

## INSPECTION REPORT

**OAKDALE SOUTH ROAD MIDDLE  
SCHOOL**

Poole

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 131691

Headteacher: Rob Sutcliffe

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess  
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 215585

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 8 - 12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane  
Poole

Postcode: BH15 3JR

Telephone number: 01202 685800

Fax number: 01202 685247

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr C D Mann

Date of previous inspection: May 1998

## Information about the inspection team

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23708	Geoff Burgess	Registered inspector	Information Technology	Results & achievements
			French	Teaching & learning
			Music	Leadership & management
				School improvement
09487	Frances Hurd	Lay inspector		Partnership with parents
				Attitudes, values & personal development
				Attendance
				Personal welfare & care
24760	Susan Barton	Team inspector	English	Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
			Religious Education	
24342	Denise Franklin		Science: SEN	Assessment & academic monitoring
			Design Technology	Adequacy of resources
15545	Anne Pratt	Team inspector	Art: EO	Learning opportunities
			Geography; History	
23330	Tony Burgess	Team inspector	Mathematics	Strategic use of resources
			Physical Education	

The inspection contractor was:

Geoff Burgess Inspections

4, Dodhams Farm Close  
 Bradpole  
 Bridport  
 Dorset  
 DT6 3EZ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
 Inspection Quality Division  
 The Office for Standards in Education  
 Alexandra House  
 33 Kingsway  
 London WC2B 6SE

# REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Oakdale South Road Middle is a spacious new school in its fifth year following the merger of Oakdale Middle and South Road Combined Schools in the northern suburbs of Poole. It serves a wide spectrum of families of mainly British heritage with a small number of pupils using English as a second language. Most pupils come from two feeder first schools with currently around 550 on roll aged between eight and twelve. More than a tenth of pupils are entitled to free school meals but with no cooked meals on offer, about a half of these bring their own packed lunches. Over a quarter of pupils are on the special needs register with an average number having statements of special need. The attainment of pupils when they start at the school at the age of eight is generally similar to that found in most schools except in mathematics where it is below.

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

This is a very good school where, under the very good leadership of the senior management team, very high quality education is enabling pupils to achieve well and develop high personal standards. Given its moderate level of funding and average intake, it provides very good value for money.

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

- Good teaching, with much of it even better, ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve well in literacy and numeracy and standards are improving year on year.
- High quality provision in most of the other subjects ensures that pupils experience a very rich range of learning opportunities and do well in them
- Pupils' personal development has a very high priority. They are enthusiastic, behave very well, work hard, relate well to each other and are becoming very thoughtful and responsible citizens
- It takes very good care to ensure that pupils are safe and happy and able to do their best.
- It works excellently with the local community and other schools in the best interests of the children and provides a very good range of extra activities to enrich the curriculum
- Very good leadership and management is helping the school to constantly improve

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

- Current very prescriptive planning and timetabling arrangements have been very effective in ensuring consistency and efficiency but they inhibit curriculum and teaching spontaneity, creativity and innovation, and limit the effectiveness of non-contact time
- Many pupils have little time or opportunity to reflect quietly on their feelings, experiences and man-made and natural wonders or to discuss spiritual matters
- Best use is not being made of all the available classroom help

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

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

Since the last inspection in May 1998, standards in the core subjects have improved at the same rate as in most schools. Good standards in literacy have been sustained this year and the rate of improvement in mathematics and science has increased. A good deal of time and effort has gone into resolving the issues identified then, such as safety at the beginning and end of the day. The full implementation of the literacy hour has substantially improved planning and teaching in English to very good effect. Provision for information technology is a current priority and much good work has already been done. Teaching in year seven is good and time lost through timetabling arrangements has been reduced. Subject and other coordinators have been given the time and scope to be much more effective as leaders and managers. Overall improvement is good.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	B	B	A	A	well above average A
mathematics	D	D	D	D	above average B
science	C	C	C	C	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

Over the past three years, standards in English, mathematics and science have all improved steadily at the same rate as in most schools. As a consequence, when compared with other schools, the disparity between subjects shown up in 1999 remained in last year's tests. However, a greater percentage of pupils achieving the higher level five, especially in reading, means that English is now well above average. In mathematics, year six boys have caught up with the national average over the past two years while girls have stayed well below. Current standards in year seven match this pattern with English above average, science average and mathematics below. Pupils of all abilities, including those who find learning difficult, are achieving well throughout the school in most subjects including English, mathematics and science and standards are improving year on year. Boys and girls are doing equally well. Year six pupils are attaining standards above average in English and science with mathematics up to average. All standards in year five are well above average. Pupils are achieving higher standards than those seen in other schools in most other subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls are very positive about school and join in wholeheartedly with all it has to offer in and out of class. They are very keen to talk about their work, proud of their achievements and their school and work hard to complete tasks set. Attitudes to school and learning are very good
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good behaviour all round the school makes a very significant contribution to the standards achieved and its happy, ordered feel. Excellent behaviour is not unusual. Adults rarely have to intervene but when they do, pupils react quickly and positively.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Everybody gets on well with everybody else and visitors are made to feel very welcome. Good manners and respect for property are a feature of the school. Pupils are growing into very confident, sociable and sensible citizens who recognise their own worth and appreciate the contribution made by others. Boys and girls work together very well and take responsibility very seriously when it is offered.
Attendance	Boys and girls really want to go to school and unnecessary absence and lateness is rare.

Pupils make a very good contribution to their own education through their very positive attitudes to work and very good behaviour. They are confident and enthusiastic about learning and are always ready to share their skills, knowledge and opinions with others

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 4 - 6	Year 7
Lessons seen overall	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.

Teaching throughout the school is mainly good with a substantial percentage of very good teaching in each year group and at least one excellent or very good lesson in ten different subjects including English, mathematics and science. Staff with specialist knowledge and expertise teach several of these. Almost two thirds of the teaching staff achieved at least one excellent or very good lesson during the inspection and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in groups of similar attainment helps to make it possible for the basic skills to be taught very effectively. Learning is greatly enhanced by the effort pupils put into their work and their capacity to get on without constant supervision or support. Expectations for pupils' behaviour and work habits are high. Relevant and interesting activities are meticulously planned and prepared with good use made of all available resources.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils are given a very rich range of learning experiences covering all the required elements and much more. Very good planning procedures ensure progression and that pupils in parallel classes have a similar diet. Excellent attention is given to promoting pupils' understanding of themselves and matters of health and safety. Boys and girls have very many varied opportunities to enhance their learning outside normal lessons. The school has an excellent relationship with the local community and other schools to the benefit of its pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Procedures for identifying need, setting targets and monitoring progress are very effective and pupils' progress is good. The special needs coordinator makes good provision for pupils who find learning difficult with sound support from classroom assistants. Other pupils are well supported in class by their teachers who provide work at the appropriate levels.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Curricular provision for pupils to study and appreciate the arts, their own cultural heritage and to celebrate the cultural diversity of others is very good Satisfactory attention is given to helping pupils to reflect on the more spiritual aspects of life. Staff make very good provision for promoting pupils' personal development with very good arrangements for the development of social skills and attitudes and moral awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good: The school goes to great lengths to ensure the safety and welfare of its pupils. Procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour are exemplary with very good attention paid to checking on and sustaining good attendance. Comprehensive, high quality assessment arrangements are very well used to keep an eye on boys' and girls' progress and set learning targets. Good communications with individual parents help to ensure that any potential problems are dealt with promptly.

Parents are very appreciative of all the school does for their children and the school provides a good range of information about the life of the school. Homework is well supported and parents help the school financially and in other practical ways.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership & management by the headteacher & other key staff	The headteacher, deputy head and assistant head work very well together as a team with clearly defined roles to provide the school with very good leadership and management. A key element of this has been the way other leaders and managers on the staff have been encouraged and helped to develop their leadership roles and they now form a significant force for good in the development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and keen for the school to succeed. They have developed good arrangements for fulfilling their responsibilities, know the school well and are aware of its strengths and concerns. The head has ensured that they are fully involved in identifying what needs to be done to improve and as a group and individually they are providing the school with necessary practical and moral support
The school's evaluation of its performance	Led by the deputy and assistant heads, monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning are a way of life in the school and key to its success. Staff and governors are involved in the process and this results in a noteworthy degree of discussion about the direction of the school. Information from tests and assessments is very carefully analysed to sort out trends and priorities. Teaching and learning are observed regularly in the classrooms and staff are given regular opportunities to discuss their performance. The school's commitment to matching best practice is very good and there is every reason to believe that it will succeed.
The strategic use of resources	Oakdale South Road School makes very good use of its excellent accommodation and good supply of resources. Teachers are very well deployed to make best use of their strengths but more use could be made of classroom assistants to support learning. Spending is targeted on agreed priorities and is very carefully managed and monitored to ensure best value. All aspects of the school's financial and other administration are extremely efficiently carried out.

The combined efforts of the head, deputy head and assistant head, the hard work of the staff and the support of the governing body have made it possible for the school to steadily improve and achieve high standards in many areas of its provision.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their children enjoy going to school</li> <li>▪ teaching is good and their children are making good progress</li> <li>▪ the school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good</li> <li>▪ pupils are expected to work hard and do their best</li> <li>• the school is well led and managed</li> <li>• staff provide a good range of activities in addition to lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information about how well their children are doing</li> <li>• The work children are expected to do at home</li> <li>• The way the school works with parents</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive judgements. Aspects of the information provided by the school and the way it is provided could be improved but homework is better than that seen in other schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. According to national testing in year six, standards in mathematics and science have not changed in recent years when compared with similar schools with a small improvement in English in 2001. However, in reality, absolute standards in each have improved almost equally each year at a rate that compares favourably with other schools. An increase in the number of pupils achieving higher levels especially in reading while national standards did not change took overall standards in English just into the well above average band in 2001. However, a similar improvement in mathematics, mainly in gains made by boys, while national standards did not change, was not enough to take it up into the average band. Another steady improvement moved science standards up within the average band.

2. When making comparisons between subjects, it is very important to note that there is very good evidence that when pupils join the school, standards in mathematics are much lower than those in English. The local authority makes a detailed analysis of the improvement that individual pupils make from the results of national testing at the age of seven to those achieved at the age of eleven. This shows that the value added between the tests is virtually the same for both subjects and also similar to the gains made by most schools. Another good indicator is the fact that, for the pupils in the present year four, national test results in 2000 were above average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics.

3. The school's policy of teaching in groups of similar attainment (setting) is helping to ensure that standards in English remain above average throughout the school with reading, the use of writing across the curriculum and pupils' speaking and listening skills as strengths. The latter is a feature of the school as regularly observed in discussions and in group work. Pupils in years six and seven are achieving above average standards while the improving trend can be seen in year five where standards are relatively even higher. Good support in and out of class is helping pupils who find reading and writing difficult gain confidence and make progress towards their learning targets. Boys and girls are doing equally well across the curriculum.

