Two five-year-olds role-playing in a baby clinic, wrote prescriptions for the mothers and an average attaining group in the same class described a cuddly soft toy. All children in the nursery recognise their written name and nearly all in the reception classes write letters confidently and legibly, although still with some reversals. In the nursery and reception classes, words and sentences produced by staff and children are widely displayed and referred to, creating a rich and stimulating environment. However while children generally achieve well in their language development, most do not make sufficient progress in speaking and listening and are below the stage expected

for their age both in the nursery and reception classes. As a result, most children are not likely to reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the time they start Year 1.

Mathematical development

- 113 Children's mathematical development is given a high priority and staff take every opportunity to use everyday routines to reinforce their understanding. In the nursery, the children counted together to 23 when the teacher was taking the register and a higher attaining four-year-old girl was able to correctly calculate that one child was absent. Most children in reception use a number line to count and correctly recognise numbers to 20. Older high attaining five-year-olds also write numbers to 10 with few mistakes. Nearly all children enjoy exploring and playing with numbers mentally. In the reception class, the teacher scattered leaves on the floor and encouraged the class to 'count with their eyes' and then asked well-targeted questions to check individuals' understanding. Many opportunities are taken to link number work to real life activities. In the nursery, language and creative activities based around the story of the little pigs were frequently used to reinforce children's understanding of number facts associated with three. Addition and subtraction are clearly explained with appropriate use of language to distinguish the operations and extend children's knowledge and understanding. A four-year-old girl in a reception class made sets of plastic cubes was helped to see the difference in length when 'adding one more' and 'taking one away'. Position words are also emphasised effectively. In the nursery during a physical development lesson, children responded well to instructions to 'jump high, low' and 'go in, over, under, on and through' different apparatus. A great deal of work is done with patterns to enable children to recognise, predict and construct using different objects and media. In the reception classes, a wide range of opportunities were provided, including using un-tuned instruments to make repeating rhythms, different coloured beads to make necklaces and cotton reels to print patterns. Nearly all children achieve well and are at an appropriate stage in their mathematical development and are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 114 In both the nursery and reception classes, staff plan a wide variety of rich, first hand experiences to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Topics are planned over the year to take advantage of the seasons, festivals, local events and interests of children. The school has an uncultivated area that is regularly visited to show changes throughout the year. Children's curiosity is

encouraged effectively to develop their skills of observation and investigation of the natural and made world. In a reception class, groups worked with an assistant exploring their sense of taste. Using very appropriate and well prepared resources, pieces of different fruit concealed in closed containers, children enjoyed tasting and describing samples they had not seen. Cooking is now more frequently undertaken following a review of the programme. Children have made and tasted foods from their own and other cultures. History and geographical skills are developed appropriately through topics that centre on children's experiences. In the nursery, simple routes were drawn on a floor map to illustrate where the three little pigs might have found the building materials for their houses. In reception, a topic on 'ourselves' was used well to show how the children had changed over time as they grew. Their understanding of new technologies is being developed effectively through appropriate activities. In the nursery, a low attaining four-year-old boy confidently used the mouse to control a program on the computer to play the nursery rhyme of his choice. In a reception class, an average attaining five-year-old girl, used a mobile phone in the role-play area to remind a patient of her appointment at the baby clinic. As a result of these experiences, children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in their understanding and knowledge of the world and most of the pupils in the reception class have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in this area.

Physical development

- 115 Children's physical development is very well covered as the school places a strong emphasis on encouraging healthy and active growth. Many opportunities are provided within classrooms, the hall and in outdoor play areas for children to explore and gain confidence in controlling their bodies. Weather permitting, nursery children have daily sessions in the designated and secure outdoor play area, using wheeled and fixed equipment. In addition, they have frequent lessons in the large hall, using a wide range of equipment. In the session observed, children showed extraordinarily refined skills of balance, jumping and landing and dexterity moving on specialist equipment. Reception children also have regular lessons in the hall and outside but they do not have sufficient opportunities for free play with large equipment. The school has recognised this need and funds have been acquired to develop an outside adventure area. However, older children move confidently, are aware of their own and others' space, follow simple commands and respond to a range of signals promptly. Children also are developing their finer skills well through a range of activities such as painting, cutting, printing and colouring carefully. They listen carefully and respond correctly to adult requests and instructions, as did reception children making 'feely'

snakes with different types of material. Overall, children make good progress and achieve very well in their physical development and most are in advance of the level expected for their age and all will exceed the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

Creative development

116 Children are given a wide range of creative development opportunities that are frequently used to re-enforce learning in other areas. The topic on the three little pigs in the nursery allowed children to experiment with mixing paints when making pig masks. As one average attaining four-year-old girl said, "*Red and white make pink for the skin.*" A variety of stimulating activities are well planned to match the age and maturity of children. In the reception class, displays of work showed examples of printing, collage, painting and observational drawing. They carry out creative tasks sensibly, handling potentially messy materials with care and usually clear up sensibly. A group in reception making towers and cranes with different construction equipment carefully ensured pieces were not mixed up and finally packed the bits away in the correct boxes. An appropriate range of musical experiences is provided. An average attaining group of four-year-olds in the nursery used percussion instruments under the sensitive guidance of the assistant to accompany the telling of the story of the three little pigs. In a reception class, most children were able to keep a regular beat using similar instruments while singing familiar songs, such as 'Girls and boys come out to play'. Children fully engage in and enjoy the creative activities prepared for them. Nearly all are at an appropriate stage in their creative development and are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

Teaching

117 Overall, teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good. Teaching in the nursery is consistently very good and in a physical development lesson during the inspection, was excellent. Teachers and assistants work very well together, forming a strong team. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of children's learning in the early years, which ensures they plan very effectively. They use time and resources very well to ensure that children work at an appropriate pace and are very well supported. Sometimes, expectations of what children can do and how they should respond are not high enough in one of the reception classes and on these occasions a few lose interest and are not sufficiently productive. Children's attainment on entry is checked and used well to identify and predict possible problems, particularly for those likely to require additional support. Staff keep a very good check on

children's progress and regularly review individuals' achievement to tackle weaknesses. Records on individual pupils are kept up-to-date and reported to parents formally twice a year.

