

INSPECTION REPORT

PRINCE ROCK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113344

Headteacher: Mr Peter Roberts

Reporting inspector: John Ayerst
3832

Dates of inspection: 26th – 30th March 2001

Inspection number: 197512

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Laira Bridge Road
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Carol Bull

Date of previous inspection: 28th April 1999

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		Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		English as an additional language	How well pupils are taught
			Leadership and management of the school
Gillian Anderson 19639	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			The school's care for its pupils
			The school's partnerships with parents
Peggy Waterston 30677	Team inspector	Children aged under five	
		Science	
		Art	
		Information and communication technology	
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	
		Equal opportunities	
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		Geography	
		History	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Prince Rock Primary School is smaller than average, with 162 boys and girls from four to eleven years of age. The school is going through a period of significant change, and extensive alterations are being made to the buildings to improve the accommodation. The building work has caused significant disruption in the recent past. Most of the pupils come from the locality surrounding the school, which is an area of high social and economic disadvantage. The area has attracted European funding for urban regeneration. More than average numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities is below average. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language (11 per cent) is high. The number of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs is well above average, as is the number of those with statements for special educational needs. The number of pupils coming to the school and leaving during their schooling is high and a significant proportion of pupils entering the school during both key stages have special educational needs. Taken together, pupils' attainment on entry is usually below average, but the current Reception class is exceptional in that the baseline assessments indicate attainment levels that are broadly average.

After an inspection in 1997 the school was judged to be in need of special measures. It was taken out of special measures following a further inspection in 1999.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has made considerable improvement in the last few years and this has been nationally recognised. It now maintains high standards and makes good provision for its pupils. The quality of education is best in the core subjects of English and mathematics.

The achievement of most pupils as they move through the school is good. The quality of teaching is mostly good and pupils make good progress in most lessons. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school.
- Teaching is good, particularly at Key Stage 2.
- Leadership provides a very clear direction that has led to considerable improvement in the quality of education.
- Leadership in English has led to a significant improvement in standards.
- The pastoral care of pupils is very good.
- Relationships across the school are very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school and these pupils make very good progress.
- The provision for the professional development of all staff is good.

What could be improved

- The very successful strategies to improve standards in English and mathematics have not yet been used across the curriculum, so that pupils achieve less well in a number of subjects.
- Schemes of work for subjects other than English and mathematics do not always set out clearly a progression of skills and concepts to help teachers' planning.
- Consequently, teachers' planning in these subjects does not build sufficiently on pupils' prior attainments, and the quality of assessment and its recording is inconsistent.
- The Early Learning Goals for children under five are not sufficiently embedded in planning and assessment for pupils in the Foundation Stage.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's was last inspected only a short time ago in 1999, when a short inspection recommended that the school be taken out of special measures. Shortly following that event the school was subject to a major refurbishment that involved a virtual rebuild of its accommodation. Teachers and pupils have had to move rooms from floor to floor, pack into and use resources from sheds, and work amidst the noise and dust of a building site.

Consequently, the school has done well to maintain satisfactory improvement in standards since the last inspection. Following delay caused by the building work, the school has recently installed a computer suite of high quality; it has not yet been in place long enough to improve pupils' achievement in the subject, but it is beginning to be used well. Arrangements for assessment and recording are good in English and mathematics, but the good practice has not yet been developed across the curriculum. The school plans to improve assessment in the next stage of development.

Since its previous inspection in 1997, the school has made very good progress and standards in English, mathematics and science have improved considerably. The quality of teaching has also risen consistently since that time.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	E	B	A*
Mathematics	E	C	E	B
Science	E	B	C	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that, at the end of Key Stage 2 in comparison with all schools, standards in English are above average, those in science are average and standards in mathematics are below average. The results in mathematics last year were lower than expected because several average attaining pupils were absent for the tests. In comparison with similar schools, however, the results in English and science are well above average; indeed in comparison with similar schools the school's performance in English is amongst the top five per cent nationally. In the same comparison the results for mathematics are above average.

In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 for year 2000, pupils' results in comparison with all schools were average in mathematics, below average in reading and well below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools they were well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. Over the last four years the results at both key stages show a significant upward trend that is well above the national trend and recently resulted in national recognition for the school.

The work seen during the inspection indicates that attainment is below the national expectations for the end of Key Stage 1 in the core subjects of English and mathematics and in line with expectations for most aspects of science. In Year 6 standards are in line with expectations in English and science, but below the standards expected nationally in mathematics. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve standards in the core subjects, but has had little time to use similar strategies across the curriculum.

In other subjects, evidence available indicates that pupils' achievements are broadly in line with prior expectations and standards are generally below the national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, with the exception of physical education and religious education where standards are in line with expectations.

Standards of attainment on entry to the Reception class are usually below average. Even so, the majority of pupils achieve most of the Early Learning Goals by the time they begin Year 1. The school also takes a high number of pupils during the two key stages, many of whom have special educational needs. The current Year 2 class, for example, has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural difficulties. Consequently, it is difficult to judge pupils' achievement in relation to their prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. It is clear, however, that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving very well overall by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported and most achieve quickly good skills in speaking and listening that enable good access to the curriculum. The majority of these pupils demonstrate competent English skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are happy in school, interested in their work and willing to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is generally good, but there are occasional interruptions to lessons from younger pupils with behavioural difficulties.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults in the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

The school works very hard and successfully to promote positive attitudes to school and to work. It is evident that the behavioural problems that do exist are among a few specific and mostly younger pupils, indicating that the strategies for socialising pupils are effective as they move through the school. Older pupils show an enthusiasm for learning that makes an important contribution to the good progress that they make in most lessons, but this has not yet carried over into homework for all pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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 quality of teaching is good. It is particularly good in English and mathematics. In 60 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection the teaching was good or very good. It was satisfactory in 40 per cent and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. This is an improvement on the last inspection when teaching was broadly satisfactory or better, and a significant improvement on the 1997 inspection.

The improvement is the outcome of an energetic drive by the management and the teachers to improve the quality of their work, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and to use the

national strategies as a means to improving performance. Pupils' learning is also good; they make good progress in lessons and achievement is very high in relation to their prior achievement. At present, however, the strategies used to improve teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have not yet been adopted across the whole curriculum, so that the quality of teaching is generally, but not always, higher in those subjects at both key stages.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has recently made considerable improvement, and provision is now satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2, but the Early Learning Goals are not being sufficiently well addressed in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported to develop language skills that give full access to the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Overall, good provision, particularly for spiritual, moral and social development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school provides very good pastoral care and the assessment and monitoring of academic achievement is satisfactory overall.

Overall, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that includes the full range of learning in subjects. Strategies to promote literacy and numeracy are well established, but time for some foundation subjects, particularly music, is low.

The wider community makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning and, while parents generally have positive views of the school, the contribution that they make to their children's learning is satisfactory overall, but could be developed further. The school is planning with enthusiasm to play a major part in the urban regeneration project that is just starting.

Assessment is used well in English and mathematics. In science, however, and in most non-core subjects, assessment has not yet developed sufficiently to ensure work is always appropriately focused on pupils' needs within classes and across year groups.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other	Good leadership and management. The senior staff set a very clear educational direction for the school, which has led to significant improvement in standards since 1997. Leadership of

key staff	subjects is more variable and, to a large extent, depends on the opportunities available within the school's strategic planning for development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors fulfil their responsibilities and are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school uses information from a range of assessments, which leads to effective development and improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the available resources to support its educational priorities.

The headteacher, with strong support from the deputy headteacher, provides a very strong and clear educational direction for the school. The leadership has brought the school through the difficult times of special measures and rebuilding. Staff morale has been maintained while the quality of education has been significantly improved and standards have risen.

