

INSPECTION REPORT

MUDEFORD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Christchurch, Dorset

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113740

Headteacher: Mr Colin Hancock

Reporting inspector: Mr D P Cosway
(OFSTED No: 2734)

Dates of inspection: 18 - 21 September 2000

Inspection number: 224181

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Type of school: | Junior School |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 7 to 11 Years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Mudeford Lane Christchurch |
| Postcode: | BH23 3HP |
| Telephone number: | 01202 473217 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Derek Johnson |
| Date of previous inspection: | 27-30 April 1998 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Paul Cosway (OFSTED No: 2734) | Registered inspector | Mathematics | What sort of school is it? |
| | | Information technology | How high are standards? a) the school's results and achievements? |
| | | Physical education | How well are pupils taught? |
| | | Religious education | How well is the school led and managed? |
| | | Equal opportunities | What should the school do to improve further? |
| Josephine Philbey (OFSTED No: 9405) | Lay inspector | | How high are standards? b) pupils' attitudes, value and personal development |
| | | | How well does the school care for its pupils? |
| | | | How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Peter Kerr (OFSTED No: 23583) | Team inspector | Science | |
| | | Design and technology | |
| | | Geography | |
| | | History | |
| | | Special educational needs | |
| Sandra Tweddell (OFSTED No: 1789) | Team inspector | Art | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils? (assessment) |
| | | English | |
| | | Music | |
| | | English as an additional language | |

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Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a junior school, educating boys and girls from the age of 7 to 11. It is average in size for a primary school, with 262 on roll. Pupils are drawn mainly from the immediate area, where there is mixed housing: some privately owned, some rented. Almost all the pupils are white. The school has the advantage, however, of drawing some children from a wider ethnic background, including travellers' children. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, about four per cent, is below the national average. The proportion identified as having special educational needs is relatively high. It is almost 30 per cent, which is above average. The number of pupils with full statements of special educational need is well above average, at almost four per cent of the total. Overall, attainment on entry is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. Pupils enter in Year 3 with, overall, average levels of ability. When they leave at the end of Year 6 they are well above average. It provides a good quality of education, with good teaching and a generally broad and balanced curriculum. The pupils make very good progress. There has been a significant emphasis on the teaching of literacy, numeracy and scientific knowledge in order to help pupils to attain better in the National Curriculum tests. The pupils' achievements in these areas have developed well as a result. The very good leadership of the school and the shared commitment amongst all staff to succeed have led to the school improving rapidly. The pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Their work rate is high and their written work is neat and well presented. The school has been so successful in raising the numbers of pupils gaining above average grades in the national tests that it is time to provide even greater challenges for the highest attaining pupils. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress and attain standards well above average in national tests.
- Throughout the school, almost all pupils develop positive attitudes, work hard and behave well.
- Pupils' moral and social development is good leading to good relationships and good discipline.
- Teaching is good overall, very good in a fifth of lessons, and teachers plan and prepare their lessons well.
- The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher are very good.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

What could be improved

- The school has realised the importance of using assessment information to track the progress of pupils in non-core subjects and science, but is not yet doing so effectively.
- The work of the school is monitored well by the senior managers, but, as identified by the school, teachers responsible for subject areas need opportunities to monitor work in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved very significantly since the last inspection, in 1998. At that time, there were serious weaknesses in the quality of education the school was providing for its pupils. These were in standards of attainment, which were too low, the curriculum, the teaching, development planning and assessment systems. Considerable progress has been made in just over two years. Standards have risen from below to well above average in English, mathematics and science. Schemes of work have been written that have improved the curriculum significantly. Teaching is now good across the school, whereas previously over a quarter of lessons were unsatisfactory. School development planning and assessment systems have improved. Much of this is the result of the hard work of the headteacher and of the positive way that the teachers have responded to the challenges that he has set them. The clear educational direction he has set for the school, along with the commitment and support of the governors, staff and parents, ensure that the school is well placed to continue to improve in future.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on their results in the National Curriculum tests and tasks at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999.

| Performance in: Key Stage 2 | compared with | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | Similar schools |
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 1999 |
| English | D | C | A | C |
| mathematics | D | D | A | B |
| science | E | C | A | B |

| Key | |
|--------------------|----|
| very high | A* |
| well above average | A |
| above average | B |
| average | C |
| below average | D |
| well below average | E |
| very low | E* |

Over the past three years, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved significantly, much more rapidly than the improvement nationally. In 1999, attainment in English, mathematics and science was well above the national average and rose further, overall, in the tests for the year 2000. Compared with the results for similar schools, performance was above average.

The inspection team found that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is currently similar to that indicated by last year's test results. Attainment in mathematics, English and science is well above the national average, despite the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and the pupils make very good progress in these areas. In most subjects pupils reach above average standards, but in some (design and technology, art and aspects of music) attainment is in line with national expectations.