- 118 Currently, the Foundation Stage is overseen by the headteacher, who teaches full time in the nursery. These are temporary arrangements following late staff changes at the end of the autumn term. The intention is to ensure permanent arrangements are in place by the start of the new school year. While the quality of education in the nursery and reception classes has not been adversely effected by the deployment of the headteacher in these areas, she has not been able to give the rest of the school as much attention as before.
- 119 Resources in the nursery and reception classes are very good and effectively used. Accommodation is also very good and used effectively. Outside facilities for the nursery are secure and large enough for active play. Plans for the adventure play area are realistic and will further enhance outdoor facilities for reception children. Staff have created a very positive and supportive learning environment.

ENGLISH

- 120 Standards are above average in reading and average in writing but below average in speaking and listening. This is an improvement since the previous inspection in reading and writing but a decline in standards for speaking and listening.
- 121 Overall standards in English for pupils aged seven are around the national average. They work hard, generally achieve well and respond well to the high expectations and good teaching which the school provides.
- 122 When pupils start Year 1, their attainment in speaking and listening is generally below the national average. Although they improve steadily, they remain below the national average when they leave school at seven-years-old.
- 123 Pupils of above average ability can discuss subjects with developing confidence and use appropriate subject vocabulary. However, average ability pupils often find it difficult to give extended answers or use the correct words to describe how to carry out an activity. For example when discussing an information and communication technology project, Year 2 pupils had a good understanding of how to control a robot but only a small number could explain the process of pressing the arrow keys in order to make it move in a particular direction.

- 124 Many pupils of below average ability have difficulty with the pronunciation of some words and are not able to form sounds correctly. This can make their speech indistinct and difficult to understand. In the most effective lessons, teachers model the correct words and then give pupils opportunities to use the same language in discussion with each other. In a Year 1 lesson looking at an alternative version of the Little Red Riding Hood fairy tale, the teacher asked pupils to discuss what would happen next with their "talking partner", then, in turn, to describe their prediction to the class while the teacher wrote their ideas on the white board.
- 125 Inspection findings confirm that by the age of seven, standards in reading are above the national average, as they were in 2001 national assessments. This is because the school has an established, systematic approach to the teaching of reading and makes effective use of support and resources to help pupils overcome reading difficulties at an early stage. Teachers also make good use of the ideas and organisation suggested by the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils read with enthusiasm and increasing fluency. The reading skills of the average and higher attaining pupils enable them to cope with most texts. They can discuss passages in detail and predict and summarise a short story. Lower attaining pupils are making good progress because of the intensive reading recovery programme, which is very well taught mainly by very well-trained learning support assistants.
- 126 Standards in writing are in line with national expectation but over the last two years, they have fallen, as shown by national assessment results. The school reports this was because there was a greater proportion than usual of pupils with special educational needs in these cohorts and staff changes. In addition, few pupils are reaching the higher level 3 in writing. There are signs that writing is now improving as a result of teaching arrangements to classes arranged by prior attainment; opportunities that have been set up to develop extended writing; and the increasing expectations of the teachers. However, while pupils are acquiring appropriate writing skills for their age, they do not write easily as they are constrained by their below average speaking and listening skills. They have a basic vocabulary but do not have the range of words to adapt their writing for different readers. Just as many struggle to speak their thoughts, this is compounded when they try to express themselves in writing.
- 127 The school has adopted a handwriting scheme, which requires pupils to join handwriting from an early stage. Standards of handwriting are good when pupils are completing handwriting exercises. However, teachers do not expect the same standards in pupils' other workbooks or subjects. As a result, they are not transferring these skills to their

independent writing. However, pupils' work displayed in classrooms is accurate and well presented.

- 128 The quality of teaching in English is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory and occasionally very good. Teachers have taken on the national guidance for teaching literacy and have a good understanding of the steps that make up pupils' learning. The planning of lessons is very good. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together to ensure that pupils are interested and challenged and all adults have very good relationships with pupils.
- 129 Year 2 pupils are organised into two classes by prior attainment so that teaching and learning activities can be more appropriately matched to the narrower ability range. These arrangements operate smoothly and the inspection found that pupils achieve well in these classes. From the summer term, Year 1 pupils will be taught under similar arrangements. Currently, one room in each year group has been designated for English as this ensures appropriate resources are readily available and displays can enrich and celebrate literacy. At the appointed time, pupils change classrooms, which is completed smoothly with no time lost.
- 130 It was not possible to see any of the weekly extended writing lessons during the inspection. Pupils' work in books shows evidence of progress in this area but few write extensively with imagination and clarity of thought. There are insufficient occasions when teachers demonstrate writing processes and pupils write for a range of purposes. Pupils' work is marked regularly and comments are usually encouraging but marking is not consistent. It does not always follow the school policy of providing clear guidance to pupils as to the next step to improve their writing.
- 131 Teachers use a lively and structured approach to the teaching of reading and spelling: "Rime Time", focusing on a different sound each week helps pupils link their knowledge of sounds to spelling patterns and gives regular practice in handwriting. The "Key Word" approach aims to ensure that all pupils can recognise and spell 300 common words by the time they enter Year 2. Both of these strategies are effective in helping pupils to develop successfully a range of approaches to tackle new words.
- 132 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of speaking and listening are less secure. Although they have good explaining skills and sometimes demonstrate language well, there are insufficient structured opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their spoken language through discussion, description and reporting.
- 133 Literacy skills are also developed through other subjects. This is particularly so in geography and history where

teachers identify key vocabulary, which is displayed and practised. Although the teachers' medium term planning for the foundation subjects indicates opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, short term plans do not always give specific strategies or vocabularies to be used. As a result, there is no consistent approach to developing speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. In the most effective lessons, activities are planned to encourage relevant pupil-to-pupil talk. In a Year 1 history lesson, pupils, having discussed chronology with their teacher, were put in groups to place different artefacts in date order and discuss their decisions with each other.