Financial management is good and resources are used well to support development. The school has negotiated appropriate targets with the local education authority and is working well towards them. Indeed the targets for 2001 have already been achieved. Development planning is mostly good and, while the development plan forms a useful tool for taking the school forward, it could give greater clarity about the school's strategic direction. The school consistently applies best value principles to its work, but these are not yet embedded in school policies. The school is well staffed and resources are good. The rebuilding will be completed shortly and, apart from outdoor provision, accommodation will be very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching and expectations of pupils. • The provision made to promote pupils' personal development. • Leadership of the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework is not consistently set or done by pupils. • Parents would like more information on the progress that their children are making. • They would like to see a greater range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agree with the positive comments made by parents. They also agree that homework is not always set or completed and does not consistently reinforce and extend learning. Inspection evidence indicates that the information provided for parents about their children's progress and the range of extra-curricular activities are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 for year 2000, pupils' results in comparison with all schools were average in mathematics, below average in reading and well below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools they were well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. At Key Stage 2, comparison with all schools shows that standards in English are above average, those in science are average and standards in mathematics are below average. In comparison with similar schools, however, the results in English and science are well above average; indeed for English in comparison with similar schools the school's performance is amongst the top five per cent nationally. In the same comparison the results for mathematics are above average. Over the last four years the results at both key stages show a significant upward trend that is well above the national trend and recently resulted in national recognition for the school. Standards in mathematics are improving, but there was a dip at Key Stage 2 last year because several average attaining pupils were absent for the tests. Overall, there is no significant pattern to distinguish the performance of boys and girls other than the national trends.
2. The work seen in pupils' books and in lessons during the inspection indicates that attainment is below the national expectations for the end of Key Stage 1 in the core subjects of English and mathematics and in line with expectations for most aspects of science. In Year 6 standards are in line with expectations in English and science, but below the standards expected nationally in mathematics. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve standards in the core subjects, but has had little time to use similar strategies across the curriculum. In other subjects, where evidence is available, it indicates that pupils' achievements are broadly in line with prior expectations and standards are generally below the national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, with the exception of physical education and religious education where standards are in line with expectations.
3. Standards of attainment on entry to the Reception class in the current year are broadly average, which is higher than in previous years, where it was below average. Even so, most pupils have achieved most of the Early Learning Goals by the time they begin Year 1. The school also takes a high number of pupils during the two key stages and often these pupils have special educational needs. The current Year 2 class, for example, has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural difficulties. Consequently, it is difficult to judge pupils' achievement in relation to their prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. It is clear, however, that pupils are achieving very well overall by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with English as an additional language enter the school at all ages with a range of attainment. They generally make good progress because of the good level of support and care provided.
4. In English, the numbers reaching the national expectation in speaking and listening are below average at the end of Key Stage 1, but overall they achieve that which can be expected. Achievement improves during Key Stage 2 and most pupils exceed the national

expectation by the end of Year 6. In most lessons pupils make sound progress in developing their language skills, and opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are taken across the curriculum. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported and most achieve good skills in speaking and listening that enables good access to the English curriculum.

5. Standards of reading are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils are achieving appropriately. Reading standards are lower at the end of Key Stage 1 and most pupils are still developing strategies to extend their reading of new words. In Key Stage 2 pupils read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts with acceptable fluency and can talk about what they have read. In general, however, reading for pleasure, and with enthusiasm, is not a recognisable feature for most boys and girls.
6. The quality of writing is below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Many pupils start school with underdeveloped writing skills and achieve satisfactorily, but many are still working towards the expected standard by the end of the key stage. Many find accurate spelling difficult. At Key Stage 2, progress improves and there are some good examples of the development of skills and techniques that support effective writing. By this stage spelling and grammar have improved and are at least in line with expectations.
7. The school makes good use of the National Literacy Strategy to raise standards across the curriculum and seeks out opportunities to extend literacy skills whenever it is appropriate. The National Literacy Strategy has been used well to improve pupils' attainment in English and has helped to set out a steady progression in the subject that has promoted good levels of achievement in relation to pupils' prior attainment.
8. Teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively and have used well to improve standards in mathematics. Most pupils attain standards that are below the national expectations for the ends of both key stages, but often this represents good achievement in relation to their prior attainment. By the age of seven most pupils count sets of objects reliably; a few understand place value to 100 and solve problems using numbers to 1000. Most pupils require support to classify information and record the information in simple lists and block graphs. By the age of eleven, pupils use place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 and some can calculate in their heads quickly. Their understanding of addition and subtraction, including fractions and decimals, is sound, but pupils are less secure in understanding the concepts of multiplication and division. A high proportion of pupils require support. All pupils are developing a good understanding of properties and movement of shapes. Throughout the school, pupils apply their mathematical knowledge to problems confidently.
9. In science pupils aged seven and eleven attain standards that are in line with those achieved nationally in most aspects of the subject, but there is insufficient evidence to enable a judgement to be made about standards in all aspects of the science curriculum. During the inspection all year groups were studying aspects of the growth, nutrition and reproduction of green plants.

In Years 1 and 2 pupils know what plants need to grow. They understand the conditions necessary to make a fair test, draw conclusions and make suggestions about why certain things happen. In Years 5 and 6 pupils know about the life cycles of plants. They use the

correct names for the reproductive parts of plants and dissect flowers to identify the differences between them.

10. Pupils with special educational needs and those with a statement of special educational needs make good, and sometimes very good, progress towards their individual targets and achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment. For example, a Year 5 pupil on Stage 5 of the school's special educational needs register, advanced by one and a half National Curriculum levels between 1999 and 2001 in English, 1.2 levels in mathematics and over two levels in science. In some foundation subjects the progress of pupils with special educational needs is slower because the work is not always sufficiently matched to their needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The good standards in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development identified in the last inspection have been maintained. They have good attitudes to their work and apply themselves with concentration to the tasks in hand. Their enthusiasm for learning is good; for example, in an English lesson in Year 6, pupils were enthused by the intellectual rigour of the lesson. Pupils are interested and involved in their activities, as in a personal, social and health education lesson in Year 5 where pupils were very good at putting their hands up and waiting their turn to speak.

12. Behaviour is good at both key stages and there is a minimal incidence of exclusions. Behaviour is particularly good in Key Stage 2 where, for example, in a geography lesson for Year 5 on Gambia, and in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, behaviour of a high order made a very good contribution to learning. A small number of pupils with behavioural problems, can occasionally disrupt some lessons among younger pupils. The school recognizes that it restricts learning, so that in Year 2 a series of lessons is being taken by the local authority's Behaviour Support Team in personal, social and health education, to develop the verbal expression of pupils and their interaction with each other. Bullying is not an issue, as the parents say that when it does occur it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

13. The personal development of pupils is good and their relationships are very good. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others because the school is working very effectively to develop empathy between pupils by addressing issues such as growing older, disability and, in geography, life in other cultures. Pupils are good at taking initiatives and personal responsibility when given the opportunity. They respond well to involvement in the school council and met candidates when the school was recently interviewing for a new deputy headteacher. In the playground, older pupils voluntarily support younger ones. Pupils for whom English is an additional language often work together as a small group in the class. They support each other well and provide good examples of co-operative learning. Staff are good role models and show respect for the pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils and each other are a strength of the school. Pupils are very courteous, even tiny pupils holding open heavy doors for others, including visitors. In an English lesson in Year 6 learning was a partnership and pupils were co-operative, making a very good contribution to learning.

14. Attendance and unauthorised absence are both broadly in line with the national average and therefore satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good. In 60 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching was good, very good or excellent. It was satisfactory in 40 per cent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. This is better than the last inspection when teaching was broadly satisfactory or better, and a significant improvement on the 1997 inspection. The advance is the outcome of an energetic drive by the management and teachers of the school to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and to use the national strategies as a means to improving performance. That this has worked well is evidenced by the significant raising of standards in these areas. Pupils' learning is also good; they make good progress in lessons and achievement is high or very high in relation to their prior attainment. At present, however, the strategies used to improve teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have not yet been adopted across the whole curriculum, so that the quality of teaching is generally, but not always, higher in those subjects at both key stages.

16. In good and very good lessons, most teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and of pupils' learning in these subjects; these are particularly evident in English, mathematics and science. Teachers use assessment effectively and plan lessons with clear learning aims that meet well the different needs of pupils in the class. Consequently, these good and very good lessons are rigorous and challenging, and teachers have high expectations of pupils. A good variety of strategies are used, which match the content of the lessons, and the presentation of material is imaginative and engaging. Previous learning is used very well as a starting point for new experience. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson for the Year 6 class on symmetrical shapes and reflection, pupils began the lesson by recapping earlier work with a kinaesthetic exercise where they made shapes with their bodies to remind and reinforce learning. Teachers constantly ask thought-provoking questions, which make pupils think through problems and challenges and prepare well for the next stage of learning. Pupils become very enthusiastic about their learning in these good and very good lessons; for example, Year 5 pupils were preparing to write poetry in the style of Wordsworth by collecting words and phrases that had meaning beyond the literal and helped to form imaginary pictures. A Year 6 class was having great fun finding, or making, nonsense words in preparation for poetry. In all lessons, relationships are very good and teachers respect their pupils.