4. Similar setting arrangements for teaching numeracy, with a strong focus on the teaching of the subject in recent years, means that pupils are achieving well throughout the school and that attainment is building year on year. Though standards in year seven remain below average pupils are attaining average standards in year six and above in year five. Boys and girls in year four are making good progress from a low base as noted above. A strong feature of work in numeracy is in the development of pupils' confidence in mental maths. Those pupils identified as needing extra help with their numeracy are doing well in the smaller groupings involved.

5. The specialist teaching of science and an increase in the time devoted to the subject is seeing a continued improvement in attainment through the school similar to that observed in literacy and numeracy with average standards in years four, six and seven and above in five. Regular use of the school's laboratory is helping to improve standards in experimental science.

6. Specialist teaching in music, physical and religious education results in pupils achieving higher standards than those seen in most schools. Standards in history are also good. Overall standards in geography, design technology, art and French match current expectations for the ages of the pupils concerned. Standards in information and communications technology are building as the equipment, software and staff confidence and expertise improve. However, overall standards are below what is now expected in year seven while in the rest of the school, pupils' achievements are largely dependent on the confidence and expertise of the member of staff taking the lesson. In this context, the recent appointment of a computer technician to troubleshoot and support the teachers is already having a positive impact. In all the above subjects, pupils with a wide range of extra needs are fully included and make good progress.

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

7. Pupils display very good attitudes towards their school and are extremely courteous and friendly towards visitors. They hold doors open and constantly ask if they can help or guide lost adults to their destination. All the pupils looked tidy and smart, taking a particular pride in their games kit, which is seen as 'cooler' than that of opposing schools. Pupils interviewed during the inspection were keen to discuss their work and took pride in their achievements. The school has suffered no graffiti or damage since it was opened: boys and girls respect their environment and take care of it. Pupils can and do volunteer to join an environmental squad that picks up litter and looks after the grounds. In lessons, pupils listen attentively and show good powers of concentration. They try their best to complete the tasks given them, even when they do not fully understand what they have to do.

8. Behaviour observed during the inspection was very good. This was particularly impressive since the school's behaviour records show that the school does have some very challenging pupils, as parents stated at the pre-inspection meeting. There have been no permanent exclusions since the school opened: one fixed period exclusion took place in the last academic year. No unsatisfactory behaviour was observed, in class or out, during the inspection. Most behaviour in class was very good and on several occasions it was excellent. Pupils move sensibly around the school. They are required to do this a great deal because of the use of setting and specialist teaching for all year groups, yet pupils' good behaviour and quick reactions ensure that little time is lost between lessons. Behaviour during lunch (taken in classrooms) and playtimes is also good. The wet playtimes witnessed during the inspection were cheerful, well-organised occasions, when no poor behaviour or idle loitering was seen.

9. Pupils display a very good level of initiative and personal responsibility. All age groups can volunteer to be playground buddies, or to be considered for election for School Council. They also carry out various duties within their classrooms. In addition, year seven pupils can volunteer for library duties and take turns to act as duty monitor for the school office. All those involved take their responsibilities seriously and do their best to carry them out. School Council members feel the best things about their role is that they are helping other pupils, getting to know more people and promoting a wide range of ideas from lots of different children. (The worst things are missing playtimes and other pupils saying they are working for the teachers)

10. Relationships are good. Pupils feel part of a real community and expect adults to treat them courteously and feel able to confide in them about their problems. They show a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and very impressive respect for their feelings, values and beliefs. Discussions in class, particularly amongst older pupils, are often of a high level. Pupils are impressively articulate and show themselves willing and able to discuss difficult issues (for example, ethnic cleansing during a year seven class assembly), or to use debating skills to clarify problems (as in a discussion of the methodology to be used to solve a mathematics problem). Pupils work together in class extremely well, whether working in pairs or small groups. Attendance is satisfactory, conforming to national averages. Most pupils and their families understand the importance of regular attendance so there is no significant problem with holiday absences during term time. Pupils arrive punctually and settle quickly in their classrooms, enabling a prompt start to the school day.

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

11. Teaching was said to be good when the school was last inspected but one key issue was to improve some of the teaching in year seven where there was a 'significant minority of unsatisfactory teaching'. With a half of lessons observed throughout the school good, a quarter very good and better and none unsatisfactory, this represents a good improvement since the last report when ten lessons did not meet requirements. This time, 14 teachers taught at least one very good or better lesson in one of ten different subjects and almost all teachers had more good or very good lessons than satisfactory. At least two-thirds of lessons in each year group were good and better with a significant proportion of very good and excellent teaching in each but especially in years five and seven. Teaching overall is good with particular strengths in literacy, numeracy, art, music, physical education, religious education and personal, social and health education.

12. An important factor in this has been the contribution made by pupils to their own learning

through their very good behaviour and interest and enthusiasm for what they are learning. They learn from and help each other and complete tasks in good time. It is significant that lower standards of behaviour and poorer attitudes to learning by a minority of pupils are the main reasons why a few lessons are judged satisfactory. Although the quality of teaching is generally associated with the expertise of the teachers involved, the structures of the literacy and numeracy strategies and 'setting' arrangements have had a beneficial effect on the teaching of basic skills throughout the school. This is clearly seen in both subjects with pupils of all abilities able to achieve well in the smaller, very focused ability grouped sets. From excellent, challenging teaching in a year five higher attaining group writing a myth to a very experienced classroom teacher using all her professionalism to manage and motivate a bubbly low attaining year four group 'doing' their 2x and 3x tables and adding two digit numbers, the benefits of the 'setting' and the strategies are obvious.

13. Some specialist teaching of science and design and technology, usually in smaller groupings has a positive impact on standards in these subjects. In other subjects, class exchanges make it possible for teachers to use their strengths and interests, such as physical education, religious education and music, with classes other than their own. A very good example of this occurs most afternoons where the considerable pool of talent in physical education is put to good use for each year group in turn. High quality teaching, excellent facilities and a very well developed curriculum mean that standards in games are high. In an excellent volleyball session, large numbers of pupils were thoroughly engaged and really enjoyed working hard improving their skills. They obviously recognise and respect the expertise of the teacher and react with good sense and great energy to his coaching.

14. Most music teaching is undertaken by the music coordinator whose confidence and enthusiasm rubs off onto the groups he teaches so that they undertake complex tasks very confidently and happily appreciate a wide range of music from many cultures. From the 'Brandenburg Concerto' to 'Guns and Roses', and from Burundi drumming to a contemporary piece composed by Steve Reich based on African rhythms, year five pupils were 'walked' through a kaleidoscope of pulse and rhythm leading to a good understanding of the idea of the cyclic rhythm. In a very good year seven religious education lesson, very well prepared and resourced activities, the expertise of the teacher and the ability of the pupils to discuss difficult concepts at a high level led to a very good understanding of suffering and of the way this related to the four 'Noble Truths' of Buddha.

15. A good deal of effort has gone into improving and developing teaching over the years, especially in the core subjects. The benefits of this are obvious in the very impressive consistency shown in the quality of the basic structures of the teaching and learning process throughout the school. It is significant that each member of the senior management team achieved at least one very good lesson during the inspection. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives carefully matched to the needs of the pupils concerned and the expected learning outcomes are usually well defined at the beginning of lessons. Activities and children are usually very competently managed and controlled.

16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. All teachers write the individual education plans for the pupils in their class and this ensures that they are used in lesson planning. Most individual education plans have clear measurable targets, although in some classes these targets need to be broken down into smaller measurable components. The teaching of small groups is consistently good with high expectations of behaviour and achievement. Lessons have a brisk pace and pupils benefit from the teacher's extreme patience and continual reinforcement of her lesson objectives. Teaching assistants make a sound contribution to pupils' learning but their full potential is not exploited in some classes.

17. Minor criticisms in the last report about time 'slippage' when pupils or staff move between lessons and about some schemes of work have been very well sorted out and the whole school operates very efficiently with great clarity of purpose. However, an unintended consequence is that the timetable and the planned curriculum have become very inflexible so that unintended but potentially valuable learning opportunities are missed or rushed because of the needs of the clock or the plan.

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

## PUPILS?

18. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is very good. Pupils are given a very wide range of interesting and stimulating learning experiences that cover all the required elements and more. There is a good emphasis on the teaching of English, mathematics and science and the effectiveness of the strategy for teaching literacy is very good. A real strength of the curriculum is way in which the school has developed cross-curricular links. Foundation subjects all have a literacy focus such as the creating of reference books in geography on the great rivers of the world using information technology and in science designing and making a poster to inform younger children about solids, liquids and gases. There are many links within the foundation subjects such as work on maps of the school in art and design and pupils designing sculptures to enhance the pond environment outside school linking with geography. The curriculum is also enhanced by many visits to places of interest, visitors and by good use of the local environment, for instance pupils visit the Mary Rose, the Tutankhamen Museum, the Roman Baths, Salisbury Cathedral and Carey Camp as part of their work in a range of subjects.

19. Planning in all subjects is meticulous. The school has adopted the national strategies and schemes of work for each subject. This has successfully addressed the concerns in the previous inspection that the absence of whole school schemes of work in some subjects impeded the systematic building of skills. Short term planning takes place weekly in year groups and ensures consistency across the years but sometimes it is so prescriptive that it inhibits some curriculum opportunities. For example, in history, a tight lesson plan limited the amount of time the teacher allowed pupils to discuss and research the hardships of Victorian childhood when the pupils were clearly interested and wished to take it further.

20. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is excellent. There is a very carefully planned programme of work for all year groups and all classes have at least one lesson a week when they consider issues which affect them, their lives and the lives of others. For example, year six pupils discussed decision making and its problems and year seven pupils talked about ethnic minorities and how racism largely stems from ignorance. All year groups have at least one module relating to sex education and drugs education. Many people from the local community are encouraged to come into school and talk to pupils about their role in the community. These include the police officer, whose regular visits to school to lead discussion on such issues as crime, safety and drugs are highly valued. Other visits are made by the rail safety officer, lifeguards and the fire brigade.

21. The arrangements the school makes to deal with pupils special educational needs is good and this makes a positive impact on their learning. Many pupils receive sound support in the classroom from teaching assistants to enable them to join in with the full curriculum. Those who are withdrawn are well supported by the special needs co-ordinator who also takes lower ability groups for English and mathematics. However, because of timetable constraints, some of these pupils are together for an hour of literacy followed by an hour of numeracy, working in large groups of sixteen to eighteen pupils. They find it difficult to concentrate for this length of time in a small room and as a result their progress is often inhibited, in spite of the efforts made by the special needs co-ordinator. All pupils have access to all the extra-curricular activities of the school and the school's policy of inclusion is very successful.