134 Working co-operatively with learning support assistants, teachers manage pupils well and organise time and resources very effectively. Year 1 and 2 classrooms display have some good examples of writing from teachers and pupils. Checklists and reminders, as well as vocabulary and book displays, are used effectively to provide prompts for pupils. In a Year 2 class, pupils had written letters to an African boy, a character in a book they had recently read. Their careful writing showed sensitive reaction to the text and an awareness of the reader. One pupils wrote, *"Do you get any rain to cool you down? Have you any shade? I think you would like it here. I bet you don't have rime-time"*.

135 Pupils generally work hard and produce a very good quantity of work. This is because teachers have high expectations of them and plan lessons that keep pupils interested and working at a good pace. Their behaviour is managed well by the teachers and classroom assistants. Relationships between all adults and pupils are very good. Staff have successfully established a culture of learning and improvement in English. Pupils, who have difficulties concentrating, are given sensitive, individual and group support by classroom assistants. Some pupils, particularly boys, can be passive and disengaged, as they were in a Year 2 lesson for lower attainers.. This occurs when there are insufficient opportunities for interaction or if class sessions are too long and they have been sitting for long periods in previous activities.

136 Arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in English are very good. Regular formal assessments are analysed and areas of weakness are tackled by setting targets that inform teachers' planning. The school has a portfolio of assessed work, which is used to check teachers' assessments and inform future areas for development. Teachers set a writing target for each pupil every half term. These are pasted in the front of the extended writing book. Half-termly targets are also communicated in written report to parents. The school has set challenging statutory targets for attainment in English.

- 137 Pupils with special educational needs learn well. There is very good provision for their learning in English. Pupils' individual needs are recognised early and appropriate assessments and plans identify clear targets that are shared with all teaching staff. Pupils in the lower attaining English set are well supported. In Year 2, the learning support assistant was able to help a small group of lower ability pupils identify and use adjectives to make "super sentences" because of her good knowledge of grammar and clear focus on the aims of the lesson.
- 138 New technologies are being used more frequently in supporting pupils' learning in English. This is most effective in giving pupils the opportunity to word process their writing and present it in different forms. Also, lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given appropriate programs to reinforce their language skills, which they find interesting and helpful in sustaining their concentration.
- 139 Leadership and management of English are very good. Supported by the headteacher, the co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done and the organisational skills to put it into practice. Procedures to monitor and evaluate pupils' learning and teaching in English are good. The co-ordinator has monitored planning, observed teaching, examined written work and talked to pupils about their learning. This has resulted in an action plan that contains many of the areas for improvement identified in this report. She has reviewed the resources and re-organised where necessary. There is a clear focus on raising standards in English, which is evident in the shared commitment, quality of planning and good teamwork between all staff who teach and support pupils' learning. The co-ordinator attends training and feeds back to staff. She also looks for opportunities to enrich and broaden pupils' experience in literacy. For example, the Education Action Zone is funding a writers' workshops, when professionals will visit the school and work with pupils.
- 140 Resources for literacy are good. Teachers have a good range of text to support classroom work and reading material has been carefully graded to develop reading. However, there is a shortage of non-fiction material for lower graded reading books. The library, which has recently been audited and improved, is attractive and well organised but still contains a limited selection of fiction and non-fiction books. It is also too small for classes to visit comfortably. The school has plans to further improve the stock and extend the floor area. Able readers enjoy the school's "Bookworm" scheme, which guides pupils to different types of books from their classroom and corridor shelves and enables them to choose specific books from the school library.

MATHEMATICS

- 141 Standards in mathematics are above average for seven-year-olds. This is an improvement since the previous inspection as more pupils now achieve at the higher level three.
- 142 National assessment results have risen steadily and remained well above average, as they were in 2001 when compared to all and similar schools. The school reports this is because, for some years, teachers have given a high priority to mental and oral mathematics and linked this to relevant first hand learning experience for pupils.
- 143 Teaching is good overall in mathematics. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics and as a result lessons are very well planned with a strong focus on the acquisition of basic number operations. Teachers have high expectations and manage pupils very well. They employ a good variety and range of methods in their lessons and work very effectively with classroom assistants. This help is particularly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress. Homework is well used to re-enforce learning and recall of basic number facts.
- 144 As a result, pupils are acquiring and making use of an appropriate range of mathematical skills. In a Year 1 lesson counting on and back in two's, a higher attaining girl correctly identified even numbers in a long sequence and explained, "*that a number was even if the unit digit was even*". Pupils find the pace and content of lessons stimulating and generally work hard. In a Year 2 lesson for the higher attainers, pupils enthusiastically joined in the oral session doubling and halving multiples of 10 in response to the teacher's quick fire questioning and encouraging remarks. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because activities are well matched to their rate and stage of learning and proceed in manageable steps. While pupils have sufficient strategies for solving problems independently, they often do not have the linguistic skills to explain their thinking confidently. In a Year 1 lesson estimating and weighing different vegetables, even high attaining pupils were not able to find the words to describe the degree of difference when comparing results. However, overall there is a good level of achievement in mathematics across Years 1 and 2.
- 145 Most pupils in Year 2 can count from 1 to 1000 and recognise and write three digit numbers. They can count in two's, five's and 10's forward and backward, understand and identify even and odd numbers, recognise smaller and larger numbers and their place value. They can measure using non-standard units and tell the time using o'clock and half

past. Pupils recognise and use coins and calculate and give change. Simple two-dimensional shapes, such as square, triangle, circle, hexagon and octagon are recognised, drawn and generally named correctly. Pupils collect and interpret data using block graphs and Venn diagrams. They also recognise and use simple fractions, such as halves and quarters, in practical activities.