The school has set itself targets for the year 2001 of 70 per cent of pupils attaining level 4 or above in English and in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. These were realistic targets when they were set, but the significant improvements since then in teaching and the quality of education that the school provides mean that they now need to be revised upwards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Good: pupils enjoy school and work hard. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good: behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good: the pupils relate very well to each other and to adults and accept responsibility very well. They work well together and treat everyone with equal respect and courtesy. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory: the proportions of authorised and unauthorised absence are broadly average. |

The positive attitudes to work and school that the school engenders in all pupils are a strong contributory factor in its success. Pupils respond well to the expectations of their teachers and want to succeed. They are given opportunities to take responsibility. They respond to these well and learn to respect adults and one another.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | N/A | N/A | 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 in English, mathematics and science is good overall.

There are many strengths in teaching. In just over 80 per cent of lessons, teaching is good or very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. There is good teaching of pupils with special educational needs. An important strength in the teaching is the thorough planning that helps to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning. This planning for lessons builds on and reinforces what pupils have already learned, so that they know what to do and are able to succeed. Discipline is good in all lessons, so that no time is wasted and pupils listen, learn and work hard. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Basic skills are taught well. Overall, the quality of teaching is a strength of the school and learning skills are developed well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory: it is a broad and balanced curriculum that provides the pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good: the provision for these pupils is good and it is managed very well. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good: there is very good provision for social and moral development. There is little planned provision for spiritual development, but it is satisfactory overall, as is that for cultural development. More attention needs to be paid to preparing pupils for life in a multi-cultural society. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school cares for its pupils well. The monitoring of their academic performance and personal development is satisfactory overall. |

The school works hard to establish a good working relationship with parents and links with parents are effective overall. The information it provides for parents has improved and is now good. The curriculum is generally broad, balanced and appropriate, with an adequate range of after-school clubs, but provision for the expressive arts is developed less richly than that for the core subjects. The school cares well for its pupils and has good procedures for monitoring attendance. Assessment systems are good in English and mathematics, but are not yet in place across the whole curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good: very good leadership from the headteacher, ably supported by the new deputy headteacher, provides clear direction for the work of the school. The school is managed well and because of this is improving rapidly. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Good: the governors are supportive of the school and give of their time willingly to help the school and be involved in its work. They fulfil their responsibilities well and have a good knowledge of the school's strengths |

| | |
|--|--|
| | and weaknesses. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Good overall: teaching is monitored well by the senior managers. The school is now analysing its assessment and test data to monitor its performance and to set targets. It is in a good position now to use the data to refine and improve the curriculum and the way it is taught, to raise standards further. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good: teachers are appropriately qualified and supported well by classroom assistants. The accommodation is adequate, although the teaching areas are cramped and not sufficiently sound-proof. Learning resources are adequate and they are used effectively. |

The headteacher and deputy have set a clear direction for the work of the school and are promoting high expectations of what the pupils can attain in terms of examination results and their personal development. They have the full support of the governing body and the staff. Not all subject co-ordinators have been able to monitor teaching in their subjects, but this is planned. The school successfully seeks best value in the use and deployment of all its resources and in the use of its budget.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|---|
| <p>The large majority of parents, around 90 per cent of those who responded, think that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children like school; • their children are making good progress; • teaching is good in school and so is behaviour; • the school expects its pupils to work hard and is developing responsible attitudes in them; • they would be comfortable approaching the school with any questions or problems they may have. | <p>Of the parents who responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 per cent do not think that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons; • 33 per cent of parents are concerned about the amount of homework that is set; • 26 per cent want more information about how their children are getting on at school and 23 per cent would like closer links forged with parents. |

Generally, parents are very pleased with the school, but there are some concerns. The inspectors agree with the positive points made by parents, finding that pupils make very good progress in the core subjects, behave well and develop a sense of responsibility. The parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and impressed by the new teachers. Very many parents believe that the school is managed well. Of things parents would like to see improved, the inspection found that the homework provision is satisfactory overall and managed well; the provision is good in Year 6 but less is set further down the school. The range of clubs and after-school activities is satisfactory considering the size of the school and staff. The information given to parents about their children's progress has improved recently and is now adequate. Both the parents and the inspectors agree that this is a school that has made rapid progress recently and is now providing a good quality of education for the pupils in its charge.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

Attainment on entry

1. Overall, pupils make very good progress during their time in the school. Their attainment on entry is close to average. For most year groups currently in the school and last year's Year 6 cohort, attainment on entry has been average or slightly below in either English or mathematics in terms of performance in their National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2. The proportion of pupils who have statements of special educational need is above average. The 1999/2000 Year 6 cohort had a particularly high proportion of pupils with full statements of special educational need and the school as a whole had almost 13 per cent of its pupils with full statements - a very high proportion.