22. Pupils' learning is much enhanced by the excellent links the school has made with the local community. The school has worked hard since its establishment to strengthen its community links, primarily through making its facilities widely available. The decision by Poole Football Club to base itself at the school has been particularly successful. The pavilion was greatly upgraded and is no longer a target for vandalism, and floodlights were installed, increasing the amount of time when the pitch could be used. The pitch is also used by Poole Youth Football Club, Dorset Fire Service, Poole Police, the Dorset Schools Football Association, the Poole and East Dorset Under-11s, and the AFC Bournemouth School for Excellence. The English Schools Football Association hold their annual seven-a-side regional finals here. Poole Old Grammarians and St Mary's Combined Roman Catholic School use the school's cricket facilities. The sports

facilities inside the school are also well used by the community. Poole Junior Netball Club holds all its training for pupils aged 11-15 here and it is the base for Wessex Volleyball Club. Two keep-fit clubs for adults are held at the school, and the Olympic athlete Todd Bennett has run training courses using the site. The school's premises are also used for meetings by the local educational authority, Poole Flower Club, the Society of Poole Men and the Dorset Wildlife Trust, which is providing expertise to enable the school to develop its pond and coppice.

23. The school has always had close links with the parish church: members of clergy have served as governors, and special services have been held there. Carol services have also been held at the local Roman Catholic Church. Speakers from both churches have visited the school, as have representatives of the Bournemouth Synagogue, the Bournemouth Islamic Cultural Centre, the Salvation Army, and a Christian evangelical group. The school choir has sung at the Salvation Army Citadel. Local businesses generously support fairs and raffles by providing prizes: for instance, Tesco provided oranges for the Christingle service and strawberries for teas at the summer fair. Local business and industry also gave some funding towards the cost of producing the homework diary. The school makes good use of the local environment to enhance the curriculum. It regularly participates in the Poole Schools Carol Concert and has hosted the Middle School Poole Town Sports.

24. Oakdale School has an excellent relationship with its partner institutions. It is part of a local group headed by Poole High School (PHS) who work together and cooperate over curriculum, pastoral and attendance issues. Pupils use the PHS swimming pool for lessons while PHS makes use of the school's minibuses and plays sporting events against the school. There are regular meetings for curriculum coordination, particularly in science. School representatives attend the PHS prize givings and productions, and year seven pupils take part in an end-of-year bridging project run in conjunction with PHS. It also has particularly close relationships with its two feeder first schools, whose pupils are invited to school productions. Year four class teachers visit the schools in the summer term to meet their future pupils, who also come for a visit. Staff liaise closely with year three teachers over such issues as special needs. Year four pupils make brochures about their first year to give to their successors. The school also liaises with the five schools who take pupils for year eight, both over transfer arrangements and as a provider of work experience. It has just begun a partnership with Poole Grammar School in its bid for specialist status in information communication technology and mathematics. Oakdale is a partner of the University of Exeter for teacher training: students also work at one of the school's two principal feeder schools as part of their training.

25. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. Clubs take place after school, and during the lunch hour, so that pupils can arrive at 8.30 and not leave until 5.30. Sporting activities include soccer, netball, hockey, athletics, cricket, cross country running, gymnastics, basketball, volleyball, rugby, swimming, badminton, tennis, and rounders. The school staff provide recorder tuition and a choir: peripatetic instruction is available in brass, woodwind, string, guitar and percussion instruments. There are also clubs for art, craft, drama, Warhammer, chess, and the school newspaper. Pupils are offered two residential visits including one to Normandy for year seven, as well as activity weeks and a 'Youth Afloat' residential weekend in year six. They make a wide range of visits to support learning to art galleries, museums and other places of interest. A drama workshop expert visits regularly to give pupils a taste of Roman, Victorian or Tudor life. However, no visiting authors or artists have yet come to the school.

26. Overall arrangements for enhancing pupils' personal development are very good with strengths in the moral, social and cultural aspects. Arrangements for their spiritual development are satisfactory. They acquire knowledge and insight into Christian values and beliefs, and those of some of the world's other great religions, and have some opportunities for reflection within religious education lessons through a time of thoughtful quietness. Members of other faith communities visiting the school from time to time add to the spiritual dimension offered. Year seven pupils are provided with the opportunity to seek answers about faiths within a forum. Discussion of feelings is addressed at appropriate times in the personal, social and health education programme. However, time is limited for real opportunities for reflection across the curriculum as a result of tight curriculum planning and timetabling. The coordinator plans

collective worship very well but, in practice, many of the acts of worship observed did not meet statutory requirements. In these, no recognition was made of a supreme deity and no time given for reflection and prayer. The content does not aid their spiritual development.

27. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. A moral code is being positively and sensitively encouraged throughout the school and the school effectively applies a positive behaviour management policy. Pupils discuss and agree their class rules each term. Rewards and sanctions are clearly set out and followed which helps to promote fairness and consistency. These are reviewed regularly. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. The personal, social and health education programme is a strong contributor to the provision of moral education through forums set up to aid discussion and debate; for example, year seven pupils are skilfully taught about issues of racism. Circle time is being introduced, currently only in year four. The inspection indicates that while pupils have not yet fully grasped circle time rules, they greatly enjoy these occasions, which are well managed by staff.

28. The worker of the week award supports self esteem and is valued by the pupils and house points give a mechanism for working together as a group. All staff promote a very caring ethos based on respect and concern for one another. Pupils are involved in and regularly contribute to a variety of charity events, some of which are originated by the pupils themselves. Many have recently supported the Salvation Army, 'adopted' pupils in Kenya and supported local athletes through 'Super Schools'. They are very good at accepting responsibility in class and around the school; for example older pupils take responsibility for monitoring the front entrance throughout the day. Members of the school council take their designated duties seriously and give good support to others. The council holds regular fortnightly meetings when they report any suggestions or complaints from their 'constituencies', and councillors are on duty in the playground to assist the lunchtime supervisors. They also act as guides on parents' evenings and Open Day, man stalls at the summer sale and sell ice-cream on school Fun Days. After the first few meetings, pupils take over the running of the meetings from the link teacher, who remains in an advisory capacity. Close links with other schools in the locality provides for further social skills to be developed through such occasions as the hosting of events and mixing with other pupils. Boys and girls with very special needs are very well integrated into the school and valued by their classmates.

29. Cultural development is very well promoted. Since the previous inspection the school has extended opportunities offered. Pupils' awareness of their own culture is acquired through visits to places of educational interest related to the curriculum; for example to museums, a local artist's gallery and places of worship, including those of other faiths. Our English cultural heritage is studied through such areas as literature and the study of the witches in Shakespeare's 'Macbeth', as well as country dancing as part of the physical education curriculum. Pupils' study of other cultural traditions is very good. Opportunities arise within the curriculum, for example, in the study of other faiths and visits to religious centres, and the customs of other countries studied in geography. The learning of French and residential visits to France add to the pupils knowledge and understanding of another countries customs in a very practical way. Pupils listen regularly to a wide range of recorded world music such as Burundi drumming, and learn songs from many other cultures. In art, they look at the work of many artists and cultures such as the impressionists and make their own attempts to use their techniques. Those who practise a particular faith have the opportunity for prayer within a specially designated room and their festivals are respected and celebrated.

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

30. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour, and for eliminating oppressive behaviour, are excellent. The policies on behaviour and on bullying are clear and offer detailed guidance to staff. The school has a simple four-point code of conduct which is widely displayed.

All teachers have a behaviour record book where they note down poor behaviour such as theft, damage to property, defiance of staff, hitting other pupils, spitefulness, fighting or bullying. Any complaints from parents are also noted and promptly followed up. Pupils who behave badly are asked to undertake tasks such as writing a list of 'twenty-five sensible things I could do at wet playtime' or to send written apologies to teachers or to other pupils as necessary. An anger management course was run for eight pupils last year with the full support of their parents. Pupils understood the strategies they were shown and have subsequently made use of them. Home visits to discuss behaviour and attendance issues are made when necessary. A number of pupils have been successfully integrated after being excluded from other schools.

31. Considerable attention has been devoted to the management of playtimes. A midday supervision policy gives clear guidance with two supervisors per year group, one of whom is in charge of first aid, the other on playground patrol. They use a yellow/red warning card system and keep a record of bookings. There are always a good number of clubs running during any playtime. On wet days, in addition to attending indoor clubs, pupils can use the computers, do art and craft activities, play cards or board games, and use construction kits. Two staff are on duty in each year area. At playtime ball games are allowed in only two areas: there are also two designated quiet areas. A card system permits access to toilets, computers, the inner quadrangle and the library.

32. The school makes very good arrangements for monitoring and improving attendance. Clear guidance is provided for staff and parents in the attendance policy and the prospectus. Attendance is constantly monitored using a computerised system. Class teachers are asked to follow up unexplained absences at the end of each week, and detailed records are kept of all following-up of poor attendance or punctuality. Attendance levels of below 90% are investigated by class teachers and year group heads. The school, in close liaison with the educational welfare service, works hard to support families in crisis to enable their children to attend school. Parents are asked to notify the school on the first day of absence, and to send in a note of explanation on the pupil's return. Registration is managed quickly and efficiently in all classes, and registers fulfil statutory requirements.

33. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of all in the school community are very good. The deputy head is the child protection liaison officer and the school works closely with the social services and other relevant agencies. The school's child protection policy, which follows local authority guidelines and is reviewed annually, provides staff with clear guidance. All staff are fully briefed on child protection issues when they join the school, and have a reporting form included in their behaviour record books. Any children causing concerns are discussed at the start of the weekly staff meeting. Confidential records are kept in a locked cupboard.

34. Clear and detailed health and safety policies outline everybody's responsibilities. Problems with car parking, which were an issue at the time of the last inspection, have been dealt with. The school has virtually no problem with vandalism or intrusion into the grounds: this is partly due to the installation of close-circuit television but even more to the extensive use of the facilities after hours and at weekends for sporting activities, including Poole Police Football Club. Visitors must wear identifying badges and anyone working with pupils on an individual basis must agree to be police-checked.

35. The deputy head, who is also a health and safety governor, has developed a detailed risk assessment checklist. His training in outdoor pursuits means that he is extremely safety-conscious, particularly on offsite visits: he and the headteacher both hold certificates in offsite safety management. The risk assessment checklist covers the whole site inside and out, lists all possible hazards, the resulting hazard level, the precautions previously taken and whether new action is necessary. It is extremely detailed, thorough, well-thought-out provision, specifically tailored to the school's particular needs. There is a rolling programme of risk assessment throughout the year. Electrical appliances, design and technology equipment and physical education equipment and fire appliances are all tested annually by specialist contractors. The whole staff has recently had training in risk assessment and all class teachers have their own risk assessment checklist for their classroom.



36. The caretaker and the science coordinator carry out COSHH (care of substances hazardous to health) assessments on all chemicals within their areas of responsibility and these are stored in locked cupboards. The delivery of chemicals to the school is always prearranged and supervised by the responsible staff. The caretaker has been trained in manual handling assessment: training is planned for all staff during the course of this year. All staff recently had training in handling fire appliances by the fire brigade. All staff who drive one of the school minibuses have to complete a local authority course of instruction. There are four first aid posts. Three members of staff hold the four-day first aid qualification; two have the one day qualification; all staff are given in-house training by St John's Ambulance. Medicines and epipens are kept in a locked cabinet: the administration of any medicine is noted and counter-signed. The accident books are regularly monitored to detect any underlying problems in the accommodation or the pattern of the school day. However, there is no dedicated medical room and sick children have to sit on the chairs in the reception area.

37. Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are very good. The senior management team and class teachers make every effort to get to know the pupils and their families. Pupils are assigned on arrival at the school to one of four houses and house points can be awarded for good work. Every week a 'worker of the week' is chosen from each class. Provision for personal, social and health education is thoroughly planned to ensure progression from one year group to the next. Good use is made of outside speakers from the emergency services, and of a drama group who do presentations on bullying and alcohol. The School Council provides a valuable guide to pupils' views. Four members of each year group are elected by their peers after making an election speech (year four representatives are appointed after half a term when they have had time to get to know each other). They hold office for a year. This term a 'playground buddy' system has been instituted. Ten pupils are appointed as 'buddies' per term, from different classes, four being on duty in the playground every day. They meet every week for discussion and to learn a new 'playground craze' – games sent in by parents and grandparents – to teach to other pupils. There is no formal monitoring of personal development, apart from the assessments made of personal, social and health education lessons.

38. Very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are being continually reviewed for their effectiveness, which has been maintained since the last inspection. A very good assessment policy and timetable sets out the schedule of assessments each term. Subject coordinators have produced very good assessment tests and tasks that are used regularly by teachers. The school is also fortunate to be part of a pilot scheme with a commercial company which specialises in assessment testing, and which marks all the papers for the school. The assessment coordinator is very effective in ensuring that all assessment data is analysed regularly. Information is used extremely well to guide teachers with planning, to organise pupils into groups for English and mathematics and as a management tool for deploying of staff. It is also used very effectively to set school and pupil targets, both group and individual. These are proving to be extremely useful in raising standards. Assessment information is used very well to ensure that activities are planned to meet the needs of all ability groups and to focus on areas for development such as the recent focus on raising attainment in science.

39. Subject coordinators are beginning to collect samples of pupils' work, carefully matched to National Curriculum attainment targets, which are being put into portfolios to support teachers when they are assessing individual pupil's work. Attainment targets are broken down into small components within each level to ensure accurate assessments. Careful records are kept of levels of attainment and progress made, together with samples of work with agreed levels. The school plans to use this information to predict the levels each pupil is expected to achieve by the end of the year.

40. Assessment procedures are also used very effectively to identify those pupils who are finding learning difficult. The breaking down of assessment into smaller steps is helpful to pupils who are making slower progress. Good liaison with outside professionals ensures that pupils' needs are fully met. At present the school is benefiting from some very good voluntary support from an Outreach worker. The school's provision for pupils with statements of special educational

needs is good.

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

41. The school has good and effective links with parents. The head and deputy head are readily available to parents and the prospectus emphasises that the school has an 'open door' policy. A questionnaire is sent out to parents biannually to gather their views on various aspects of school life. In addition, the school holds an annual Open Day when parents and local residents are invited to visit classes and see displays of pupils' work. A home-school agreement has been used since the school started. New parents are invited to the school in the summer term and meetings are also held to clarify the options for the transfer to secondary school. Every pupil has a homework diary which also includes a record of his or her reading and guidance on homework. Parents are encouraged to support reading and conversation. Staff make every effort to get to know pupils and their families and the office staff provide friendly and welcoming faces at the school reception desk. However, parents are not invited to attend class or year group assemblies.

42. Parents' views of the school are good overall. They are confident that their children enjoy school, and that they are well taught. They think the school has high expectations of its pupils and helps them become more mature. They are pleased with the provision for extra-curricular activities and think their children are making good progress, and that behaviour is good. Some parents do not feel that the school works well in partnership with parents, are not satisfied with the work that their children are given to do at home, and do not always feel well informed.

43. The impact of parents' involvement on the school is good. A number of parents come in regularly to hear readers, help in the library and provide support in other ways during lessons. Others help with the extracurricular provision in music and sport. The School Association is run by a committee of parents and staff with a parent and a teacher appointed alternately as chair and parent representatives from the communities of both Oakdale and South Road. The Association has a tabletop sale in the summer and runs discos each term for pupils. It raises about £3,000 a year for the school. It is also the sole provider of the school uniform, a business which is run on a non-profit-making basis to keep costs to parents low. Committee members man a stall in the school foyer at which requirements may be purchased. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is satisfactory. The majority of homework set is done. Some parents regularly hear their children read, provide specific items when required, and help their children research topics on the Internet or in local libraries. Others, with difficult personal circumstances, are not able to give much support for their children's learning

44. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus and governors' report are clear and helpful, and fulfil statutory requirements. Each year group sends out a 'welcome' letter in September giving general information, and sometimes a small amount of curriculum information. Letters are sent out during the term on specific topics such as forthcoming visits or activities, and a newsletter at the end of term celebrates achievements. The school has run workshops for parents on numeracy, sex education and drugs awareness. It has also tried to create a home-school science link: parents are encouraged to assist their children by doing simple experiments with them. The noticeboard for parents did not seem to be much used at the time of the inspection.

45. Reports are written on automatic copy paper: the top copy goes to the parent, the other is kept by the school. For each subject, pupils are graded for effort, personal organisation, attention in class, participation in lessons and presentation of work. A second section grades them for skills relating specifically to the subject, for instance, for cooperation, safety, creativity and coordination in physical education. There is a sentence providing an 'overview of performance' and another covering 'target for improvement'. Overall the reports provide parents with a good idea of children's progress. The reports offer some information on the nature of the curriculum covered and in some cases the 'overview of performance' was actually a summary of material studied. The weakest area was the 'target for improvement': in some cases these were too vague (for example 'with more effort [he] will produce work reflecting his ability'). The reports do not give any guidance as to how parents might support their children's learning. Termly parent consultations are held but with their children being taught by several teachers, several parents do

not feel they provide them with the information they require.

46. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are supportive, involved and given the opportunity to discuss their child's individual education plan during the consultation meetings, held each term for all parents. Most attend these meetings and every effort is made by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to contact any parents unable to attend the meetings. Careful records are kept of contacts made with the parents but at present they do not sign the individual education plan nor is there a particular target for the parent to support their child with their difficulties, at home. Parents of pupils who find it difficult to conform to school rules are very involved with the school and meet regularly with the deputy head.

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

47. The school had only been in existence for just over two terms at the time of the last inspection, and the report gave full credit to the management team saying that together, they had achieved 'a great deal in a short time' to ensure 'a smooth transition for pupils, that staff taking on new roles have settled quickly' and that 'the ethos of high expectations had been established'. The strong foundations laid then have been very well built on so that the school is now in a very strong position. The combined talents of the head, the deputy head and latterly the assistant head, have made it possible for the school to have already created a tradition of high standards in many areas of its work. Very well developed policies, structures, procedures and ways of working are known and implemented consistently throughout the school community. A very careful eye is kept to ensure that nothing slips and as a consequence, pupils and staff all know exactly what is expected of them. Everyone in the school community fully understands his or her respective role and is committed to fulfilling it and in constantly improving. The last report said that, 'The overall management of this new school is developing well'. It is now possible to say with real certainty that the leadership and management of Oakdale South Road School is very good and that the contribution of the senior management team in this has been outstanding.

48. At the time of the last inspection, many subject coordinators were new to their roles and the expectations upon them. The school has made a substantial investment in time and finances to making it possible for all staff with management roles to develop their expertise and make an impact on their responsibilities. All staff have non-contact time for this purpose and all have very specific roles and targets within their areas of responsibility. Staff manage their responsibilities very effectively and are very conscientious. Together they form a powerful force for good within the school.

49. Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The register of special needs is efficiently maintained and regularly reviewed and full provision is made for pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The co-ordinator has appropriate plans to review the policy and inform staff of the recent government advice in the light of the introduction of the new Code of Practice. She has produced a good handbook for all staff to inform them of procedure and explanations of medical conditions. Special educational needs funds and resources are carefully audited to ensure the needs of the pupils are fully met. The school's management promotes a very good inclusive atmosphere.

50. Governors are very supportive and committed to the school, many visiting on a regular basis. They now have a well-defined and understood structure of committees and individual responsibilities and a clear programme related to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Many bring considerable expertise to the governing body and all are very keen for the school to succeed. They take their monitoring role seriously visiting regularly and receiving feedback from staff on the effectiveness of various current policy developments. As individuals and as a body they know their school and their responsibilities very well. The special needs governor has particular expertise in his area of responsibility. He has a clear view of provision in the school and reports regularly to the governing body on special needs issues.

51. Monitoring and evaluation have high priorities in the school community with the lead taken

by the deputy and assistant heads who keep a very close watch on what is happening. Standards, classroom practice and the effectiveness of policies and procedures are kept under review by responsible staff and governors. Very good use is made of available data and other information to identify trends and make comparisons. The evaluation of assessment data is used effectively to decide what needs to be done. For example, in the past the data indicated that the school needed to focus its improvement planning on mathematics and science. This it has done to good effect and standards are improving steadily through the school in both subjects. Recent developments in using more detailed assessment procedures for 'tracking' individual pupils and similar groups through the school have great potential for making this an even more rigorous process. Very good use is made of information and communications technology for this purpose. Individual members of staff are encouraged to think about their own performance through professional interviews, and professional development through in-service training has a high priority. The clearly structured and very practical school improvement plan is a comprehensive document which focuses on the key aim of improving standards and involves everyone in deciding what should be included and how effective actions have been.

52. The school budgets thoroughly for all expenditure and has benefited greatly from shrewdly targeted spending. A well-structured School Improvement Plan (SIP) ensures spending decisions are linked to priorities by sound financial planning. The SIP identifies proposed development for the year, although the school has produced a business plan which details longer term financial projections for the following six years. The SIP identifies the key issues, the priorities for the year, and the improvements, timescales, cost and performance indicator for the other planned developments the school wishes to make, as well as details of the Standards Funds expenditure for the year.

53. Governors are kept well informed of the emerging financial position through committees which meet termly. They are briefed at all stages of the process, including staff consultations, identification of priorities for development and financial planning. The Finance Committee and the whole Governing Body are given comprehensive oral and written reports twice every term and have the opportunity at each meeting to question the Finance Officer and members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) to clarify any issues arising. They receive print outs of the financial management system, which highlights recent changes in LEA budget allocation and variations in recent expenditure, and options available to deal with projected over or under spends. In the last inspection procedures for monitoring and evaluating educational and financial planning were not in place. Clearly both the SMT and Governors are now in a good position to monitor expenditure to ensure money is spent wisely. Systems of financial control are very well developed and respective roles and responsibilities are appropriately defined. Good accounting records are maintained and monitored by the school. Each subject leader has a delegated budget that they manage in accordance with the priorities identified in their part of the SIP. All financial resources, including SEN funding, are tightly managed.

54. At present the school has a healthy budget surplus of approximately £200,000 as a result of increased pupil numbers and other historical factors beyond their control. Financial projections show that, if the present level of funding continues and the school maintains its current staffing level, the budget will be in deficit in five years. The Governors have never-the-less been exploring ways of using most of the money, if it is possible, to provide additional space for another computer suite to improve provision.