- 146 Generally, the start of lessons are taken at a brisk pace with effective use made of well-targeted questions to reinforce work already covered. Pupils sit in rows on the carpet according to their prior-attainment, which helps ensure individuals are asked questions at an appropriate level of difficulty and teachers can check their understanding more easily. In a Year 1 lesson, a high attaining girl, on being asked, quickly recognised a sequence of even numbers and counted on in two's beyond the number line correctly. The teacher then involved a girl with special educational needs, who just as quickly identified that the two missing numbers in a sequence were four and six. On occasions, these oral sessions become confusing for some pupils when problems are not broken down sufficiently into meaningful learning steps and a few individuals become inattentive. In a Year 2 lower set, many pupils had difficulty counting in 10's beyond 100, the end of the number line being displayed. The teacher persisted by rewording the question but most pupils were unable to visualise a number line extension without concrete experience and many became restless.
- 147 The main teaching focus of lessons is very well planned and builds easily on pupils' previously acquired knowledge and understanding. In Year 1, teachers make very effective use of practical demonstrations and involve pupils at every stage in working through an example together. In a session on estimating and weighing objects with non-standard units, pupils were fully engaged and most understood the process by the end. A high attaining girl defined estimation as, "*It's when you make a sensible guess.*" Pupils put forward their suggestions as to the weight of a banana, which ranged from eight plastic cubes to 90. Classroom assistants sat beside pupils with special educational needs and helped them join in with the class activity of counting the cubes being put in the balance scale by individuals in turn. Pupils sustained their interest throughout the demonstration and showed great excitement when the scales balanced at 45 cubes.
- 148 Individual work follows on well from these class sessions as the challenge of tasks are appropriately matched to the rate and stage of different groups. In addition, very appropriate resources are readily available as pupils in both Years 1 and 2 go to classrooms dedicated to mathematics for these lessons. In a Year 2 higher set exploring division by

sharing into equal groups, individuals worked conscientiously consolidating their learning, using a range of strategies to record their thinking. The teacher constantly checked their progress and intervened appropriately, asking questions or steering them to consult a prominently displayed number square or line to help overcome difficulties. In the Year 2 lower set covering similar ground, much more use was made of concrete operations using connected plastic cubes and the very effective support of the teacher and assistants.

- 149 The closing session of lessons is used effectively to review progress, discuss pupils' difficulties and point the way forward. In the Year 1 lessons on weighing, both teachers recognised that most pupils needed more practical experience of making comparisons between the weight of different objects in order to have a reference point about which to base their estimations. In the Year 2 lessons on division, teachers stimulated pupils' thinking about what to do when having formed equal groups there were some left over and announced this would be the focus of the next lesson.
- 150 Teachers use standardised tests regularly to check individuals' progress in developing and using mental mathematical skills. The information is systematically analysed to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and set appropriate targets for classes. When the performance of individuals falls behind in a particular area, they are given personal targets to catch up. Pupils' work is marked regularly for accuracy with most guidance being given orally to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.
- 151 Homework is very well used to encourage pupils to work at their class and individual targets. Each pupil has a written card describing the current focus that is attached to the home/school book. Parents are invited to a termly coffee morning to find out what targets are being covered and how they can help with their child's learning at home.
- 152 Information and communication technology is being used more to support pupils' learning in mathematics as teachers' confidence grows. Currently, computer programs are generally used to reinforce basic number facts and operations and illustrate geometric shapes. Other new technologies, such as overhead projectors and programmable wheeled vehicles, are used effectively to demonstrate mathematical ideas more clearly. However, the school has recognised that there are insufficient programs to cover all aspects of mathematics.
- 153 Pupils have a number of opportunities to further their mathematical development in other subjects. In Year 1 and 2 literacy lessons, position words were emphasised when sequencing events in the story of 'Red Riding Hood' and 'The

First Frog'. In a Year 1 science lesson on pushing and pulling, the properties of cylinders were explored. Also in Year 1, pupils designing a room for a character in a story, talked about scale and relative sizes when selecting different items of furniture. In Year 2 geography, pupils could identify and explain the relative sizes of different countries on a map. In Year 1 history, pupils understood and interpreted time lines correctly when looking at family photos.

- 154 While the co-ordinator has only been in post for a year, he has considerable experience from previous schools. As standards have remained above average, he has focused on those individuals and groups who have not achieved as well as expected. These were identified as the younger high attaining pupils. From discussions with staff following observation of their teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work, the decision to extend the setting of classes by prior attainment to Year 1 was taken to tackle this shortcoming. He intends to evaluate the effectiveness of these actions by monitoring pupils' learning in these classes in the summer term.
- 155 Teaching arrangements in specialist classrooms make effective use of the good accommodation and very appropriate resources. Displays in the mathematics teaching rooms are attractive and helpful but there are few examples of pupils' mathematical work in Year 2 to celebrate their achievements. There are few books on mathematics in the library and little use is made of written resources, other than work sheets, to support pupils' learning through individual study.
- 156 Overall the school is maintaining above average standards in mathematics and there is a very strong commitment from all staff to improve and further develop teaching and pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

- 157 During the inspection, only two lessons of science could be seen. Judgements have been made using these observations, talking with pupils, examining their work, discussions with teachers and looking at their planning.
- 158 The standards attained by the children at the age of seven years are above the national average, which is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were average. This is as a result of close attention to developing children's observational and investigative skills, improving teachers' knowledge and understanding and implementing a more effective assessment process.
- 159 In 2001, the last year of reporting, teachers' assessment showed standards to be in the highest 25% in the country,

both at the Level 2 national benchmark and the higher Level 3. Creditably, just over a third of the pupils attained the higher level. Pupils did particularly well in experimental and investigative science processes.