Attainment in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2

2. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in the National Curriculum tests was well above average in 1999. Both boys and girls performed equally well, compared with girls' and boys' attainment nationally. Both boys and girls were, on average, at least two terms ahead of boys and girls nationally in English, mathematics and science, measured by their average points scores in these tests. Over the last four years, the trend in results has been for them to rise much more rapidly than results nationally. They were below the national average in 1997 and 1998. The results for 2000 show that this trend has been maintained. The comparison with similar schools, based on free school meals, is not fully applicable, because this school does not supply school meals. Nevertheless, compared with similar schools, overall attainment was above average in 1999. Pupils' attainment in English was broadly in line with that in similar schools, but their attainment in science and mathematics was above that of similar pupils elsewhere.

Current levels of attainment

3. The finding of the inspection is that attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average, a significant achievement for these pupils and a result of their hard work and good attitudes, as well as the good teaching they have received. Attainment in speaking and listening is above average. Pupils are articulate and can address adults appropriately using Standard English. Almost all pupils listen well. Over 80 per cent of pupils reach the national average or above in reading and writing. This is confirmed by the provisional results from their Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests for the year 2000, in which 88 per cent gained level 4 or above, half of these attaining level 5. They can write accurately for a range of purposes and read with good understanding. In mathematics, in part because of the successful introduction of the numeracy strategy, attainment at the end of the key stage is also well above average. The pupils have very good numeracy skills. They know how to perform a very wide range of calculations and have a good range of strategies for checking their answers. Their knowledge and understanding of science are well above average, though their investigative skills are lower. They have very good knowledge of living things, how they grow and reproduce, and very good understanding of physical processes, such as electricity and magnetism. Their good literacy skills help them to perform well when writing answers to questions and their written work is neat and well organised in all subjects.
4. In many foundation subjects, pupils achieve well and their attainment is above the standard expected for pupils of their age by the end of the key stage. Pupils are achieving above expectations in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, physical education, history and geography. In art and design and technology, attainment is in line with expectations. This is lower than in other subjects, partly because these subjects have had less priority in recent curriculum development plans. Attainment in music varies across aspects of the subject. It is in line with expectations overall, but performance skills – such as singing – are

above average. Attainment in musical composition is satisfactory, but the appreciation of music is underdeveloped and is below the expected level.

5. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire believe that pupils make good progress at the school and the inspection finds that progress is generally good, and very good in the core subjects. Pupils with special educational needs, pupils for whom English as an additional language and low attaining pupils make good progress because of the skilled, patient teaching they receive. In particular, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school and reach good standards relative to their prior attainment. They enjoy very good and in some cases exceptional standards of support from their learning support assistants, enabling them to achieve well in relation to their specific learning targets. The very high proportion of pupils who gain level 5 in the national tests supports the inspection team's judgement that the work set for the higher attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science is challenging them and helping to ensure that they make very good progress. In some foundation subjects, such as art and design and technology, the lack of assessment information means that, in some classes, the high attaining pupils are not set work that is challenging enough to enable them to attain as highly as they should.
6. In the last report, it was said that attainment was below average at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in writing was well below average. Attainment was found to be broadly in line with expectations nationally in music, physical education and religious education. It was reported to be below average in design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography and art. There has been very good improvement in the core subjects in the two years since the last report and good improvement in almost all other subjects. Standards have risen considerably across the school as a whole.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils have good attitudes to school and to their learning. This reflects the findings of the last inspection and makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve. The school has successfully developed good work habits. Most pupils are keen to do their best and are hard working and responsible. Pupils want to achieve well and listen carefully to instructions given by their teachers. They are eager to contribute to discussions and to answer questions posed in lessons or during assemblies. Most pupils concentrate well and enjoy a challenge. An example of this was seen in a Year 3 numeracy lesson when worksheets were deliberately challenging to test pupils' understanding of consecutive numbers. Pupils worked hard at the task, gaining confidence and seemed disappointed when they had to finish the lesson. Pupils are friendly, polite and pleased to show their work to visitors and discuss it.
8. Pupils' behaviour is good. They behave well in the classrooms and move around the building in a very orderly way. In the hall, at lunchtimes, the atmosphere is congenial and characterised by courtesy and good manners. Pupils play happily together and enjoy each other's company. No harassment or bullying was observed during the inspection. There have been no exclusions over recent years.
9. Throughout the school, pupils form positive relationships with one another, and with their teachers and other adults. They are developing caring and respectful attitudes to themselves and each other. When a pupil is upset, others quickly try to help. Pupils readily congratulate each other. An example of this was seen in a Year 5 music lesson where a pupil's articulate description of the musical term 'pitch' drew spontaneous applause from the class. Pupils work effectively both collaboratively and individually. On many occasions, they were seen working in groups and pairs, helping each other and approaching their tasks sensibly and conscientiously. They have a clear sense of responsibility. During the inspection they were seen tidying classrooms, returning registers and helping at lunchtimes.
10. Pupils with behavioural problems learn to modify their behaviour because of closely monitored targets that they share in setting.