55. School administrative staff and the finance officer provide high quality support. The school's administration systems are efficient, unobtrusive and support the day to day running of the school. A finance computer package is well used to raise orders and monitor spending. The most recent external audit found the financial control and administrative procedures to be sound and operating satisfactorily. Although the report made no formal recommendations, a number of suggestions were made, which the school has addressed in full. For example a detailed contingency plan has been established detailing the procedures to be taken in the event of an emergency closure of the school.

56. The Governing Body and Headteacher always strive to apply 'best value' principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition by involving qualified professionals. They

make good use of the all information available to target their spending to bring about improvements in provision and standards. Overall the strategic use of resources, including funding is very good.

57. A generous number of staff meet the needs of the pupils very well. Boys and girls benefit from having specialist teachers for many subjects, including science, design technology, music and physical education, particularly higher up in the school. Class sizes are high but extra staff employed by the school enables pupils to be taught in smaller groups for English and mathematics. Senior managers have enough non-contact time to carry out their additional duties. Procedures for the induction of new staff are very good with a very good programme for newly qualified teachers. The school is very well equipped to support the training of new teachers, which it does regularly through its links with Exeter University. Sufficient support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum are satisfactorily deployed to support the needs of the pupils but there is scope for them to be more involved and active in several classrooms.

58. The spacious, bright and attractively appointed school building provides excellent accommodation for staff and pupils. The fact that they are still in such very good condition is a testament to the efforts of the caretaking and cleaning staff and also to the pride which pupils have in their school. It also has a number of rooms particularly designed for specialist teaching, such as a science laboratory, design technology room and a food technology room, excellent music and drama studio and school library. These rooms provide the pupils with very good opportunities and support their learning extremely well. The excellent sports hall is particularly designed to enable sports such as badminton and volley ball to take place indoors, and there are extensive playing fields outside. The school's very good links with the local football team has enabled it to benefit from the playing field being floodlit.

59. Overall, the quality and range of resources is good with very good resources for physical education, religious education and art. The school library is very well equipped. Curriculum provision is also enhanced by visits in the local area and extended visits, including an annual trip to France.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

60. To build on its many strengths, the governors, head and staff of Oakdale South Road Middle School should:

- (1) While maintaining the efficiency, cohesion and consistency achieved over the years, do whatever is possible to build some flexibility into timetabling and curriculum planning so that spontaneity, creativity and innovation are not inhibited by:
  - identifying times through the week which are not constrained by class or teacher movement in each year group and encouraging year teams to explore ways of using this time to allow teachers and pupils to follow self-generated extended lines of enquiry where appropriate
  - while ensuring consistency and cohesion, making planning less prescriptive and encouraging teachers to adapt it to their own needs and those of the class
  - regularly changing the times when teachers have non-contact time so they can use it for monitoring what is going on in other classrooms in their area of

responsibility

(Paragraphs 17, 19, 21, 80 & 84)

- (2) Ensure that pupils have enough opportunities to add depth to their learning and reflect on their experiences by:
- looking for opportunities to include these elements when planning work in all areas of the curriculum
  - taking opportunities as they arise to develop pupils' thinking and awareness about deeper issues
  - ensuring that all class collective worship meets requirements  
(Paragraph 26)
- (3) Make the most of the investment the school is making in extra classroom help by:
- ensuring that all classroom assistants have an active role, clearly understood by them and the children, at all times
  - involving them more in the planning and evaluating processes so that they feel a greater sense of ownership of the work they do
  - building on training already provided to develop particular strengths or interests as needed by the school  
(Paragraphs 16, 57 & 75)

### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Visits are well used but few visiting authors or artists have come to the school.  
(Paragraph 25)
- There is no dedicated medical room  
(Paragraph 36)
- Standards in information technology are often determined by the confidence and expertise of the teacher taking the class  
(Paragraph 6 & 112)
- The hour long French session is a challenge for many pupils, especially those who find the subject difficult in the large mixed ability classes (Paragraph 116)
- With their children being taught by several teachers, several parents do not feel that discussions with teachers provide them with the information they require.  
(Paragraph 45)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	106
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	22	53	28			
Percentage	3	21	50	27			

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		545
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		119

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	66	71	137

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	55	47	57
	Girls	59	38	62
	Total	114	85	119
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (87)	62 (66)	87 (85)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	53	47	53
	Girls	58	42	57
	Total	111	89	110
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (81)	65 (67)	80 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	4
Indian	4
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	514
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1
--	---

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y7

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	23
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	34.1

#### Education support staff: YR– Y7

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	334

### Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	1058842
Total expenditure	995368
Expenditure per pupil	1830
Balance brought forward from previous year	63470
Balance carried forward to next year	233623

### Results of the survey of parents and carers

#### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

546

Number of questionnaires returned

245

#### Percentage of responses in each category

My child likes school.

My child is making good progress in school.

Behaviour in the school is good.

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	53	2	1	
My child is making good progress in school.	41	51	4	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	60	3		5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	59	17	5	
The teaching is good.	36	59	2		2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	55	16	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	43	9		2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	2		2
The school works closely with parents.	23	51	16	5	4
The school is well led and managed.	42	51	2	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	60	5	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	38	2		2

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

### **ENGLISH**

61. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attain above average standards, which is similar to the findings in the previous report. Attainment of pupils in year seven is well above those expected nationally, which is a significant improvement on the previous report. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual education plans.

62. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average throughout the school. Pupils speak clearly and are eager to present their ideas and viewpoints confidently. They are able to offer comparisons of the characters and settings within books. Boys and girls sort out their ideas in sequence and use a wide vocabulary correctly, including that specific to subjects. They speak with expression and are well able to discuss a range of topics in a meaningful way. Most are confident within role-play situations and use their knowledge of situations and language to effect. For example, year four pupils within religious education acted out the feelings of Joseph and Mary when they found their son missing in Jerusalem. Pupils listen attentively, concentrating on what teachers and pupils say, as well as to tape and video recordings and music.

63. The attainment of eleven-year-olds in reading is above the national average. By the end of the key stage, the average and higher attainers read accurately and fluently for a range of purposes. Lower attaining pupils are less confident, not recognising the purpose of punctuation or understanding the text sufficiently well to self-correct mistakes. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to read with sustained concentration. They have a wide knowledge of books, which they enjoy talking about, and have well developed library skills by the end of year six. Most read books for information and understand the value and use of the contents, index and glossary pages. They know and understand how to find books in the school library including the use of the catalogue system. Pupils in year four use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words. They are able to self-correct their reading when the meaning is inappropriate, as well as explaining the story. They read together as a class confidently, enjoy the fantasy poem, 'The King of Quizzical Island' and explore the vocabulary of a nonsense verse. Pupils are confident in talking about their favourite books. Year seven identify the characters in Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' and show a very good awareness of the roles they play in the plot. They explore the language and recognise the changed form, meaning and spellings of words.

64. Standards in writing are above average at the end of year six and well above in year seven. Throughout the school, grammar, spelling and punctuation continue to be taught systematically and pupils make good progress, extending the range of formal and informal writing across the subjects of the curriculum. They develop their awareness of how writers use words and varied sentence structure to hold the reader's attention. Across the school pupils write for a wide range of purposes using suitable formats including diaries, stories, poetry, letters and descriptions. This includes non-fiction writing such as a record of the Egyptian day they enjoyed and the writing of recipes for cooking. Year four pupils write a fantasy poem using language linked to other areas of learning, for example set in shape land or magnetic land. Pupils in year five write their own version of a myth, which they fit into a well-defined structure. Successful links are made to other subject areas, such as the writing of the 'Plague Rap' whilst studying the Tudors. Pupils in year six enjoy reading stories of 'Harry Potter' and then write a play script that is converted to picture frames. They have developed a good idea of structure within story writing. Pupils in year seven produce impressive folders linked to geography. They are organised as a reference book and pupils have made good use of information technology. Pupils throughout the school are

encouraged to plan and draft their work to improve style, content and punctuation. They work with a critical friend to revise and edit work effectively. Information and computer technology is sometimes used effectively in the drafting process. Almost all pupils write fluently and legibly in well-formed script as a result of regular practice.

65. Overall the quality of teaching is good throughout the school with some very good and excellent teaching within all year groups. A very important factor in this is the way the school has made it possible for pupils to be taught in smaller groups of similar attainment in each year group. This is especially the case for lower attaining pupils, many of whom finding learning difficult, make good progress as a result of the well-focused teaching and good support this makes possible. Teachers have a good understanding of the content and requirements of the curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. Lessons are very well prepared and teachers' plans have clear objectives, which are shared with pupils to focus their learning well. Subject knowledge is very good and skilful questioning by teachers promotes quick responses from all pupils in the class. Explanations are clear and the very apparent enthusiasm of teachers for the subject has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and interest. They settle promptly to their tasks working independently when required in a very calm atmosphere. The pace of lessons is good with suitably challenging work for all pupils. Pupils are given responsibility for their own learning and encouraged to use their initiative, which they do very successfully.

66. Since the last report the literacy strategy has been very successfully implemented. The year seven programmes of study are currently being studied. Standards in writing have improved and a greater awareness of opportunities for extended writing recognised. Resources have been reviewed to support teachers and the revised curriculum. A separate coordinator has been appointed for the development of speaking and listening.

67. The English coordinator has a clear view of her role and has monitored the implementation of the literacy strategy effectively. She monitors planning and standards of pupils' work through moderated work samples and the analysis of the optional tests in years four, five and seven. Learning targets are set for individuals, which are referred to regularly, using a range of assessments and carefully structured work and this has a positive impact upon standards. Pupils make very good use of the school library, both as a centre to read fiction and to research for information. The coordinator for speaking and listening has introduced a structured programme for pupils in year five and six to cover all elements of the National Curriculum and ensure continuity and progression in learning in all subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

68. Results of National tests taken by 11 year olds have improved year on year since the last inspection, the improvement being largely consistent with that achieved in other schools. However, pupils' attainment in mathematics on entry is below average and, although pupils make good progress and are achieving well, results of the tests have been stubbornly below average so far when compared to all schools and similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher grade, Level 5, is better and is average when making the same comparisons. Overall this is still disappointing since results in English over the same period have been above average.

69. However, inspection evidence obtained during the inspection from lesson observations, talking to children and analysis of work indicates that standards in year six are better and year five better still, which suggest results should rise in the next two years. Consequently the judgement on attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly similar to that made in the last Ofsted inspection, when it was said 'attainment is similar to the national average.' The overall attainment of the year seven pupils remains as it was at the end of Key Stage 2, below average. In 2000 and 2001 tests, boys outperformed girls in mathematics. However, in two previous years, girls outperformed boys and no differences were noted during the inspection.

70. Through the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) and the commitment of the staff to raise standards in the subject, pupils, including children with special educational needs, are now making at least satisfactory and mainly good progress and are achieving well. The effective implementation of the NNS has brought necessary rigour to the planning and a proper progression to the development of the subject through the school. This is

much aided by pupils being taught in smaller groups of similar attainment or 'sets' which helps pupils of all abilities but especially those who find mathematics difficult.