160 In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of science. This is because teachers' plan thoughtfully, drawing on a well-thought out and detailed scheme of work. As a consequence, pupils find science very enjoyable, interesting and demanding. They participate enthusiastically in all aspects of lessons, including involvement in demonstrations, sharing resources, making predictions and drawing conclusions. They are keen to describe their experiences. So for instance, they could recall the effects of extreme cold on a range of materials, explaining enthusiastically that an elastic band did not freeze because it did not contain water. There was a certain amount of wonder in their description of an egg cracking because of the expansion caused by freezing. They had an obvious delight in being shown that air pressure could be harnessed to keep a piece of cardboard on an inverted jar of water so that it would not empty.

161 In the Year 1 lesson on forces, pupils were fully engaged right from the start as the teacher had well-prepared resources and interesting challenges ready. After checking their recall of the effects of pushing and pulling on objects from the previous lesson, pupils were quickly involved in predicting how they would move a sick elephant or broken down car given a limited range of equipment. These resources included a length of kitchen worktop, dowelling sticks, marbles, string and card. While their initial suggestions were unrealistic, once in groups with very effective questioning from staff, more sensible hypotheses were put forward. These young pupils were beginning to understand the importance of discussing and refining their ideas before coming up with a sensible idea to test practically.

162 In a Year 2 lesson, pupils observed a variety of seeds and their relationship to fruits, making careful labelled drawings and recording interesting facts. The lesson was well planned, the task was modelled clearly and a brisk pace was maintained during the practical session. The task was matched appropriately to challenge pupils of different abilities. Health and safety matters were emphasised. Pupils were encouraged to observe closely with attention to detail. The classroom assistant supported low attaining pupils quietly and efficiently yet with infectious enthusiasm thus prolonging pupils' attention. Higher attaining pupils were given suitably challenging work to extend their thinking.

- 163 Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported as they are able to be fully involved in practical experiments because of the readily availability of effective guidance from assistants. In the Year 1 lesson on forces, these pupils were encouraged to experiment with the equipment while the assistant asked questions to focus their attention on the rolling property of different objects. By the end of the session, they were able to suggest which ones were the best to use. As a result of this type of support and help, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in science.
- 164 The subject is very well led with staff receiving good quality support, advice and guidance from the co-ordinator, through the development of a scheme of work and a reliable assessment procedure. A programme of monitoring and evaluation resulted in agreeing new science and safety policy statements and a structure for assessing pupils' performance in each unit of work. Effective in-service training has been provided for teaching and support staff, particularly in investigative science processes and appropriate questioning skills. All work is marked regular, invariably with encouraging comments but none are checked against National Curriculum levels and there is little written guidance to help pupils improve. The co-ordinator is beginning to collate a school portfolio of pupils' work to exemplify standards and make teachers' assessments fully secure. A workshop for parents that demonstrated five miniature lessons with pupils was very well attended and received. There is a popular extra-curricular science club that further enriches pupils' experiences.
- 165 Overall, science resources are good. They reflect the breadth of the curriculum, are stored, labelled appropriately and are readily accessible. While new technologies are not yet being used extensively to support pupils' learning, the recently acquired electronic microscope was a wonder to the pupils and of considerable fascination to adults. The school is aware that the stock of books to support science in the library is insufficient and has plans to purchase more. The grounds have been developed, including the establishment of a pond, to support environmental studies.
- 166 Standards in science are above average and likely to remain so as teachers further refine their assessment skills to identify and tackle shortcomings in individuals' performance.

ART AND DESIGN

- 167 Only two lessons of art were observed during the inspection so judgements are based on talking with pupils, examining

their work, discussions with teachers and looking at their plans.

- 168 This evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils in the school is above that which is expected for their age. By the time the pupils leave the school at seven, they have experienced a broad range of challenging work including two and three dimensional art and design using a range of appropriate media. There has been significant improvement since the previous inspection, secured by a clear policy and expectations, staff training and more effective monitoring, evaluation and action planning.
- 169 Teachers have very successfully encouraged pupils to express themselves through art in many creative ways. Year 2 pupils looked at photographs of Antarctica in the half-light and then reproduced similar colour combinations mixed from primary colours only. These formed the basis of some very effective 'penguin pictures'. A study of Australian aboriginal art led to imaginative pastel work and some very impressive decorated clay bowls.
- 170 Year 2 pupils are able to explain in detail how to mix colours to obtain the desired balance. They were observed putting this into practice with considerable confidence and then extending the principle to other media. They also shared with each other various ways of controlling brush strokes and the effects these produced. They worked with concentration to produce an observational pencil drawing of a peacock's tail feather and utilised this skill in a science lesson on seeds and fruit.
- 171 Pupils are made aware of the work of well-known artists. Andy Warhol's methods and thinking underpinned one lesson. Looking at William Morris's work developed the links between observational drawing of natural objects and stylised patterning. Year 1 pupils were very enthusiastic about art and able to describe how they worked with a variety of media whilst explaining personal preferences.
- 172 Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by learning assistants, who make a significant contribution to the learning of all.
- 173 All art and design work is very attractively displayed in classrooms and around the school, with sympathetic mounting and clear labelling. Pupils take a pride in the work displayed and are keen to express positive opinions.
- 174 The subject is well led with a clear philosophy and high expectations from the headteacher who is acting as the co-ordinator as well. There has been appropriate development and training opportunities as a result of focused monitoring and evaluation, including a review of resources and staff

skills. The policy and guidelines have been revised recently. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly by the co-ordinator and pupils' work is evaluated systematically and assessed annually. Sketchbooks have been introduced and will be used for a termly common drawing task to help assessment. The collation of a school portfolio of pupils' work exemplifying standards has been started. Further staff training is planned to further refine assessment procedures.