17. In some subjects teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is inconsistent. In music, for example, a number have limited experience of the subject. In these lessons, that are never less than satisfactory, assessment is used less effectively, partly because teachers are not confident about what, or how, to assess. Where they are less confident about the subject, teachers do not always set tasks at an appropriate level and planning is not so well focused. Consequently, learning is less rigorous and purposeful. This is more of a problem with classes that have a high proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties because, as the pace slows, pupils become restless and have to be dealt with, which slows the pace further.

18. Teachers use the framework of the literacy and numeracy hours well. The lessons have good structure, pace and balance. Pupils' learning in both literacy and numeracy are supported well across the curriculum in most other subjects. In history and geography teachers have made a priority of developing skills through an oral rather than a written experience. In science they write out experiments and instructions and use their numeracy skills to measure and weigh.

19. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, sometimes, for example in mathematics, very good. Teaching assistants are usually effectively deployed and provide valuable, sensitive support so that pupils make good progress. Teachers are aware of and meet targets set out on pupils' individual education plans. The teaching assistants collect teachers' planning at the beginning of the week and sort out any additional resources that are required. The progress in lessons of pupils with special educational needs is discussed regularly between teaching assistants and the class teachers. Where it is more appropriate for pupils to be withdrawn for individual support, the teaching is good. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good and is targeted well towards their individual needs. The teacher has a good range of strategies to help pupils develop understanding and the use of English.
20. The use the homework to extend pupils' learning and improve their progress is mixed and varies from teacher to teacher. Homework is not always as appropriate as it could be, pupils do not consistently note it and a substantial number do not do their homework. Where it is done, it is marked satisfactorily, but it does not consistently refer to pupils' individual targets. The school is aware of the problem and is in the process of setting up a homework club to help pupils.

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

21. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that includes the full range of learning in subjects at both key stages. However, the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is still under development and, in planning, the 'stepping stones' towards meeting the Early Learning Goals are not identified in all areas. Provision is, however, satisfactory for children under five, good for pupils for whom English is an additional language and very good for pupils with special educational needs. The quality and range of learning opportunities are sound for children under five and for Key Stage 1 pupils, and good at Key Stage 2, particularly in English and mathematics.
22. Curricular provision has improved since the inspection in 1999 and now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are clear policies in all areas of the school's work. These are implemented consistently and are securing and maintaining improvements in the quality of planning, teaching and pupils' achievement and attainment. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced effectively and schemes of work have been written for all subjects; time allocations are appropriate, except in music where time is insufficient. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health, spiritual and moral development is now good.
23. The school has made significant strides in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The use of information and communication technology is not fully developed in all subjects at present, as the excellent computer suite has only been operational for a few weeks.
24. Recently devised schemes of work in all subjects cover a two-year cycle and link national and school requirements successfully. In English and mathematics they provide a useful framework for teachers' planning and identify coverage of the key knowledge to be taught across the school. Consequently, planning in literacy and mathematics is particularly effective. In these subjects and in information and communication technology and physical education, the schemes identify adequately the progressive development of skills and concepts across the school, but this is not the case in other subjects where the school has not yet had time to develop its curriculum planning. In these areas the same work is undertaken at a similar level in two year groups, for example in Years 3 and 4 in

the work covered in the history topic on the 'Romans' when studying 'Invaders'. In other subjects, such as art and music, teachers are not always clear about the progression of skills and understanding and find it difficult to plan for and assess progress.

25. The school provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils effectively. This is evident in the high quality provision for refugee pupils, pupils with special needs or those for whom English is an additional language. Specialist teachers and teaching assistants provide very good support that ensures pupils are fully challenged in their work.
26. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has a clear school policy that explains inclusion of all pupils and the policy is well embedded in practice. Consequently, they are fully included in all lessons and in the life of the school. For example, pupils with special educational needs have full access to all trips and visitors. Most of the curriculum provision is provided by very good support in the classroom. In English and mathematics, teachers meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs very well by providing work that is well matched to their needs. The match of work to pupils' levels of attainment is not so good in foundation subjects. Often pupils tackle the same tasks, but do not finish them. The special educational needs co-ordinator is aware of the problem and has included it in her improvement plan as an issue to address. On those occasions when more individual support is required, very good provision is made in the well-equipped specialist room.
27. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including academic activities, such as a 'Science Clinic' and recorders, as well as sports such as football and badminton. For general interest pupils can go to the recently formulated 'Harry Potter' club. Field trips, visits to galleries and visitors also enhance the curriculum for all pupils who participate; trips and visits are subsidised to enable all pupils to participate. An impressive range of visitors, including artists, authors, and students from the local Art College, provides valuable opportunities to extend pupils' learning.
28. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and underpins the school's aims and the personal development of pupils. It helps to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives, and to become informed, active, responsible citizens. It is central to the school's teaching and, as a cross-curricular dimension, permeates all aspects of school life and is a strength. It is an integral part of the whole curriculum and is taught as a separate subject, and through links with cross-curricular themes. Sex education is taught successfully in accordance with the governors' policy and there is appropriate provision for raising health and drugs awareness. Overall, personal, social and health education is the successful foundation for the school's philosophy and ethos – the bedrock of Prince Rock.
29. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. The school is alert to its role in the regeneration project and the community nature of the school. The refurbishment has provided accommodation that will make a good contribution to local activities and the school is making a bid for 'Out of Hours' funding that will establish a self-sustaining project, which will make the school central to the community. The nationally funded computer suite, the very attractive large school hall and other provision will make a good contribution to these facilities. A local company sponsors its employees to come into school regularly to work with pupils and they provide very good support with paired reading. There are good links with the Church and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are about to visit a local mosque. The school is laying the foundations to achieve its objective to be a true community school.

30. The constructiveness of relationships with partner institutions is good. There is very good use of the academic council to build the information and communication technology network and develop a vision of it as a tool for learning. The academic council works closely to develop shared policies. There are good links with the local college to support learning, for example with a collapsed curriculum day in Year 5 and with a day working on science in the college laboratory. This and other arrangements ensure good liaison with receiving and feeder schools.
31. Overall, the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. This is achieved through the daily act of collective worship, religious education lessons, the personal and social education programme, the example of teachers and other adults, through some other subjects and through a range of educational visits and visitors.
32. The spiritual development of pupils is catered for successfully through the implementation of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, planned programmes for collective worship and personal development, and through the sensitive, caring attitudes of all adults. The daily act of collective worship provides opportunities for pupils to celebrate and reflect on the achievement of others when awards are given for special achievements during the week. There are regular opportunities for prayer and reflection during assemblies and consideration of values and beliefs during religious education and personal, social and health education lessons. The provision of music at the beginning and end of assembly creates an atmosphere of calm and reflection for the occasion. The whole-school singing assembly, led by the deputy headteacher, sensitively celebrated how each child was 'special'.
33. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school provides a friendly, caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel secure and valued. The school's expectations of pupils' behaviour are explicit so pupils understand routines and know what is acceptable behaviour. There is a clear behaviour policy, which parents support. Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and all adults set a good moral example that encourages self-discipline and good relationships. Pupils are honest and fair in their dealings with each other during lessons and playtimes. They were open and friendly towards the inspection team, for example. Pupils think about people less fortunate than themselves and raise funds for local charities. Older pupils showed concern for people living in the Gambia during their geography lessons and moral issues, such as adoption, are considered during assembly
34. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils work co-operatively in lessons in a range of groupings. Pupils with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully integrated within these groups. They are keen to help each other, and discuss topics and make decisions amicably, such as those regarding building a hotel in the Gambia. The school has a strong social commitment and continually strives to help pupils live safely within their community. For example, an alternative break time was established on Mondays to allow pupils to discuss issues that had arisen over the weekend. Pupils are encouraged to become responsible members of the school community and to play a full part in the life of the school. They accept responsibilities conscientiously, such as being a member of the school council, or looking after pupils who are ill.
35. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school promotes the cultural traditions in its area through visits and areas of curricular study. Pupils learn about the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society through religious education