71. As pupils progress through the school their understanding, knowledge and skills of mathematics are increased and refined. In year four, pupils are well challenged to use any operation to make the numbers on five dice 'come to' a given total. They understand that numbers can be added in any order and that re-ordering can help in their calculations. The pupils are very willing to share and explain the method used. By year five pupils can identify factors of a number and can multiply numbers by 10, 100, 1000 etc. In year six pupils use a variety of methods to write down multiplication calculations. They are able to construct a simple bar and pie charts, plot coordinates, translate and reflect shapes. In the oldest classes pupils further extend their skills and knowledge in mathematics. Average pupils understand letters can represent numbers, although several struggled to long multiply using the conventional method. Their more able classmates construct quite complex line charts (e.g.  $y=x/2$ ) and are able to solve algebraic equations, such as  $2x+4=14$ . The standard of presentation of the pupils' work is generally satisfactory, with some examples of some very well presented work.

72. Pupils' attitude to mathematics is good. The behaviour observed in all maths lessons was at least good and often very good or excellent. Pupils are nearly always fully engaged in their work, interested and work hard. They respond enthusiastically, particularly in the mental maths and are eager to volunteer answers or explain the strategy they are using. Pupils apply effort, work well on the task and listen attentively. Boys and girls respect the feelings of their classmates and spontaneously show their appreciation when others share their work or give a correct answer. In the lower ability sets pupils try hard, behave and listen well. Occasionally, however, a few appear passive and disengaged, despite the best efforts of the teachers.

73. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good with some very good lessons and some satisfactory. The school has embraced the introduction of the NNS and confidence has grown in the teaching of the subject. Planning is now thorough and systematic and closely linked to previous lessons with clear learning objectives. Work is well matched to the ability of the pupils, not only through the ability setting, but also within a set where, quite often, the teacher provides three levels of work. Teachers ensure activities are well chosen so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, can take part. Appropriate resources and equipment are used effectively to ensure understanding. In mental maths, the use of different resources, such as number boards and number cards gives every child the opportunity to answer and so be fully involved. Analysis of work indicates satisfactory use is made of practical activities to reinforce concepts and skills. Questioning is well used to extend and challenge pupils thinking and to assess knowledge. Pupils are well managed and clearly know what is expected of them. Some teachers set time limits to ensure learning is more productive. Boys and girls are further encouraged to try hard by praise and the school's reward system.

74. Where teaching is better the pace of lessons is brisk, with a good mix of direct teaching, explanation and questioning, and opportunities for pupils to use practical activities to reinforce their learning. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to explain their strategies and methods. For example year six pupils were encouraged to find different ways of multiplying two numbers together and to explain their method to their classmates.

75. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory, explanations of new concepts and skills could be clearer and insufficient use is made of the final summing up (plenary) to consolidate learning. The mental maths session is generally well used to give a clear start to the lesson. However, in some lessons observed this lacked the crispness and brisk pace of the introductory mental maths seen in many schools. Occasionally the plenary is little more than a marking session and could be more effectively used to draw together what has been learned and to highlight key facts or ideas that need to be remembered. Classroom assistants provide additional support but they are often passive through large parts of the lesson and better use could be made of this valuable resource

76. As a result of the quality teaching and the establishment of well developed work habits, learning is good and pupils are generally achieving well. Pupils' ability to use correct mathematical terminology is developed from the time they enter the school. They improve their understanding of

mathematical operations and their ability to use different methods of working out a problem in their head. For example, in multiplying pupils build on their previous knowledge and use partitioning to work out increasingly difficult calculations. During lessons pupils are becoming more self-reliant when faced with a problem. They are willing to ask for help when needed and are motivated to improve. Evidence from lessons observed shows pupils work purposefully and try hard. It was quite noticeable that in several lessons learning improved once the pupils moved to the practical activities. Appropriate work set to be completed at home often extends or complements learning in class.

77. The curriculum is now based on the Framework for the National Numeracy Strategy and outlines the key objectives to be addressed each term. This covers all the necessary aspects of the subject and ensures progression as pupils move through the school. The previous subject leader updated the school policy in July 2001. Later this year the issue of inclusion is to be included in the policy. Work is selected from a variety of sources to ensure it is suitably matched to the ability of all the children.

78. Assessment arrangements are very good. Analysis of standardised tests, carried out on entry to establish a baseline, and then across the school, have helped to monitor the progress made by individual children. Information obtained from these tests, National tests (SATS) in year six and non-statutory SATS in other years is carefully analysed to assess standards and identify trends. Scrutiny of the National Curriculum Tests has enabled teachers to identify the key issues to be addressed. The recent year six national test results have been analysed and the school aims to extend this process across years four and five, following the optional tests in the summer term, in order to set targets. They are also used to identify pupils who will benefit from additional support in the 'springboard' and 'booster' sets.

79. Twice termly 'Assess and Review' sessions enable teachers to make a realistic judgement of the key objectives achieved. The information generated is used to influence future planning. However, although the school collects and analyses an enormous amount of data the information generated lacks the cohesion to ensure that projections of pupil attainment are clear and accurate. Alongside these more formal assessments a number of planned teacher assessments are identified throughout the year. Half-termly overview sheets are used to monitor how good the match is between the taught curriculum and the ability of the children. Day-to-day assessments are made on the lesson evaluation sheet or kept in the teachers' mark books. Pupils' work is regularly and consistently marked, but only sometimes includes useful comments to help the pupils recognise how they can improve.

80. The coordinator is very new to the post. She has worked closely with the deputy head and the previous coordinator, who was a 'leading maths teacher.' Her enthusiasm is already having a positive impact on the development of the subject. Well targeted training to raise subject knowledge and the monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior management team have already helped to raise standards. However, at present the subject coordinator does not monitor teaching directly. The school's improvement planning is well developed and this ensures resources are targeted at agreed priorities. Resources for mathematics are good, with enough good quality books and equipment etc for teachers to do all they need to do. Suitable cross-curricular links have been established with other subjects, although links with information technology (IT) could be further developed. The school is currently in the process of becoming partners with Poole Grammar School who will support mathematics at Key Stage 3. The joint aim is to target able children in year seven, seeking out excellence in Mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

81. Standards of attainment in science are currently above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and are as expected of pupils by the end of year seven. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection. The school has identified science as a focus in order to raise standards and is providing the pupils with additional teaching time and specialist teaching to address this issue. Evidence from lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work indicate that this provision is having a positive impact on standards, particularly in year five.

82. In year four pupils confidently predict and test whether certain materials are magnetic or not. They use scientific terms such as 'attract' and 'repel' and record their results using the categories 'materials that attract', 'materials that repel' and 'metals that are not attracted to magnets'. Most use their knowledge of materials to explain why some materials are suitable for specific purposes. They recognise that some changes in materials can be reversed and others cannot. Year five pupils show they understand the changing states of matter and explain how molecules form when designing a poster explaining this for younger pupils.

83. Pupils in year six recall their knowledge and understanding of electricity from previous lessons satisfactorily. They are competent at making an electrical circuit and naming electrical conductors and begin to understand and use symbols to represent electrical components. Above average and average pupils explain 'reflection' and 'refraction'. Lower achievers compare the brightness of lights in a circuit. They investigate materials confidently to see which ones are translucent, transparent or opaque. In year seven pupils decide their own criteria for classifying animals, mammals, fish and reptiles. They use their knowledge of the seven life processes to classify a variety of plants. Most pupils describe how to use a Bunsen burner and compare the effect of the different flames it makes. Above average and average pupils separate materials using methods such as evaporation, filtration and chromatography. Most are beginning to identify and describe similarities between chemical reactions and to use chemical formulae such as  $H_2O$  in their work. Lower achievers can describe the differences between the properties of materials and explain changes such as 'evaporation' and 'condensation'.

84. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Some specialist teaching in smaller groups is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. By preparing detailed lesson plans for some of her colleagues, the coordinator has addressed the issue in the previous report of insecure subject knowledge by non-specialists. However, this sometimes inhibits teachers because of the very prescribed timing for each part of the lesson. Teachers question skilfully to encourage pupils to recall their previous knowledge and to promote discussions. In a year six lesson, effective questioning by the teacher helped pupils to remember all they had learned about electricity before they moved on to the next stage of the lesson. Clear learning objectives and explanations of the task are shared at the start of lessons. Behaviour management and relationships are very good and as a result, pupils are very focussed. They concentrate very well and work extremely well together in small groups as when year five pupils organised their work so that each group member had a different task when designing a poster.

85. Support staff help to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs are fully included throughout lessons. However, in year four, some lower achieving pupils who do not have additional support in lessons are not making as much progress as their peers with several pieces of unfinished work in their books. Homework is used extremely well to support learning. It is particularly effective in year five where pupils have a home/school science link where they are invited to take part in a series of experiments at home. Parents and pupils are very enthusiastic about the link, which supports parents' involvement in pupils' learning very well.

86. Very good assessment procedures in science are used very effectively to support pupils' learning with a very good range of assessment tasks and tests for pupils, prepared by the coordinator to fit with the school's scheme of work. Results are carefully analysed and used to help teachers with planning and to ensure that all pupils are making progress. Good links are made with other subjects, particularly literacy. Pupils used research skills, their knowledge of reporting and setting out information when designing a poster for younger pupils. Good use is made of mathematical knowledge when recording results in tables and graphs. However, there is very little evidence of pupils using information technology in science except in year five where some had researched on the Internet for information for their poster.

87. Subject management is good. The coordinator has monitored test results and samples of pupils' work effectively and has observed some teaching of science but this part of her role is not developed. She has appropriately identified the need to monitor the effectiveness of additional support in the classroom during science lessons. Resources are in good supply and pupils

benefit from having access to a specially equipped science laboratory for practical work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

88. Standards in art are as expected of pupils by the end of year six and by the end of year seven when they leave the school. Pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in lessons and achieve well. This is because of the consistently good and often very good teaching, careful planning for the subject, good resources and confident, enthusiastic teachers.

89. In year four, pupils current art work is linked to their geography on St. Lucia. They discuss Henri Rousseau's painting 'Tropical Storm with a Tiger' with a view to using a range of materials and information technology to create their own pictures of an animal in its habitat. In the lesson observed, pupils were successfully using the brush tool on the computer programme Dazzle. They were able to create a range of imaginative images and exciting colours for their collages and knew how to use these to the best effect. Pupils in year five are exploring ideas for creating different containers. They experiment with shape, pattern, style and purpose and make careful sketches of their ideas. They respond sensitively to a reading of the poem 'The Magic Box' and to suggestions that their container should hold a special wish. Year six pupils are making good progress in learning about movement in art. They discuss the paintings 'The Football Players' by Henri Rousseau and 'The Cardiff Team' by Robert Delaney. Pupils are articulate in their description of what they see and they try to recreate some of these movements with their own bodies. In year seven, pupils make very good progress in their understanding of the architectural features of buildings and their different qualities. They are currently looking carefully at the school building and through a range of very well presented resources such as the original plans of the school and examples of design features such as arches, mouldings and architraves, are learning to appreciate and observe the complexities of building design. Later on in the term, when they have collected sufficient ideas to inform their work, they will design and make their own buildings.