- 175 Resources are good, both in quality and range. Greater use of new technologies is occurring although the range of software is limited. The annual 'Arts Week', held twice so far, has been effectively used to broaden teachers' knowledge and provided pupils with the opportunity to work with professional artists. This was particularly effective in large three-dimensional work. Art and craft is offered as an extra-curricular activity, is very popular and further enhances an already rich provision in and beyond the classroom.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 176 During the inspection only one lesson of design and technology could be seen. Judgements have been made on this observation, talking to pupils, examination of their displayed work and in discussion with teachers and looking at their plans. This evidence indicates standards are as expected for the age of pupils; an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average. Pupils are now aware of the design, make and evaluation procedure and generally follow this when responding to practical challenges.
- 177 National guidance has proved most helpful to teachers in planning appropriate tasks, usually linked to topics in other subjects. Practical activities are chosen that appeal to pupils, are related to their personal experiences and pitched at an appropriate level.
- 178 In the Year 1 lesson observed, the class topic was based around the story 'Little Red Riding Hood' and pupils were beginning the first stage of designing a room for one of the characters. The teacher very appropriately linked the task to pupils' knowledge and understanding about the shape, contents and uses of items in their own bedrooms. She encouraged them to think of what different things the wolf and Red Riding Hood would like. In this way, she effectively emphasised the importance of purpose in the design process. Pupils were then helped to explore the different materials and fixing agents they could use in their models. It was evident that pupils had a sound foundation in their knowledge and understanding in these areas. An average attaining boy knew the difference between fixed and moving parts and that a door needed a hinge that could be made from

sticky tape. In the individual work, pupils were able to achieve well as they were given effective support and guidance from the three adults present. This help was essential as the work sheet proved too complex for pupils to interpret on their own. They had difficulty describing how they were going to make the models as they did not easily find the words to say or write. However, their sketches were understandable, well proportioned and clearly showed how items were to be constructed. A high attaining boy had an effective design for bunk beds using wooden sticks and tape. Overall, the teaching in this lesson was good.

- 179 Year 2 pupils know that to design and make a product effectively requires careful planning, the assembly of appropriate materials and fixing agents and testing and refinement. With adult help, they described how they had designed and made wheeled vehicles, ranging from cars, ice cream vans and lorries. They knew how to reinforce card board boxes to make them more rigid and cover them with masking tape to hide the print and illustrations before painting. While they knew how to make holes for the axles and could draw a diagram of what to do, they were unable to find the appropriate words to explain that these openings had to be in line. They explained how they evaluated their vehicles, seeing which rolled the furthest but also looked attractive.
- 180 Pupils enjoy designing things and are well motivated, talking enthusiastically about the things they have made. They are acquiring an appropriate range of skills, knowledge and understanding in design and technology.
- 181 As yet, there are few opportunities for pupils to use new technologies in design and technology but the school is aware of the need to find and acquire appropriate programs, particularly for computer assisted design.
- 182 The co-ordinator has recently been seconded to the local authority and the headteacher has an overview of the subject. Currently, design and technology is not a development priority for the school. However, the headteacher regularly views teachers' plans and checks samples of pupils' work but has not initiated actions to improve teaching and provision. Resources and accommodation are good.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

- 183 During the inspection only one geography and one history lesson were observed. Judgments have been made on these observations; examining pupils' work, discussions with the co-ordinator and with pupils, looking at teachers' planning and from displays around the school. This evidence indicates

that pupils' attainment in Year 2 is generally around that expected for their age in both history and geography.

- 184 In geography, pupils in Year 1 and 2 are building their knowledge about their immediate locality and beginning to learn about countries and climates around the world. Classroom displays make good use of maps and globes and photographs. These help pupils locate places and understand the characteristics of different regions and cultures. Year 1 pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of their locality and express their view about different environments. They visit St Budueax's Church as part of learning about the local area and Wembury Beach to find out about a seaside environment. Year 2 pupils are beginning to learn about the way in which people influence their environment and basic facts about different countries and climates. They visit Morwellham Quay and see the way in which a mining industry affected the development of a settlement and transport. The 'around-the-world' topic involves learning about six countries, comparing the climate and learning simple facts about their major characteristics and cultures.
- 185 Pupils enjoy learning and try hard, producing neat, thoughtful work. They are able to write simple comparisons between the United Kingdom and a range of countries and can copy and identify the main features of a map. They are beginning to understand variations in climate based on a country's position in relation to the Equator.
- 186 Lessons are very well planned and include interesting activities such as the Year 2 lesson observed about India that ended with the pupils tasting popadoms. Special educational needs pupils are able to make good progress because of the well-matched work and the effective support they receive from classroom assistants. Teachers make interesting links to other areas of the curriculum, particularly art, where the 'around-the-world' topic has been the starting point for some high quality art and design work.
- 187 Leadership in geography is very good and the co-ordinator has organised a good range of resources to support the carefully designed scheme of work. This gives teachers clear guidance and support in lesson planning. Planning is monitored, pupils' work reviewed and lesson observed by the co-ordinator, who, as a result, has produced an appropriate action plan.
- 188 Recently the co-ordinator has been leading the development of an outdoor area. This will provide for all areas of learning including the opportunity to learn about different environments.