lessons and to some extent through celebrating the cultural traditions within the school community. This is undertaken sensitively, as some pupils from other cultures do not wish to be 'different' and some parents want to put the past behind them. However, the school capitalises on visits from local artists and is developing links with residents in the area. For example, a valuable contribution to visiting the seaside in the past was provided by a grandmother. Literature from across the world and from other times contributes to pupils' cultural development, but opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness through art and music are less well developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. This is a very caring school with a great sense of social responsibility. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for child protection and procedures are thorough and well established, all staff are appropriately briefed and the school is very alert to its responsibilities. The health and safety procedures are effective and follow the school's policy. Exceptional procedures were carefully established with the contractor to ensure the safety of all during the modifications to the school's building.
37. The school provides very good pastoral care and the assessment and monitoring of academic achievement is satisfactory. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Teachers know pupils well and track their personal development through the merit point system, and the termly self-assessment by pupils, which is in line with the personal, social and health education policy. The school rightly takes pride in this provision, which underpins the personal development of pupils through all areas of the curriculum. The school works effectively with a wide variety of agencies to support and nurture pupils who have specific needs.
38. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The celebration of good attendance has a high profile with certificates for 'never late, never away' each term, which cumulatively attract prizes. Registers are well kept, carefully monitored and lateness is strictly recorded. The educational welfare officer is in weekly and follows up and supports the very small number of families whose children are poor attenders.
39. The procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good. The clear policy is followed, and the low class sizes support its management throughout the school with effective results. The school has identified a problem with a small number of pupils in Key Stage 1 and has fully involved the local authority's Behaviour Support Team in a course of lessons to develop their communication skills and inter-dependence. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good and ensure that bullying is not an issue.
40. The school has improved its procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress since the last inspection. In addition to statutory tests administered at the ages of seven and eleven, other nationally recognised tests are carried out annually and individual progress is tracked. This monitoring helps the school to make predictions about attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. Detailed analysis of results to enable the school to identify the progress of particular groups of pupils is less well developed. Pupil profiles have been introduced which contain samples of work, as well as test results, so that individual progress may be readily seen, but work samples are not always annotated with National Curriculum levels of attainment. The school's policy statement is insufficiently

detailed to ensure consistency of practice throughout the school and existing procedures require monitoring and evaluating.

41. Pupils' papers in the statutory tests for eleven year olds are analysed so that any general weaknesses can be identified and the curriculum modified in subsequent years. Teachers' evaluations after lessons tend to relate to the lessons themselves rather than to the progress of pupils, although some teachers include pointers for future lessons and adapt their planning to meet pupils' needs. Assessment is used well in English and mathematics to identify pupils with special educational needs and to inform planning for lessons, so that pupils are taught appropriately for their abilities. Similarly, pupils for whom English is an additional language are carefully and frequently assessed so that teaching focuses well on their needs. In science, however, and in most non-core subjects, assessment is insufficient to ensure work is appropriately differentiated within classes and across year groups. Pupils of all abilities often work at the same level and, where a two-year rolling programme is in place, pupils in two age groups have very similar lessons. As a result there is insufficient progress in the development of understanding and skills in science, art, design and technology and music. Provision for the progressive development of skills is satisfactory in information and communication technology, in physical education and in religious education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The overall views of those few parents who completed the questionnaire and attended the parents' meeting are that it is a good school. Parents give a positive view about children being happy in school, about the quality of teaching and expectations of pupils, their personal development and the way the school is led. Their concerns are focused on homework, information on progress and the range of activities outside lessons, but apart from the inconsistent setting of homework, the inspection found these areas to be satisfactory.
43. Whilst overall the school has effective links with parents, the headteacher accepts that these could be improved. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is satisfactory. Annual reports are sound, but could give more information about pupils' progress and achievement.

General information about the school is satisfactory, but newsletters are neither regular nor numbered, and parents cannot be sure that they have received them. The school plans to address this issue by displaying them on an outside notice board. The home/school agreement has been well designed to reinforce the tripartite partnership, and reinforce the school rules and endeavours of both the school and parents. Satisfactory information about progress is supported by consultation evenings, which take account of parents' working hours. Each class sends parents a termly overview to encourage their involvement and support. The school has tried various initiatives to support parents and pupils, from curriculum evenings to drop-in sessions, but these initiatives are not well supported by parents. The school has an 'open door' policy, and the headteacher is available to address specific needs, indeed the questionnaire identified that parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. Home/school books are not used consistently.

44. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory, and the contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is sound, but sometimes constrained by personal circumstances. A small number of committed

parents give good support in school, but there are times when out of school activities are limited by the availability of parents to support transport for sports fixtures.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. As reported in the last inspection the quality of management and leadership is good. The headteacher, with strong support from the deputy headteacher, provides a very strong and clear educational direction for the school. The leadership is thoughtful and sensitive. It has brought the school through the difficult times of special measures and rebuilding. Staff morale has been maintained while the quality of education has been significantly improved and standards have risen. Relationships amongst staff are good and there is a strong sense of teamwork. The senior team effectively monitors teaching, planning and pupils' work. The school has put a high priority on the monitoring of teaching, which has been a significant factor in the improvement in the quality of teaching over the last four years.
46. The school has good systems for evaluating its performance and uses assessment and other indicators well. The aims of the school are reflected well through its work and through its very good and positive ethos, which is committed to continue to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The governing body is very supportive of the school and governors understand its strengths and weaknesses. The governors are mindful of their responsibilities and fulfil their statutory duties appropriately. A good number of governors regularly visit the school to work with pupils.
47. The quality of curriculum leadership varies, but is mostly satisfactory. Because the school has been working hard to improve standards in English, mathematics and science, the work of some other co-ordinators has been constrained. It had been the school's intention to introduce a rolling programme to support subjects across the curriculum, but this has been delayed by the need to organise for the major building programme and its consequent disruption.
48. On the whole, there is good delegation of tasks to curriculum leaders, but the monitoring of curriculum leadership is inconsistent. All subjects have appropriate curriculum policies, but the imported curriculum frameworks that teachers plan to are too general and not sufficiently detailed in subjects other than English and mathematics. Assessment arrangements are also good in those two areas, but assessment practice is not fully developed in other areas. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is not yet fully embedded in planning and is the next priority for development.
49. Development planning is mostly good. The school development plan covers the necessary areas, appropriate priorities are planned and costed, and success criteria are identified. The plan is the outcome of widespread discussion with staff, governors and parents. The headteacher and staff share the school's vision for its future, but the development plan does not prioritise sufficiently to give a clear indication of the school's strategic direction. Overall, however, the plans form a useful tool for taking the school forward. The school consistently applies best value principles to its work, but these are not yet embedded in school policies. Financial management is good and resources are used well to support development. Monies provided for specific purposes are used well for those purposes. The school has negotiated appropriate targets with the local

education authority and is working well towards them. Indeed the targets for 2001 have already been achieved.

50. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed and is a strength of the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the learning support teachers have a clear vision for the development and enrichment of provision. They have a clear action plan that is endorsed by the headteacher and governors. A governor who is very involved and knowledgeable oversees the provision for special educational needs. The development of special educational needs provision does not, however, have a focus in the school development plan and the monitoring of the provision is not systematic. Similarly, the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is managed well by a teacher from the local authority who visits the school. The work is particularly well integrated into the general class work of the school.
51. The day-to-day administration of the school is good, largely due to the quality of work of the school administrators, who make effective use of new technology. The school is organised and orderly and pupils are safe and secure. Relationships between pupils and all adults in the school are very good and contribute to the purposeful working environment.
52. The school makes good strategic use of its staffing, accommodation and resources to support its educational priorities. The school has good staffing levels that ensure an average class size of 24 pupils, which is smaller than the national average. Three of the teachers are newly qualified and they, and all new staff, are well supported by good induction procedures. Teachers and support staff are well matched through their qualifications and experience to meet the demands of the curriculum. The school is well prepared for performance management. In recognition of the hard work and commitment of staff the Department for Education and Employment School Achievement Award has just been given.
53. The adequacy of accommodation is very good. The school has undergone a major refurbishment, which is nearly complete. The school has worked hard over the last year to minimize the disruption to teaching and learning. Art and information and communication technology have been more difficult to teach in this period, but an extremely well-resourced information and communication technology suite is now in use. The headteacher has monitored learning at this time and the hard work of the staff has kept the disruption to a minimum.
54. The school has ample space to teach the curriculum with some very good specialist areas, for example the physical education hall, music and drama hall, rooms for art and design technology and food technology, and a community room. The school playing field is within ten minutes' walk. The refurbishment is now making a good contribution to pupils' progress and the morale of staff and creating a positive ethos in the school. It is maintained very well.
55. The adequacy of learning resources is good overall and particularly so in English and information and communication technology; they are more average in other areas, except music where resources are unsatisfactory as many have been discarded recently at the end of their useful life and there is a need to rebuild the stock.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. To continue to raise the standards of work and extend further the good quality of provision apparent in many aspects of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- a) extend strategies that are improving the quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science to other subjects so that the quality continues to improve across the curriculum;

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(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 15 and 47)

- b) ensure that the schemes of work for all subjects set out clearly a progression of skills and concepts that teachers use to plan to;

(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 24 and 48)

- c) improve arrangements for assessment so that teachers have sufficient information for planning in all subjects in all years and that pupils' achievements in all areas are fully recorded;

(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 17 and 41)

- d) review the curriculum for the Foundation Stage to ensure that the Early Learning Goals for children under five are embedded in planning and assessment.