90. Pupils throughout the school respond particularly well to the regular opportunities provided for them to use the environment around the school. Those learning about buildings enjoyed looking carefully at the school and sketching some of its architectural features. Pupils experimenting with body shapes played a game of statues in the playground enthusiastically while some of their classmates, very sensibly, took responsibility for recording the shapes with a video and digital camera.

91. Teaching is good and often very good. Teachers use a good range of well prepared and presented resources. They make good links with other subjects such as geography, when, for example, pupils study plans of the school and maps of the area when considering the design of buildings, and literacy when poetry is used as a stimulus for ideas and creativity. Teachers use questions well to help pupils to be thoughtful and observant. They encourage them to make their own response to what they see and feel and responses are appreciated and valued.

92. Art is well led by an enthusiastic, hard working subject coordinator. The subject is well planned with a clear focus on pupils having a wide range of ideas to inform their work. Pupils are beginning to use their sketch books well for this and are starting to be able to evaluate what they do. The school benefits from having a room especially designed and equipped for art lessons. This is an attractive, very well resourced space, which pupils enjoy using. Art is celebrated throughout the school by many attractive displays of pupils' work in a wide variety of media. Classrooms and shared spaces benefit from displays, which are often interactive, asking questions and inviting a response. A display in the art room entitled 'Art work of the Term' celebrates special work from every year group. At the last inspection the school was criticised for its lack of attention to three-dimensional work. This area is now well covered, with many good examples of clay work and sculpture with a variety of materials.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. Standards are similar to most schools at the end of year six and when pupils leave the school at the end of year seven. Pupils' achievements in food technology are good throughout the



school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained overall since the last inspection.

94. In year four, pupils begin to select the appropriate materials to make a bag identifier. They use their knowledge from the teacher's demonstration about suitable materials for a pair of shoes to decide on the materials and design for the bag identifier. In food technology pupils prepare a healthy fruit salad. All have a sound awareness of the need for safety and hygiene when working in the kitchen. Some pupils design high quality posters to promote the eating of fruit as part of a healthy diet. In year five a group of pupils successfully use a SMART box and computer to make a burglar alarm. Another group of pupils look carefully at the packaging of a variety of biscuits and discusses the impact of the packaging on the consumer. They also identify the most useful information for the consumer on the packets.

95. Pupils in year six design and make a pair of indoor shoes using a range of suitable materials. They discuss the design criteria and the qualities they need to have confidently. For example, the shoes need to be comfortable, warm, flexible and durable. They evaluate their finished product and indicate where it could be improved. By the end of year six pupils are able to generate ideas by collecting and using information. They produce comprehensive plans and work using a variety of materials, suitable for the product, a range of tools and equipment and then identify what is working well and what can be improved.

96. By the end of year seven pupils draw on a wider range of sources of information for their work. They make close observations of a variety of simple maze games made by other pupils, discuss confidently how these could be improved and specify the most effective, interesting and demanding game they can make themselves. One group of pupils design and make glove puppets to be used to perform in a short puppet show, linked to a personal, social and health education theme for younger pupils. Pupils discuss the problems they may encounter when making the puppet and are comfortable with the use of the terms, 'design', 'make' and 'modify'.

97. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some good and very good teaching observed during the inspection. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and the system of rotating groups enables teachers to use their strengths and specialist teaching facilities effectively. This makes a positive impact on pupils' learning. Planning is good and learning objectives are clearly shared with pupils at the start of lessons. All teachers have a good awareness of the need for safety rules and continually remind pupils of them.

98. Management of design technology is good and the coordinator gives good support to colleagues. He has appropriately sought external advice to support him with developing his own expertise in order to support his colleagues. Some very good assessment sheets have been produced to support teachers with assessments using National Curriculum levels of attainment, but these have not yet been completed for all year groups. The subject coordinator effectively monitors planning and samples of pupils' work but he has had very few opportunities to observe the quality of design technology teaching across the school. Resources are good and the specially equipped design technology and food technology rooms enhance pupils' learning opportunities effectively.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

99. The way that the curriculum is organised for the teaching of history and geography meant that only two geography lessons were seen, one in year four and one in year seven. Standards are judged to be as expected of pupils throughout the school. This judgement is made from looking at pupils' previous work, teachers' planning, displays throughout the school and by talking to pupils.

100. Year four pupils are learning about St. Lucia as part of their studies of a distant location and in year seven the starting point for work in geography this term is 'World Sport'. In the two lessons observed teaching and learning was satisfactory. In the year four lesson, most pupils made steady progress in their ability to look at photographs, maps and other resources and recognise and name features in pictures such as buildings, roads, sky, but they were not

encouraged to draw conclusions about life in St. Lucia from these. For example, pupils said it was hot and they noticed that some houses were made of scrap metal, but the teacher failed to ask them why they thought this was so. In the year seven lesson pupils, just embarking on the topic World Sport began to discuss World Cup football and the countries involved. They were able to answer questions about the football governing bodies and some of the countries involved in the World Cup and were set a homework task, which involved locating World Cup venues on a map.

101. Good examples of pupils' previous work in geography, notably beautifully presented books about well-known rivers of the world made by year six, using their ICT skills, were observed. This work indicates that pupils have learnt a great deal about how a river affects landscapes and people. They use special vocabulary such as flood plain and erosion successfully, describe the settlements around the rivers and the changes that have taken place. Previous work by year seven includes work on Poole with extensive, well presented work on interpreting maps of the area, some comparisons of location and some very good persuasive writing extolling the virtues of Poole.

102. Many good links have been made with other subjects. Pupils in year four are looking at Henri Rousseau's painting 'Tropical Storm with a Tiger' in their art lessons with a view to creating their own tropical pictures and linking this to their work on St Lucia. In history, year five learning about ancient Greeks, locate Greece on a map, look at pictures of modern Greece and discuss the tourist industry and modern Greek life. In year seven pupils learning about perspective in their art lessons, have produced very good paintings of notable buildings in Poole.

103. The subject coordinator is very new to the role. He is keen to improve standards in the subject and improve resources, particularly the school grounds where he has plans to develop the pond area and a coppice area. The school is proud of the experiences that they offer pupils through trips and other 'hands on' experiences. Older pupils make a yearly visit to Normandy in France and Carey camp is a regular residential trip for year six pupils. The local environment is a rich resource and often used to support work in geography. Pupils undertake town trails and visit the harbour and other interesting places around them.

## **HISTORY**

104. Standards in history are good throughout the school. Since the last inspection standards have been well maintained at Key Stage 2 and have improved at year seven. Most pupils make good progress in their learning because of good teaching, meticulous planning of the subject, interesting resources and frequent visits to places of historical interest. All year groups benefit from 'hands on' experiences in history, enjoying history / drama workshops relating to studies such as the ancient Egyptians and the ancient Greeks, presenting facts through role play and making trips to places such as the Roman Baths, Salisbury Cathedral, The Mary Rose and The Tutankhamen Museum.

105. By the end of year six, pupils show a good understanding of the various sources available for them to use for historical enquiry and use them effectively to find out about the past. Year six pupils studying the Victorian period used photographs, artefacts, paintings and literature to find out about the life of the Victorian child and compare it with their own. They read extracts from Dickens book 'Oliver Twist' and were surprised by the hardship and poverty experienced by many children in those times. Year five pupils studying the ancient Greeks compared two cities and regimes in Ancient Greece, Sparta and Athens. They looked carefully at drawings, maps and books and made thoughtful, observant comparisons and conclusions about such things as work, the role of women, slaves and soldiers. In year seven pupils are studying the Mediaeval period and currently looking at life in a mediaeval village. They have already learnt a lot about the structure of a mediaeval community and use vocabulary such as villein, cottager, and Lord of the Manor correctly. Pupils know about the sort of jobs that people would do and how they paid their tithes to the Lord of the Manor.

106. Throughout the school, they talk about their learning in history. They recall with pleasure

and interest facts they have learnt; for example from work on the Tudors, the Romans and the Norman invasion. Most have a very good understanding of chronology, helped by having time lines well displayed in most classrooms. In lessons they discuss significant events in the period of history that they are studying. One ten year old when writing an imaginary diary entry as a Victorian child chose to date it 1841, because that was before the Mines Act of 1842 and he wanted to pretend that he was a very young child working in the mines.

107. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. All lessons are meticulously planned and the plans are followed by all teachers in a year group. While this ensures that all pupils receive the same curriculum sometimes it inhibits spontaneity and the opportunity to follow different lines of enquiry raised by pupils. All teachers use and prepare resources well. Good question and answer sessions are a feature of most lessons and are used effectively to find out what pupils know and understand. All classrooms have attractively displayed information, artefacts, photographs and books on the current topic. Many of these ask questions of children to further develop their interest and extend their learning, for example, one display is set up as a history investigation around a Greek pot with a letter, purporting to come from an archaeologist. It invites pupils to try to discover whether the pot is genuine or fake.

108. Teachers make very good links with other subjects, particularly literacy, requiring pupils to write reports, lists and descriptions as part of their work in history. Links with other subjects are often made; for example a display entitled 'How science affects us' has bibliographies on famous scientists from the past such as Galileo, Pasteur and Babbage.

109. Management of the subject has been very good. The coordinator, who is very new to the role, is enthusiastic and works hard to support her colleagues and ensure that good standards are maintained. She has clearly identified targets for future development which include monitoring the teaching and learning throughout the school and moving towards level assessments as well as the end of term topic tests which pupils currently undertake.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

110. Standards in information and communications technology within the school have moved on substantially since the last inspection but with national expectations for what is possible increasing at an even faster rate, the school has made this a priority for development this year. A very substantial investment in improved hardware and in upgrading staff expertise has been agreed which will soon come to fruition and an ICT technician is already making a difference in trouble shooting and in supporting staff and pupils in the existing computer suite.

111. Currently, pupils in year seven are much more computer literate than the equivalent group in 1998 but with increased expectations are still not achieving what is now expected of them. As with all pupils throughout the school, they log-on using a password, access their files and various programmes, save their work and log-off confidently with little need for help. During the inspection, pupils of all abilities were working together, very happily in pairs creating a presentation of scenes from Macbeth (linked to work in literacy) using images and text. They showed real confidence in finding, copying and pasting images of witches and then stretching and resizing them to fit their needs. Many showed that they knew how to change fonts and add colour to them in the title and entered text as a caption for their pictures. The teacher then made good use of the 'new' technician to help him use the digital projector to share volunteers' work. They were obviously proud of their own efforts and spontaneous applause showed they appreciated each other's.

112. Year fours consolidated their knowledge of a graphics programme in creating images to match those of a Rousseau painting which involved using symmetry and reflection (linked to work in art and mathematics). In one class all produced creditable pictures and, some with help, were able to resize them and use the symmetry and reflection tools to create different plants and butterflies, which matched current expectations for pupils of this age. However, in another class with a less confident teacher, no pupils actually used the tools but all produced pictures. This demonstrated the fact that currently the confidence and expertise of the teacher taking the class often determine standards.