- 189 In history, pupils are developing a sense of chronology. Building on their work of personal and family history in the reception, pupils in Year 1 look at changes over the last 100 years. In the lesson observed, they studied photographs and artefacts and compared the way domestic life and household objects have changed. Also in Year 1, they learn the main facts about Guy Fawkes and the gunpowder plot and in Year 2, they study life in Victorian times.
- 190 The visit to Morwellham Quay enables them to gain some first hand experience of life in an early Victorian schoolroom and mine. As a result, pupils enjoy history, are keen to share their knowledge and write carefully and thoughtfully in their books about these experiences.
- 191 By the age of seven, pupils talk about some of the main facts about the Victorian period and understand it was over 100 years ago. They are able to explain in detail some of the hygiene and medical difficulties faced by Florence Nightingale. Their knowledge and understanding of history is developing well. This is because of the very well planned lessons and interesting teaching. Displays are used well to remind pupils and develop the language of history.
- 192 In the Year 1 history lesson observed, an understanding of chronology was particularly effectively taught because the teacher used a range of soft toys and asked pupils to sort them by age. Later in the lesson, pupils had the opportunity to place a range of artefacts in date order. Classes also share their knowledge of history more widely. Pupils particularly enjoyed telling their parents what they had learnt about the Victorian period.
- 193 History is very well led by the co-ordinator who has ensured there are good resources to support teaching and pupils' learning in each topic studied. Good use is also made of the local museums loan service. Teaching and pupils' learning are regularly monitored and the findings discussed with staff and included in the school's improvement plan.
- 194 The school is aware that the library is not sufficiently stocked with books to support geography and history but has plans to tackle this deficiency.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 195 Only two group sessions of information and communication technology were seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made on these observations, discussions with pupils, interviews with teachers and examination of curriculum plans and records.
- 196 The school has made good progress since the previous inspection in improving provision. The well-equipped,

recently installed information and communication technology suite presents a very exciting opportunity to increase pupils' learning. Also, the adoption of national guidance and agreed assessment procedures are helping teachers have more structure in their teaching and a more accurate and valid indication of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

- 197 By the age of seven, pupils achieve a standard that is in line with national expectations. They understand and can use the basic functions of a computer keyboard and are beginning to learn how to highlight, edit and move text. The classrooms contain a number of displays that show that pupils are able to use word processing skills to present writing in interesting ways. Pupils can load CD ROMs and are able to retrieve information using index, hyperlinks and search engines. Pupils also understand something of the application of technology to the everyday world through digital cameras, mobile phones, remote controls and audio-visual systems. Photographs taken using digital cameras are also used to record pupils' achievements and enhance displays of work.
- 198 Year 1 pupils develop good control of the mouse by using design programs to draw and shade objects and animals. They are also introduced to aspects of control technology by using a simple floor robot. Year 1 and 2 pupils are beginning to experience the Internet. Pupils understand the main principles of e-mail and the Internet, including the need for caution and adult supervision to keep them safe.
- 199 Pupils enjoy information and communication technology, have a very positive attitude and respond well to the planned activities. On occasions, some high attaining pupils can be restless because they are capable of progressing faster than the pace of teaching allows, as they were in a Year 2 session.
- 200 Good opportunities are created for pupils to use computer technology in other areas of the curriculum. For example in a Year 2 science lesson, a computer microscope was used very effectively to investigate the properties of seeds. Good use is also made of new technologies to develop knowledge and understanding in geography as, for example, when Year 2 pupils were asked to use a CD encyclopaedia to research particular words and phrases for their "around the world" topic.
- 201 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology is generally secure. This year they have completed a national training course and have received effective support from the co-ordinator. Classroom assistants have also received training using different software and are given guidance by teachers before taking groups in the information and communication technology

suite. Further training is planned to extend teachers' use of new technologies in supporting pupils' learning in other subjects, starting with English and mathematics.

- 202 Good provision is made for special educational needs pupils. They have work adapted to suit their needs and receive very effective support from assistants. Small groups are often given a 10-minute computer session at the end of literacy or numeracy lessons to reinforce basic skills.
- 203 Opportunities for pupils to learn and make progress in information and communication technology are good. Each class has two sessions per week in the new suite and every classroom has at least one stand-alone machine that is used for activities, which change weekly.
- 204 Leadership and management of the subject are good as the co-ordinator has well-thought out and realistic plans based on an audit of gaps in provision and teachers' skills. The school has made significant progress recently since the computer suite has been installed and has the potential to raise standards further.

MUSIC

- 205 Only two lessons of music could be seen during the inspection. Evidence from these lessons, assemblies and discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that levels of attainment in singing are above average but overall are as expected.
- 206 Pupils sing appropriately, have a keen sense of performance and enjoy composition. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection by monitoring and auditing the quality of the provision and pupils' learning and by providing training for staff. There is an appropriate emphasis on composition and good use is made of recorded music to encourage listening skills.
- 207 The co-ordinator has volunteered to take responsibility for music very recently, has limited experience of leading a subject and is responsible for physical education as well but has made a sound start. The delivery of the subject was audited by the previous co-ordinator and a training programme identified to improve teachers' knowledge and confidence. The school has a clear policy statement with a well-planned scheme of work that meets requirements and outlines the weekly lessons specifically. These include the learning intentions and likely outcomes as well as the activities and resources. The scheme has been broadened recently to encompass successfully multicultural aspects of music.

- 208 In a Year 1 music lesson, pupils suggested symbols to represent sounds and then performed them to illustrate the 'Red Riding Hood' story. They were able to suggest improvements using changes in dynamics and tempo. Their performance was recorded and played back to enhance their listening skills. The lesson was well planned and organised by the teacher although pupils were too inactive during the opening session. The teacher made good use of incidental opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of the elements of music and then reinforced the key words with word cards. Thus she showed 'pitch' with 'high' and 'low'.
- 209 Pupils enjoy music and talked about their experiences and activities enthusiastically, bursting spontaneously into a favourite song, which they sang rhythmically and mostly in tune. They could not only clap the rhythm of the song but also copy simple rhythmic patterns accurately and hold a steady beat.
- 210 In a Year 2 lesson, pupils showed they had a good foundation in music knowledge and understanding. At the start, high attaining pupils correctly recalled and defined 'tempo', 'rhythm', 'timbre' and 'pitch' following very effective demonstration of these words by the teacher's voice and the playing of instruments. The class attentively listened to an evocative extract by Saint-Saens and correctly identified musical elements portraying an elephant. The composition, performance and appreciation activity was very well planned and organised by the teacher. In confidence, he gave each group a card with the picture of a different animal and had selected instruments he knew would produce representative sounds. Pupils enthusiastically explored possibilities but handled the instruments carefully and responded promptly to the teacher's requests. Their performances were recorded and played back with the teacher encouraging pupils to say what animal each musical piece represented. As one high attaining boy remarked, "*The maracas were the cheetah walking through the grass, the tambourine showed him running and the loud drum was when he pounced.*"
- 211 Pupils with special educational needs enjoy music and due to the good support from learning assistants are fully involved in activities.
- 212 In assemblies, pupils enjoy singing hymns and songs but are less confident with higher notes, especially when there is no adult supporting them vocally. They listen to music quietly and are encouraged to reflect on its qualities and to state their feelings and opinions.
- 213 Music plays a key part in seasonal celebrations, such as harvest and Christmas, when pupils are provided with opportunities to perform in front of family and friends. The popular performing arts club, to which all have equal

access, provides pupils with opportunities to develop their skills further and to perform to audiences of relative strangers.