(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 21 and 59)

*

(This area is identified for development in the school's development plan)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- a) Improve the provision for multi-cultural education, particularly in art and music.

(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 35, 91 and 114)

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

36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	17	36	40	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	162
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	91

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	53

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	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	9
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	15	15	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (65)	79 (58)	95 (73)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	8	10
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	15	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (81)	84 (88)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	11	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	12	17
	Girls	9	6	10
	Total	24	18	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (58)	60 (74)	90 (84)
	National	75 (70)	71 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	12
	Girls	7	8	7
	Total	20	20	19
Percentage of pupils	School	67 (63)	67 (68)	63 (68)

at NC level 4 or above	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	141
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:1
Average class size	24.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	216

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	382465
Total expenditure	387677
Expenditure per pupil	2294
Balance brought forward from previous year	29306
Balance carried forward to next year	24094

**Qualified teachers and support staff:
nursery**

NB. These sums include total LEA costs for services to the school.

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

170

Number of questionnaires returned

24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	33	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	55	8	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	50	25	0	8
The teaching is good.	58	42	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	46	21	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	21	4	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	46	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	42	16	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	63	25	0	0	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	42	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	21	8	16	16

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

No further issues were raised.

Other issues raised by parents

At the meeting for parents concern was expressed about the amount and quality of some of the homework set. In general, inspectors agree that the setting of homework is not consistent from class to class.

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

57. At the time of the inspection there were 28 children in the Reception class, all attending full time. Ten children had entered in September as rising-fives and the remainder at the beginning of the spring term. The statutory baseline assessments are administered within six weeks of children entering the Reception class; some parents are able to share pre-school reports with the school. Standards of attainment on entry in the current year are broadly average, which is higher than in recent years, where attainment on entry was below average. Children's gains in their learning are satisfactory overall and sometimes they are good. Most pupils are on course to achieve all of the Early Learning Goals for children of this age.
58. The school has done its best to provide adequate accommodation for the Foundation Stage but the classroom and its annexe are cramped for the number of children. There is no direct access to the outside and, to some extent, this inhibits the use of the playground. Opportunities for physical activity are also constrained by the lack of a secure play area with, for example, climbing equipment suitable for the promotion of children's physical development. The school is aware of the deficiency and plans to make appropriate provision when the current building work is completed. Teachers use the available space well and work to make the environment bright and welcoming. Children are introduced to the routines and expectations of the school in a warm and sensitive manner.
59. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes it is good. The teacher and classroom assistants work well together and provide appropriate activities and experiences for children. Planning for progression in children's learning is not sufficiently focused, however, upon the specific stepping stones towards the Early Learning Goals and, as a result, children's gains in their learning are sometimes slower than they should be. This lack of a clear focus in the planning also means that accurate assessments of children's progress cannot be made to enable the next stages in their learning to build upon what they know, understand and can do. The school is fostering good links with children's homes by the arrangements that are made for children to take books home to share, and by the practice of inviting parents and carers to come into the classroom at the beginning of each morning to help children write their names.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. The teaching of personal and social development is good and nearly all children will meet or exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they begin Year 1. Most children enter school with confidence, even though a significant proportion of them will not be five until July/August. The school has placed considerable emphasis on the development of personal and social skills so that children are enabled to make the most of the learning experiences they are offered. Social skills are developed well during the daily 'snack time' when children sit at tables sharing cups of milk, and subsequently washing their own cups. They are forming good relationships with their peers and with adults. They listen to instructions and are patient when listening to each other, co-operating well in groups. Their attention to tasks is generally well sustained and they treat property appropriately.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Teaching is satisfactory in this area and the children are making satisfactory progress towards the Early Learning Goals for communication, language and literacy. The majority are likely to achieve most of them. They enter school with speaking and listening skills which are typical for children of their age, and interact well with others. These skills are consistently developed in lessons, such as when a puppet is passed round a circle and children take turns to make up a sentence beginning 'I like going...'. Children are beginning to recognise letters by name and by sound but do not yet readily turn to phonics as a strategy to help them to read. However, in a well-prepared lesson to help children to become familiar with letters and phonic relationships, tasks were appropriately matched for the different experience and abilities of the children. Children enjoy looking at books and sharing them with their parents and other adults. Some children are able, with help, to write a sentence.

Mathematical development

62. Children's progress towards the achievement of the Early Learning Goals in mathematics is satisfactory and most children are likely to achieve a significant proportion of them. They are able to use number names to count, in unison, in order and most children recognise numbers to ten. They work co-operatively to order numbers in a path and are developing their ability to count the correct number of objects reliably. The teacher uses practical activities well in other areas of the curriculum in order to develop concepts; for example, some pupils were able to gather together the correct number of beanbags for an aiming game in physical education. Teaching is satisfactory in this area.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. In lessons that are satisfactory children are provided with a variety of experiences, which help to extend their knowledge about the world and they are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area. Every day they discuss and complete a weather chart. A wall display of family photographs indicates the children have had opportunities to extend their understanding of relationships and to develop their understanding of chronology. A visit to the local postal sorting office provided an experience beyond their immediate environment and provided a focus for role-play activities. In a lesson in the new computer suite, children used the mouse to click on a colour and drag it to construct a picture of their own face. With help, they were able to give instructions to file and print the results, taking delight in seeing their work emerge from the printer.

Physical development

64. The provision for physical development is satisfactory and, because of good teaching, most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals and a significant proportion will exceed them by the time they move on to Year 1. When the weather is suitable, the children are able to take turns in riding scooters and tricycles in the playground at lunchtime. They have two designated physical education lessons per week in which they have the opportunity to climb over, under and through small obstacles and to engage in activities such as aiming beanbags at objects from progressively greater distances. They move sensibly around the school and use the play areas showing some awareness of space and of each other.

Creative development

65. In a satisfactory lesson seen during the inspection, children used waste paper and other materials to construct and paint models. They are using a range of materials and implements with increasing competence. They join in singing songs and nursery rhymes and are beginning to use their imagination in role-play, such as in the post office. They explored rough and smooth textures when making butterflies. The rather cramped conditions in the reception classroom restrict the variety and frequency of opportunities for creative activity so that the Early Learning Goals in this area may not be met by the time the children enter Year 1.

ENGLISH

66. The test results for 2000 show that, at Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils reaching the national expectation was below average in reading and well below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, however, the proportions were well above and above average respectively. At Key Stage 2, the proportion achieving the expected level in English was above the national average. In comparison with similar schools the proportions were well above average and in the top five per cent nationally in this evaluation. Test results show considerable improvement since 1996 at both key stages. The proportion of boys achieving the higher level 5 at Key Stage 2 increased markedly last year.

67. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English are below the national expectation for the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with the expectation for the end of Key Stage 2. The current Year 2 class has a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs and of pupils who have arrived at the school during the last two years. Consequently, results are expected to be lower at Key Stage 1 for the current year. The school has developed well-focused strategies to improve standards in English. In most years pupils enter Year 1 with below average attainment, particularly in language, reading and writing. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2, in all aspects of the subject.

68. The previous inspection report indicated that the majority of pupils achieved standards in national tests, at the end of both key stages, which were well below national averages. The present results indicate significant improvement, particularly at Key Stage 2. The school is already well above its target of 60 per cent of pupils reaching the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2.

69. While pupils achieve satisfactorily, the numbers reaching the national expectation in speaking and listening are below average at the end of Key Stage 1. Achievement improves during Key Stage 2 and most pupils exceed the national expectation by the end of Year 6. In most lessons pupils make sound progress in developing these skills. Pupils use language to share their ideas, both in whole-class and small group sessions. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are taken across the curriculum. For example, in a personal and social education lesson in Year 5, pupils discussed the problems that people with disabilities might have in moving around the school building and what alterations might be necessary.

70. The school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy well and standards of reading are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils are achieving appropriately. Reading standards are lower at the end of Key Stage 1 and most pupils are still developing strategies to extend their reading of new words. They recognise a good

number of common words in context and are developing a good knowledge of letter sounds to help them decipher unknown words. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts with acceptable fluency and can talk about what they have read. Pupils use their reading skills to support other areas of the curriculum, to research information in history and geography, for example, and when reading instructions in information and communication technology. In general, however, reading for pleasure, and with enthusiasm, is not a recognisable feature for most boys and girls.