113. Pupils in year five were also working at expected levels as they corrected a faulty database to make it work properly; used Textease to create a block graph of an established database; and searched the internet to find information about their current history topic, the Greeks. A feature in this year group as in others is the sensible and industrious way pupils work in the computer suite. In all the lessons observed, adults rarely had to do more than stop and start and prompt or help where necessary.

114. Very good use of the digital projector made it possible for the class teacher to demonstrate to a large class how to use Textease to select and animate images on tracks of the pupil's own making. Some pairs had an image going round a track in minutes while others needed some specific support to get going. However, once they all had, a dizzying range of multiple tracks emerged and some developed the idea into dances and races. The amount and quality of interaction between pupils and pairs is a significant factor in the way pupils pick up ideas and try out new techniques.

115. Unusually, this subject has upper school and lower school coordinators which when it is fully developed will help in the very full workload involved. By adopting the national scheme of work, staff now have a solid structure to build on and shared lesson planning is also helping. However, the greatest factor in subsequent improvement will be the planned training that will come with the new hardware.

## **MODERN LANGUAGES**

116. Pupils in year seven only are taught French twice a week by the French coordinator who is also a year seven class teacher. This answers one of the issues in the last report which was that teacher's linguistic competence ranged from very able to adequate. However, one of these sessions is an hour long and this is a challenge for many pupils, especially those who find the subject difficult in the large mixed ability classes, and for the teacher who takes four identical one hour sessions consecutively.

117. Standards are very similar to those noted at the time of the last inspection with written work largely at the level expected. Most pupils are able to understand the language and the vocabulary being used in class but many lack the confidence to speak the language or answer in class. For example, when asked how old they are or when their birthdays are, almost all pupils knew the numbers and dates but few were willing to answer with a complete sentence. Eventually the teacher had to resort to English instructions like 'repeat after me'. In a school where pupils articulate responses are a feature of all classrooms, apart from a few willing regulars, most pupils are passive. They are much happier completing the written exercises which mainly involve copying and choosing words from a limited vocabulary which they do competently. However, pupils' books showed very few examples of pupils being asked to write freely using what they have learned.

118. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned against the agreed scheme of work to cover all that is necessary in year seven. However, other than providing some extra support for pupils who are really struggling, little account is taken of the wide range of linguistic experience and aptitude in each class. The teacher is very confident in his use of the language and some of his enthusiasm rubs off in oral sessions but in the large classes many less confident pupils avoid rather than engage.

119. A very positive feature of the life of the school is the annual French trip which provides the stimulus for pupils to learn about the culture of France. However, though cross-curricular links are a feature of work in many other subjects, the possibilities in such subjects as art, music, literacy and information technology are not exploited in the teaching of French.

## **MUSIC**

120. Music is a subject which benefits greatly from being taught to all classes by the two teachers on the staff who are confident and competent in this area. It also gains greatly from the

school's very good accommodation and resources and the fact that about a quarter of pupils are learning one or more of a wide range of instruments from visiting instrumental teachers. These include string, woodwind, brass and percussion and with a large choir and extra-curricular recorder clubs, pupils have plenty of opportunity to learn and make music.

121. Attainment was said to be 'in line with national expectations' at the time of the last inspection. With good and very good teaching, plus all the extra music going on in the school, standards have been raised and are now better for the ages of the pupils concerned than seen in most schools. The quality of singing is good throughout the school with good attention to developing this progressively through the school as noted in all lessons. Year four pupils sing known songs such as 'Coca Cola' enthusiastically with the teacher emphasising posture and breathing and move onto singing a round, 'Row the Boat', very confidently. By year six, pupils are able to pitch their singing accurately and sing scales. They soon picked up the idea of the 'drone' and were able to sing the scale of C against it before moving on to singing overlapping scales as a round. All very impressive.

122. Pupils' knowledge of music expands as they move up the school and this is enhanced through the input from the many pupils learning instruments especially in the older classes. Year fours are able to recognise fast tempo and changes in pitch in some Gershwin music. Year fives know the relationship between pulse and rhythm when studying a whole range of music from the Brandenburg Concerto to Guns and Roses and year six obviously understand about notation and scales from the work noted above. In all the above, pupils are exposed to a very wide range of genre and type of music but a feature is the way popular music is included and valued. This was well demonstrated in year seven who looked at sounds made acoustically and electronically and identified them in recorded music, including Crowded House, and in live music such as an electric guitar and a saxophone played by classmates.

123. The school has invested a good deal in music provision to good effect and the overall quality of provision is very good. The scheme of work is well developed and very relevant to the needs and interests of Oakdale South road pupils and a simple but effective system for noting down what pupils can and cannot do related to the scheme is well used. Some cross-curricular work is in evidence but an area for development is the use of computers in making, changing, communicating and analysing music. With well-planned and very suitable activities and knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching, the great majority of pupils are very enthusiastic about listening to and making music. It is a pity therefore that with teachers understandably consolidating available time, pupils are only able to benefit every other week.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

124. Overall the provision for physical education (PE), including teaching, resources and curriculum is very good, and is a strength of the school. As a result of all the school offers pupils progress very well and achieve good and sometimes very good standards in physical education. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection when attainment in physical education was said to "often exceed national expectations," and that "progress in all years is good." Boys and girls achieve comparable standards.

125. The youngest pupils are developing their ability to pass a rugby ball. Year four pupils pass and catch a rugby ball with increasing certainty showing appreciation of what makes a good pass. In a year five dance lesson, pupils demonstrated a good awareness of beat. They were able to create well thought out routines, including some of the taught elements, such as 'promenade,' 'do si do' and 'star formation' and performed them in time with accompanying 'jig' music. Year six pupils are extending their rugby skills and are beginning to use tactics and strategies to get the ball past a defender. The oldest pupils demonstrate good eye to ball coordination during a volleyball lesson and show much improved ability to deliver and receive the ball.

126. Pupils make very good progress in PE. All pupils participate fully, including those pupils

with special educational needs. They work hard and at a very good pace and obviously enjoy their physical education lessons. For example, year seven pupils showed great pleasure in a circuit training session to help improve their fitness. All pupils entered into the spirit of the activity, worked constructively with other pupils and tried hard. School organisation and procedures, where pupils often change at break or lunchtime, ensure little time is lost between sessions and lessons start briskly and on time. Pupils enter the hall or go to the field in good order and quickly become engaged in purposeful activities. They respond vigorously and enthusiastically to warm-up exercises, taking more responsibility for their own warm up as they get older. The standard of behaviour is almost always high. Good use is made of the apparatus and the equipment available. Pupils co-operate well in lessons and acknowledge the need to take turns and share fairly.

127. Overall the teaching of PE is very good. All the teaching in the lessons observed was good or better. This is an improvement from the last inspection when teaching was said to be 'mainly good and often very good, although a minority is unsatisfactory.' The high quality of teaching in PE is significantly influenced by the school organisation which allows teachers with subject specialism to be involved in the teaching of a high proportion of lessons. These are brisk and purposeful and have a high level of challenge, which enable pupils to consolidate and extend their previous skills and knowledge. Teachers have high expectations of both pupils' performance and behaviour. A significant feature of most lessons is the very good use of demonstration by the teacher to model activities or by pupils to share their work and to illustrate where the work is good or, indeed, needs improving. Teachers use language specific to physical education when talking about the pupils' work. They have good and often very good subject knowledge and are able to identify relevant teaching points to help children improve. Where the teaching is at its best, the lesson is well structured and has a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to practise and improve techniques, demonstration is used effectively and the lesson moves along at a rapid pace.

128. The PE curriculum covers all areas of activities identified in the National Curriculum, although pupils are unable to swim at present because the pool at the High School is out of action. In addition to the taught curriculum, the school provides an excellent range of extra curricular activities including football, netball, rugby, hockey, golf, badminton, volleyball, basketball, table tennis, cricket, athletics, tennis and cross country and the school teams participate fully in local tournaments and competitions.

129. The co-ordinator is highly qualified and leads the subject very well. He has built up close links within the local community, such as with neighbouring schools, who are encouraged to use the facilities, and outside organisations to further enhance the provision. Poole Town FC uses the school field and the school is able to use their floodlights to extend the time it can be used. Wessex Volleyball Club uses the school hall and coach children at lunchtime and past and present pupils use the facilities through links with Poole Netball Club. The school is currently working towards both the Active Sports Award and the (Gold) Charter Standard for Football. Accommodation for physical education is excellent. The school has a well-equipped hall and generous grass and hard areas to fully implement the scheme of work. Resources for physical education are plentiful and in good condition

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

130. Pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2 and year seven. Pupils in year six understand that people may follow a particular religion and the significance of some of the major Christian festivals. They are familiar with some of the signs and symbols of the Christian faith, such as bread and wine, and know their meaning. Most recall stories from the Bible in the Old Testament, miracles performed and parables told by Jesus and can explain the meaning of some of his teaching. They know that the Bible is a special book to Christians and are aware that other faiths also have special texts. Pupils are developing an awareness of other world faiths including Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism and can identify different places of worship. In year seven pupils question the meanings of events they encounter within their life. They are able to express their views very well about such issues as 'Is there life

after death?'. Many show great empathy exploring their feelings when faced with real life situations found within the news, for example the distress of a very ill child.

131. In their understanding of religious education the pupils make good progress. They articulate their thoughts very well and ask many meaningful questions. Pupils in year four extend their knowledge of life in Palestine and Jewish customs. They learn the significance of the story of the boy Jesus in the temple through role play. Pupils in year five recognise that not all New Years start on January 1 and discuss what it means to make a new start. They learn about the Chinese New Year and show marked respect for the many artefacts they look at. In year six pupils explore the significance of the Lord's Prayer for people today. They experience what it is like to be tempted and resist within the lesson extremely well. In year seven pupils concentrate without distraction within a reflective time. They identify suffering within the world today and relate it to the Four Truths of Buddha. Those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

132. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good and in year seven very good. Teachers know enough about the Christian faith and of other world religions to enable them to teach to the locally agreed syllabus. Lessons are clearly planned and pupils very well managed. Expectations of pupils' behaviour and the high standard of their responses are valued by teachers. Where questioning is used skilfully it extends pupils' recall of information and adds to their knowledge and understanding. An open respect is shown by pupils and adults for the opinions and beliefs of others. Pupils are well motivated and their own experiences are incorporated into their learning. The pace of the lessons is good, and challenging tasks provide opportunities for the exploration of religious views and deeper understanding of issues.

133. The subject is managed very well with good support and in-service training provided. The detailed planning, which is provided by the coordinator, is most successful when teachers adapt it to the needs of their pupils. Since the last inspection all teachers have gained in confidence in teaching about other religions aided by in-service training, which has increased their subject knowledge. The coordinator monitors pupils' work and the end of module tasks are assessed ensuring good progression throughout the school. The range and quality of resources is very good and close links with visitors from all faiths provides specialist knowledge. Visits to places of worship, including world faiths, are planned. Provision is made for pupils withdrawn from the teaching of religious education and close liaison with parents provides study appropriate to their individual beliefs.