- 214 Resources have been systematically upgraded and are used effectively. There is an appropriate range of good quality instruments to support pupils' performance and composition and a range of suitable recorded music. These are clearly labelled and readily accessible.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 215 Only one lesson of physical education was seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made on this observation, talking to pupils and discussions with teachers and looking at their plans.

- 216 Standards for Year 2 pupils are better than national expectations and have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils leave school with a sense of physical awareness and control. They acquire a range of appropriate ball skills and some basic knowledge of common games. The continuing development of dance has made positive connections with music. Pupils are beginning to develop and understanding of the contribution safe exercise makes to health.

- 217 In the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils warmed up well, using movements with increasing physical demand. They understood and could explain the importance of this process. Learning objective were made clear and pupils worked hard, being able to explain how they had achieved them and make sensible suggestions for improvements. The teacher modelled movements very well and encouraged pupils to note and praise the example of two individuals. In this way, she established expectations and increased the level of challenge. Pupils become more imaginative in their interpretations and progress was evident. They remained on task and well behaved throughout the carefully planned lesson. They joined movements together to make sequences and persevered by trying to improve.

- 218 Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in activities, benefiting from good support from classroom assistants and teachers and enjoy physical activity.

- 219 The school has a balanced programme of activities covering gymnastics, dance and games, that meet the requirements of the national curriculum. In the summer term, the oldest pupils are able to experience dry-slope skiing and to participate in orienteering events. This enrichment of curriculum provision is a strength of the school.

- 220 The subject co-coordinator is a physical education specialist and has only assumed the responsibility this year. She has limited experience of leading a subject and is also responsible for music but has made an effective start. The outcome of her monitoring teaching and pupils' learning in the autumn term was reported to all staff. As a result, there is an effective action plan for improvement based on these observations and evaluations. This includes staff training, some of which has been provided by the co-ordinator, focussing on the structure and shape of lessons. Lunchtime assistants have also received training from the co-ordinator on how to make better use of equipment and encourage pupils to improve their games skills. Safety aspects are emphasised in the policy and reflected in the scheme of work. Health and physical well-being are important facets of the curriculum and emphasised in the policy statement. The school is progressing steadily towards applying for the national Sportsmark and the Healthy Schools Awards.
- 221 All pupils are able to develop their skills further by attending the weekly gymnastics and football clubs. A sports day, well supported by families and friends, is held in the summer term.
- 222 The school hall is very suitable and sufficiently large with a good floor surface for indoor activities. Apparatus and equipment are very appropriate and of good quality. The storage of these has been improved and labelled to make them more accessible. There is a special set of equipment dedicated to use at lunch-time.
- 223 The outdoor play area is a good size with a range of suitable and clear markings. There is a small set of climbing apparatus and an adequate area of grass close to the school building. The adjacent and readily accessible football field of the neighbouring junior school is used for lessons and playtimes during better weather.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 224 During the inspection, only one lessons of religious education could be seen. Judgements have been made based upon this observation, discussions with pupils and looking at their work and interviews with teachers and examination of curriculum plans. Based on this evidence, standards in religious education are as expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is the same as in the previous inspection.
- 225 Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of Bible stories from the Old and New Testament they have heard. They know that Noah built an ark following God's instructions so that he, his family and the animals would escape the floods. They understand that keeping promises is important, just as God

did for Noah. They recall the story of Moses and appreciate how sad it was for his mother to let her baby go to a stranger. They can retell the story of the 'Good Samaritan' and realise that doing kind things for people in trouble is a good act. They know the names and reasons for some of the principle Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. They understand the common importance of light in the different faith festivals of Advent, Divali and Hanukkah.

- 226 In the Year 1 lesson on why Jewish people celebrate the festival of Purim, pupils followed the story with interest as the teacher used very appropriate resources and involved the class in role-play. Individuals chosen for the principal characters of Vashti, Mordechai, Ester, Haman and the King successfully followed the teacher's helpful suggestions, giving expressive performances. The emotions of jealousy and revenge were explored and pupils effectively encouraged to predict the likely development at different stages of the story. The current day Jewish celebration of Purim was described satisfactorily using a large well-illustrated book. However, the purpose of the festival was not fully explained and pupils were not sure why Jews still remembered the story. However, a high attaining girl made a good link to traditional pantomime when she heard that Jews enjoyed watching performances of Purim and barracking the evil Haman. She said, *"it's just like we did at the panto when we booted the baddy."*
- 227 Although the new locally agreed syllabus is used as a basis for planning, aspects of existing schemes of work that proved successful are incorporated in the programme of study. This is particularly so for coverage of festivals and customs from world religions as these are not included in the recommended curriculum for Years 1 and 2. Each year group covers a different unit of work every half term. Pupils' progress is checked after each module and reported to parents annually.
- 228 The co-ordinator is on secondment and the headteacher has an overview of the subject. Religious education is not a development priority although training is planned to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of world religions and in their use of artefacts to support pupils' learning.
- 229 While overall, resource are adequate to support the agreed syllabus, as boxes to support different topics are held centrally, the library has insufficient books on Christianity and only a few on other religions.