71. The quality of writing is below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Many pupils start school with underdeveloped writing skills and achieve satisfactorily, but many are still working towards the expected standard by the end of the key stage. Many find accurate spelling difficult. At Key Stage 2, progress improves and there are some good examples of the development of skills and techniques that support effective writing. In Year 5, for example, pupils were writing poetry and carefully choosing words to create imagery in the style of Wordsworth. In a lesson for Year 6 pupils they were writing nonsense poems and playing, with great enjoyment, with the distortion of words. By this stage spelling, and grammar, has improved and is at least in line with expectations. In order to raise standards in writing, the school makes good use of the National Literacy Strategy across the curriculum and seeks out well opportunities to extend literacy skills whenever it is appropriate.
72. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They are attentive and respond well to their teachers. Pupils share ideas with confidence because they know that their contributions are valued. This environment promotes their learning well. Pupils work well in groups and willingly share resources. Relationships amongst the pupils themselves and with their teachers and other adults are good and this contributes positively to their progress.
73. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages and pupils make good gains in their learning. At Key Stage 2, teaching is sometimes very good. There are also some satisfactory lessons at both key stages. In the good and very good lessons, activities are well matched to the needs of all pupils, expectations are high and the learning is challenging and rigorous. The lessons are very carefully planned with clear learning outcomes that are shared with pupils so that they understand fully the purpose of the lesson. Relationships are often very good. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson when pupils were making up nonsense words for their poems, all enjoyed the activity and the learning became a joint enterprise with the teacher. There is a brisk pace, and good organisation allows pupils to work on activities that motivate and challenge them. Skilful teaching of literacy enables pupils to offer imaginative suggestions for alternative words and pupils are intellectually challenged. For example, in Year 5, pupils were challenged to use language beyond its literal meaning and to find words for their poems that painted an imaginary picture of spring. The teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The pupils' needs are readily identified and a good range of strategies are employed to promote good progress. Where lessons are satisfactory, pace is slower and, while the level of the activities is generally appropriate, they are less well matched to the specific needs of the pupils. Consequently, the pupils' response is less enthusiastic and their learning less rigorous.
74. The leadership of the subject is very good and standards have improved considerably over the last four years. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy very successfully and pupils' literacy skills support their learning across the curriculum well. Resources for English are very good both for the classroom and in the library.

MATHEMATICS

75. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards in numeracy and all areas of mathematics that are below those expected for their ages, but often above those standards anticipated from their prior attainment. The 2000 national test results show a similar picture for Key Stage 2, but at Key Stage 1 standards improved and were in line with the national expectation and above the standards achieved by comparable schools. Standards are improving and, apart from a dip at Key Stage 2 when several average attaining pupils were absent for the tests last year, there has been an increase in the proportion of eleven year old pupils attaining national expectations. The school has set challenging targets for Year 6 for 2001, that are higher than those set for 2000, and is on track to exceed them slightly. However, these targets are still below national expectations. There are differences in the performance of girls and boys that are related to the size of the cohort and the proportion of pupils with special needs. Pupils with special needs, those with English as an additional language, and refugees are very well supported and make very good progress.
76. By the age of seven most pupils count sets of objects reliably; a few understand place value to 100 and solve problems using numbers to 1000. Most pupils require support to classify information and record the information in simple lists and block graphs. By the age of eleven, pupils use place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 and some can calculate in their heads quickly. Their understanding of addition and subtraction, including fractions and decimals, is sound but pupils are less secure in understanding the concepts of multiplication and division. A high proportion of pupils require support. All pupils are developing a good understanding of properties and movement of shapes. Throughout the school, pupils apply their mathematical knowledge to problems confidently; when appropriate, to solve real-life problems, such as in Year 5, where pupils studied 'time' in relation to catching an aeroplane to the Gambia. A scrutiny of pupils' work illustrates coverage of all aspects of mathematics, good progress, but low attainment across the school. Pupils' presentational skills are high in Key Stage 2.
77. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and sometimes good, for example when the special needs teacher supported pupils with very low prior attainment to identify the group's favourite type of crisps. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour is explicit, as illustrated by the high proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties in Years 1 and 2, working effectively in groups when supported by classroom assistants. However, pupils do not respond well to sitting on the carpet for long periods of time and this leads to a loss of concentration and teaching time at the beginning and ends of lessons.
78. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is very good and a strength of the school. Teaching is consistently good, or very good, and often excellent in Year 6. The pace of learning is high and all pupils make good progress. Pupils benefit from the teachers' enthusiasm and understanding of the subject. They learn new concepts and solve problems effectively using a range of learning styles and practical apparatus, for example, when Year 6 pupils were learning about rotation, reflection and symmetry using a number square in the playground, in paired work and with computers. In another successful lesson, pupils used 'hand-gym' to count backwards and forwards in 5s and 10s and then used number lines to solve numerical problems in a range of successful ways.

79. The teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is well established, planning is good and teachers use questions to challenge pupils' thinking and to clarify learning. Pupils are clear about what they are to learn and teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons carefully to plan the next steps in learning. Oral and mental sessions are interesting and purposeful; pupils make good progress and develop sound mental agility. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising and extending their skills, or applying skills to a range of problem-solving situations. Teachers use mathematical vocabulary appropriately so pupils explain their work using the correct terminology.
80. Pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is not well developed. This is because the school has been undergoing a significant building programme and the computer suite has only just been completed. Links with other subjects are not yet in place, although pupils use numerical skills when drawing graphs in science.
81. Teachers use informal observations and regular tests to assess pupils' attainment. Assessment is used to set challenging targets for pupils in Year 6, but the process is not yet fully in place for other year groups. The school uses non-statutory test materials to track pupils' progress, and is developing end-of-year group targets so pupils' progress can be assessed against expectations.
82. The school has made very good progress since 1997 and, in spite of considerable upheaval caused by major rebuilding, has maintained good progress since the inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors in 1999. The school received intensive support from the local education authority; this helped the subject manager to bring about improvements to teaching, learning and the curriculum. The co-ordinator left at the end of last term; currently the headteacher is managing the subject effectively and a new co-ordinator will take over in September.

SCIENCE

83. Results of statutory tests when pupils are eleven years old show that there has been an improvement in standards of attainment since the last inspection. In 2000 90 per cent of pupils achieved level 4 or above compared with 84 per cent nationally. The school's results are well above those achieved in similar schools. There has been a rising trend since 1998. In 1999 girls achieved slightly better results than boys, which is contrary to the national trend. However, the school has small cohorts and not too much can be read into one year's results.
84. In the lessons seen during the inspection, standards of attainment were in line with those achieved nationally by pupils aged seven and eleven. There were too few examples of pupils' previous work, however, to enable a judgement to be made about standards in all aspects of the science curriculum.
85. Even so, during the inspection all year groups were studying aspects of the growth, nutrition and reproduction of green plants to a satisfactory standard. In Years 1 and 2 pupils had conducted experiments to find out what plants needed in order to grow. They had planted cress seeds and tested whether they grew better with water or without, and with or without light. In well-focused discussions the pupils showed that they understood the conditions necessary to make a fair test, and were able to draw conclusions and make suggestions about why certain things happened. In Years 5 and 6 pupils had been

looking at the life cycles of plants. In the lessons seen during the inspection the pupils consolidated their knowledge of the correct names for the reproductive parts of plants and dissected flowers to identify the differences between them.

86. The quality of teaching was always satisfactory in the lessons seen and sometimes it was good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, organise their lessons well, and use effective questioning skills to help pupils develop their thinking. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils thought about why plants had grown at all when they hadn't been watered; pupils suggested there might be moisture in the soil, or in the air, to help the plants to grow, even though they had done less well than those regularly watered. In Years 5 and 6 pupils demonstrated recall of what they had previously learned when they continued their work on plant reproduction. Pupils enjoy their science lessons because teachers plan activities that interest and engage them. Samples of past work and teachers' plans show that all areas of the science curriculum have been visited and that investigative opportunities form an appropriately significant part of the learning opportunities available to the pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make similar progress to their peers in science.
87. The school's curriculum, which is based upon a nationally recognised published scheme of work, is appropriately broad and balanced. It is planned on a two-year rolling programme so that two classes cover the same aspect of science at the same time. This enables two teachers to plan their work together, but has resulted in all pupils, in both year groups, often completing the same tasks. In the lessons seen, and in samples of pupils' work, there were differences in the quality and quantity of work produced, but not in the tasks set. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by classroom assistants and follow the same activities as their peers. In order to improve pupils' learning in science further, planning should clearly identify appropriate progression in skills and concepts so that activities build upon what pupils know, understand and can do. The lack of task differentiation shows that any assessments of pupils' understanding carried out at the beginning and end of units of work do not sufficiently inform lesson planning.
88. The science co-ordinator was appointed recently and manages the subject well. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. She has a science background and is committed and enthusiastic. A portfolio of assessed work is being developed to inform judgements about the level at which pupils are working in all aspects of the subject. A curriculum audit has been carried out, priorities identified and resource needs met.

ART AND DESIGN

89. No art lessons were seen during the inspection because the subject is taught in rotation with design and technology, and was not timetabled to take place during this part of the term. There was insufficient evidence available to make a secure judgement about pupils' attainment in the subject by the time they are seven and eleven. The amount of pupils' work on display was insufficient to indicate curriculum coverage or standards. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 had painted self-portraits, making good use of colour. In Years 3 and 4 pupils had used viewfinders to help them make observational drawings, with results that indicated drawing skills below expectations for the age group. Sketchbooks have recently been introduced for all pupils, but they are not used well and contain insufficient examples to show whether any progress is being made.

90. A visiting artist had helped younger pupils to produce an attractive wall hanging using paint on canvas, which depicted scenes of Plymouth. He had worked with older pupils to use a similar technique to tell the story of Theseus and the Minotaur in the style of a Greek vase. Links with schools, colleges and community groups have provided funding and expertise to aid the school's developments in art; for example, there have been workshops for weaving and puppet making and co-operation for firing the schools' decorated clay tiles. A textile panel of small sewn pupil portraits formed part of the millennium celebrations. Overall, there is little display of pupils' work. Teachers have ensured that their rooms are bright and cheerful, but much of what is displayed represents teachers' efforts rather than those of pupils.
91. At the time of the last inspection, levels of attainment in art were judged to be below expectations at the end of both key stages. Since then the school has adopted a nationally recognised scheme of work; it is adapting the units within the scheme so that cross-curricular links can be made where appropriate and skills progression built into its programme. The scheme of work is being evaluated on an ongoing basis and adapted in the light of experience; it is too soon to judge whether the scheme is having a positive impact on standards. At present, opportunities to explore the arts of other cultures are more limited than in many schools.
92. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She is able to assist teachers with their planning and to provide advice. Facilities for teaching the subject are excellent; there is a large, well-equipped room available for all lessons and adequate resources for teaching the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Evidence for the inspection is taken from the three lessons seen, from teachers' planning and from a scrutiny of wall displays. The tasks pupils were completing in the Year 2 lesson indicate that, by the time pupils are seven years old, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils' attainment when they are eleven years old is below the levels expected nationally.
94. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 had designed a tepee, testing materials for suitability and joining sticks to make a frame. In the lesson seen they were experimenting to find ways to join three sticks to make a secure frame and then covering the frame with plastic to make it watertight. They used tools and equipment sensibly and most pupils tried hard to achieve a satisfactory result, assembling, joining and combining materials to make a model.

In a Year 6 lesson pupils were evaluating a 'One Pot' dish they had made previously as part of a project about the Gambia. Pupils had enjoyed the practical aspects of their task, and could express opinions about it when questioned, but they found it difficult to make judgements about the dish and answers were not always related to the set task.

95. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the lessons seen. Planning is thorough and instructions generally clear so that pupils know what they are to do. Answers to teachers' probing questions show that pupils have good recall of the work they have done in previous lessons. Sometimes teachers accept whatever their pupils produce too readily, however, so that pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to find better ways of doing things. Classroom assistants are well briefed about the objectives for lessons and support pupils well, particularly in practical tasks. The school is fortunate to have a large,

designated room for art and design/design and technology lessons so that there is ample space for practical activities and equipment and tools are readily to hand.

96. Links with the local community are demonstrated by a display showing the shadow puppets made from scraps by Year 2 pupils for the Expressive Arts Festival in Plymouth. Older pupils extended their awareness of other cultures by making decorated baskets related to the Year 5/6 project about the Gambia.
97. The curriculum is based upon a published, nationally recognised scheme of work. The school has adopted a two-year rolling programme to ensure breadth and balance in its work. At present, very similar lessons take place in two-year groups; teachers in Years 1 and 2, 3 and 4, and 5 and 6 plan together. The school recognises that the curriculum will require further development in the light of this year's experience. In order to raise standards of attainment further, more emphasis will need to be placed upon progression in the development of knowledge, skills and understanding than is currently the case.
98. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role and sufficiently knowledgeable to be able to provide helpful advice to colleagues. She monitors planning, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. The subject is well managed and areas for future development have been appropriately identified. Useful links have been established with local secondary schools and colleges, which enhance pupils' learning opportunities by, for example, allowing the school to use a kiln. Pupils with English as an additional language generally have more than sufficient language skills to support their work in design and technology and they make similar progress to their peers.

GEOGRAPHY

99. There was too little evidence to judge standards. Few lessons were taught during the inspection, none in Key Stage 1 and, due to the disruption of building work, very little work was displayed on walls, or in pupils' folders. The lessons observed, an analysis of planning and documentation, and discussions with pupils indicate that there has been considerable recent improvement. This is due to the focused leadership of the co-ordinator, with support from the deputy headteacher, curricular improvements and more confident teaching.
100. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good. Lesson planning is of a high standard with clear aims, which the pupils understand. Teaching methods enable all pupils, including those with special needs or English as an additional language, to be successful. Activities both challenge and inspire pupils. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils discussed and debated from different viewpoints the impact of building a multi-national hotel in a small village in the Gambia. Pupils used prior knowledge to identify how and why this would improve, or damage, the environment and the culture and quality of the villagers' lives. Most empathised with the inhabitants of the village, but pupils representing the multi-national company argued very convincingly and enthusiastically for the building of the hotel. A recent local study of Plymouth enabled pupils to compare their lives with those of the Gambian people. Good links were made with food technology in making a Gambian fish dish. The school has an adequate range of resources including videos, books, globes, maps and plans. Visits and field trips are used to investigate outside the classroom.

101. The subject is well led. The recent scheme of work covers a two-year cycle and successfully develops geographical understanding through the context of enquiry. It provides teachers with effective support for their planning, and identifies coverage of the key knowledge to be taught across the school. Links with the development of pupils' personal skills have been established, but links with other subjects, such as English, mathematics or information and communication technology, are limited. The co-ordinator has plans to ensure skills and concepts are progressively developed across the school and assessed against attainment targets.

HISTORY

102. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards as only two lessons, none in Key Stage 2, were taught during the inspection, and very little work was displayed on walls, or in pupils' folders. Analysis of planning and documentation, and discussions with pupils indicate there has been considerable improvement over the past few years. This change is due to the development of a broad and balanced curriculum and purposeful leadership by the co-ordinator.

103. In the two lessons observed, the teachers had a sound grasp of the subject, planned lessons well and prepared activities to challenge the pupils and sustain their interest. Through a mixture of questioning, prompting and explaining, the Year 1 teacher successfully helped pupils gather and select relevant information about seaside holidays in the recent past. However, the limited work seen indicates an over-dependence on worksheets throughout the school, particularly in Key Stage 2. Also discussions with both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils indicate that they have difficulty understanding chronology and retaining information. For example, Year 2 pupils were unclear if 1950 was before 1980, and Year 6 pupils had trouble recalling the main features of the Ancient Greeks.

104. The subject is well led. The newly devised scheme of work covers a two-year cycle and successfully links national and school requirements. It provides a structure teachers find useful in their planning and identifies coverage of the key knowledge to be taught across the school. The co-ordinator has suitable plans in hand to ensure there is a progression of skills and concepts across the school. Informal assessment arrangements are in place.

Links to the development of pupils' personal skills have been established, but links are limited to other subjects, such as English, mathematics or information and communication technology (to research, practise, communicate and refine learning). In 2001, the co-ordinator plans to introduce more formal arrangements, linked to attainment targets, to track pupils' progress. There is a sound range of source materials including local visits, books and photographs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

105. In the last inspection standards were judged to be well below expectations at the end of both key stages and the school did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. There have been considerable improvements in the quality of, and provision for, pupils' learning experiences since 1997. The recently opened computer suite is an excellent facility that provides enough computers for a whole class to be taught effectively at the same time. Well-chosen resources, such as the projector and large screen, enable all pupils to view the procedures they need to use in order to, for example, enter data,

save and retrieve information. Technical problems have delayed the installation of cabling, so that pupils do not presently have access to the Internet or electronic mail, but this position will shortly be rectified. It will take time for the use of these facilities to have a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils when they are eleven. While standards higher up the school remain below expectations at present, there are signs that, in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2, pupils are already acquiring skills appropriate to their age.

106. Children in the Foundation Stage were seen working with images, drawing self-portraits by using the mouse to drag colours on to the screen to 'paint' a face and, with help, clicking to print. Pupils in Year 1 had used the same software to draw flowers as part of their science work on green plants and, during the lesson seen, they labelled these with the correct terms in the appropriate positions and printed the results. In this lesson the development of skills was well planned and a good cross-curricular link had been made.
107. Skills were also developed in lessons in which older pupils were using databases. Pupils in Year 3 entered data about themselves on to a database template, making comparisons between using a computer and a paper-based system for recording information. In Year 5, pupils used a database 'form' of their own design to enter more detailed information. In both cases the intention is to save the information and then interrogate the database. Pupils of all ages were seen using the keyboard and mouse with increasing skill and confidence.
108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The school's computer technician/class assistant provides excellent technical support and often leads most of the teaching in a session. She has been appropriately trained but, while some training has taken place for teachers, the in-service programme is behind schedule. As a result, teachers have yet to become confident in their use of the suite. Planning is thorough, taking into account the stage pupils have reached in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding and building upon this appropriately so that good progress is made. Pupils' work is saved on their own individual disks. These show the progress pupils are making and indicate the increasing range of their experiences.
109. The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher. He has ensured that curriculum planning provides experiences appropriate to pupils' current needs. His considerable expertise has been invaluable in enabling the school to acquire equipment and software through the local academic council so that specific grants have been used well and good value for money obtained. The school recognises that its computer facilities are currently under used and that cross-curricular links need to be further developed. Groups of pupils are beginning to use the facility to support their work in the literacy hour; but this practice is less evident in numeracy and other curriculum areas.

MUSIC

110. Pupils' achievements are variable as they move through the school. Progress is unsatisfactory and standards are below expectations for the end of both key stages. In some classes, where the quality of teaching is good, pupils achieve well, but curriculum provision for the subject is not sufficient to sustain consistent progress. Overall, insufficient time is provided for music, not enough teachers have sufficient skills and planning for pupils to make progress is not developed. On the other hand, when given the opportunity, pupils sing well and with obvious enjoyment. They sing willingly and with a

good tone. In other respects, however, skills of pitch, pulse and rhythm are not developed consistently and higher attainers, in particular, are not sufficiently challenged.

111. Opportunities to see routine music lessons were limited during the inspection. An imaginative project with students from the local university was in progress and gave pupils a good experience of music making. Pupils clearly enjoy their music and take part with enthusiasm. Behaviour in the lessons seen was always good. Pupils with special educational needs generally make similar progress to their peers.
112. It was not possible to see enough lessons to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching, but in a lesson for Year 6 pupils the teaching was good. Tasks were set that engaged pupils' interest and challenged them musically. Pupils were singing 'London's Burning' as a round in preparation for them to write their own rounds. Intellectually, the lesson was challenging, but basic musical skills were relatively under-developed for these pupils.
113. Standards in music were not reported in the last inspection. The school has given priority to the development of other subjects in the last few years and there has been little focus on music in that period. Consequently opportunities for professional development in the subject have not been available. Neither has there been a consistent focus on developing the school's policies for the subject in terms of schemes of work and assessment.
114. The subject leader has limited musical skills and has no time to monitor teaching or pupils' work in the subject. Time for music is too short for the National Curriculum requirements to be properly met. Resources have recently been reviewed and there is need to replace old and unsuitable instruments. Pupils' access to music from other cultures does not feature strongly in the schools' curriculum. Pupils have an additional opportunity to make music in the recorder group.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. The 1997 inspection found that pupils' attainment in physical education was unsatisfactory throughout the school. Evidence from this inspection shows that provision and achievements have improved considerably. Pupils make satisfactory progress in gymnastics and dance as they move through the school and standards by the time pupils are eleven years old are in line with national expectations. The local authority scheme of work used by the school is comprehensive and provides for progressive development of pupils' skills in all aspects of physical education. A new, well-equipped gymnasium provides good internal accommodation, but playground areas are sloping and uneven, inhibiting their use for games activities. No games lessons were seen during the inspection. The school has the use of a field, but this is a short walk away across two major roads so it is not used regularly for practical reasons, such as inclement weather and a lack of help with supervision en route. In line with the local authority's policy, swimming lessons take place every afternoon in a three-week block in Years 3 and 4. Records show that pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres and a significant proportion swim further than this, promoting safety in a school close to the sea.
116. The quality of teaching was good in all the lessons seen. Teachers have a well-defined focus for lessons, are clear in their instructions to pupils, and use demonstration and peer group evaluation well to promote improved performance. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were creating a sequence of movements involving changes of level over high and

low apparatus. They moved with good control and, in some cases, imaginatively. The classroom assistants helping in this lesson managed pupils with behavioural problems well, but the pace of the lesson was slowed. Pupils in Year 4 had been working on bending, stretching and curling activities and were using these experiences to link movements together in a sequence. The teacher's good subject knowledge meant that he was able to make effective coaching points, which helped pupils to improve performance. In a Year 6 lesson pupils demonstrated abilities that were broadly in line with national expectations, responding to the teacher's challenges and showing good balance and spatial awareness. Consistency of approach by all teachers promotes good learning; pupils handle apparatus well and they are used to warm up and cool down activities as a regular part of lessons. Pupils understand the need for, and the advantages of, healthy exercise.

117. The school has good links with the local teacher training college. These were used to pupils' advantage during the inspection when a group of post-graduate students led a session involving music, physical education and dance with a Year 5 class. Pupils used a variety of instruments to make patterns by beating, and developed simulated animal movements to a rhythm, creating patterns of movement in response to a simple story. Pupils made good progress in the lesson.

118. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator, who has ensured that there is a good range of resources available to meet the needs of the curriculum. He had opportunities to work alongside class teachers last term, sharing his expertise as well as monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. As a result he is well informed about pupils' strengths and weaknesses within the subject; for example, he is aware that pupils' ball skills are currently below expectations although more able pupils do well through development in after-school extra-curricular activities. The school tries to take part in local sports festivals, but does not always have sufficient adult help to transport teams. All staff have been involved in in-service training as part of the Top Play and Top Sport initiatives. This training has developed their ability to teach games skills effectively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. As very few samples of work were available and only four lessons, none in Year 6, were observed, there was insufficient evidence to judge attainment. Lesson observations, an analysis of documentation, and discussions with pupils indicate there have been considerable recent improvements due to the purposeful leadership of the new co-ordinator. The curriculum has been improved and teaching is more secure. Religious education is taught regularly and no pupils are withdrawn from lessons.

120. Few pupils enter school with much knowledge of Bible stories or an understanding of religious beliefs or practices, so lessons are carefully planned to take account of their needs. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers use a range of interesting methods to enthuse pupils, and most manage pupils with behavioural difficulties sensitively. In a Year 1 class, pupils learn about the significance of baptism, and the Year 4 pupils develop a wider understanding of the religious significance of fasting during Ramadan. Pupils are expected to think for themselves and to make connections between stories they hear and everyday life. For example, in the Year 4 lesson, pupils listened attentively to the video. The teacher's questioning and thoughtful responses, particularly from a Muslim pupil, helped the pupils understand the complexities of self-denial. Most pupils respond well to teachers' expectations and work hard. Many pupils take a pride in their work, particularly in Key Stage 2; however, presentational skills are not so well developed in Key Stage 1. Teachers' expectations of

pupils' behaviour is explicit, so pupils understand routines, know what they are allowed to do and are keen to participate in lessons. There is a high proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties in Years 1 and 2, who work effectively when supported by classroom assistants. In some lessons, however, there is a loss of concentration and teaching time at the beginning of the lesson. On the other hand, pupils with English as an additional language have mostly more than sufficient English skills to gain full access to the subject; they are well supported and make at least satisfactory progress.

121. The subject is well managed. The newly introduced scheme of work covers the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus over a two-year cycle and successfully develops an understanding of religious practices within a context of enquiry. It provides teachers with effective support for their planning, and identifies coverage of the key knowledge to be taught across the school. The recently appointed co-ordinator has suitable plans to ensure the progressive development of skills and concepts across the school and formalise assessment procedures. Effective links have been established with the development of pupils' personal skills, but links with literacy are under-developed. The curriculum is enhanced by visitors to the school, such as the local vicar, and by the recent purchase of Islamic and other religious artefacts.