11. Levels of pupils' attendance throughout the school are satisfactory and in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences are also in line with the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Teaching across the school

12. At the time of the last report, teaching was described as being a serious weakness. Although almost three quarters of the lessons were satisfactory or better, with a third judged to be good, in 27 per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory or poor. Teachers' expectations were too low and tasks sometimes repetitive and too easy. There has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching across the school.
13. The finding of the inspection is that teaching is now good overall. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was found to be good in just over half and very good in a fifth of lessons. One excellent lesson was observed. The teaching was good overall even though the inspection was conducted early in the school year, when teachers were still getting to know their classes and establishing classroom routines.
14. The improvements have come about as a result of the effective monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and the deputy. The results of this monitoring have been used to plan professional development for individuals or the whole staff as appropriate. Consistent approaches have been adopted across the school as a result. In all classrooms, expectations are high of both work and behaviour. All teachers plan very thoroughly and insist on respect for all, hard work and concentration from their pupils. Listening skills are developed well by all staff so that pupils take in the instructions and information they are giving and lessons have clear and attainable objectives. Parents indicated in their questionnaire returns that they believe teaching to be good in the school. Teaching is now a significant strength of the school and makes a major contribution to the quality of education and the standards attained.
15. Where teaching is very good or excellent, there are very good classroom routines that pupils understand and follow. This helps to establish a very good learning ethos in the classrooms and very good relationships. Pupils are set tasks that challenge them and teachers' expectations are high. Questioning is used very well to keep pupils alert and ensure that they think things out for themselves. In very good physical education lessons with Year 5 and 6 classes, for example, the teachers had planned the lessons very effectively, setting out clearly what they expected the pupils to learn. The lessons began by reminding them of work they had previously done in order that they would be able to build on skills they had already acquired. Demonstrations were used very effectively to establish what was expected in terms of skills and high standards. The emphasis was strongly on the development and then the further refinement of skills and techniques. Control and management of the pupils were excellent. A key factor in the success of these lessons was the very good subject knowledge of the teachers. This gave them the confidence and expertise to demonstrate for the pupils and then analyse and discuss the pupils' strengths and weaknesses in order that they could learn and improve. Teaching such as this has led to good standards in games skills and dance.
16. Most lessons taught in the school are good or very good and factors that are strengths in almost all teachers' work are good subject knowledge, effective planning (with objectives shared with the pupils, so that they know what is expected), and good endings to lessons, when the learning objectives are revisited to consolidate the pupils' learning. Lessons are structured so that skills and knowledge are built gradually and progressively over time. Resources are prepared to support lessons effectively. The pace of learning is brisk in the good and very good lessons.
17. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory, there are many of the strengths that are consistent across almost all lessons. The work is organised so that pupils can build on what they have done and learnt previously. The teachers have good class control and management, which ensures that there are few interruptions and pupils learn at a brisk pace. On occasions, the lesson is not

planned well to meet its objectives. In a religious education lesson, for example, that had many good features, the pupils were set the task of writing a poem to explore their feelings about days that are special to them. The parameters set for the task – that the poem had to be of a certain length and that it had to rhyme – dominated the pupils' thinking so that it became a poetry lesson. The main aim of the religious education teaching was lost as the pupils struggled with rhymes and syllables.

18. Assessment is used well by teachers in English and mathematics to ensure that work is planned for all pupils for all pupils that extends and challenges them. There is insufficient assessment information for this to be true across the whole curriculum. The school has recognised that this is an area for development and plans are well advanced for the consistent assessment and recording of pupils' achievements in all subjects.

Teaching in subject areas

19. In English, mathematics and science, teaching is good. The planning and organisation of lessons are areas of strength, and ensure that time is used effectively. Questioning is done well by all teachers. In mathematics, teaching is thoroughly planned and classes are well managed, to ensure that there is a good learning environment. Teachers have high expectations. In science, teachers work very well to develop knowledge and understanding, but there is scope for more practical work to develop the pupils' skills of investigation.
20. The quality of teaching is a strength in many other subjects. In art and design and technology, it was not possible to observe enough lessons to make a judgement about the quality of teaching, but in all other subjects teaching is good. The new resources are used very well in information and communication technology and the subject expertise of teachers is developing well. There are good cross-curricular links in history that make the subject meaningful to pupils. The teaching of ancient civilisations is particularly strong. In geography, teachers concentrate on teaching both knowledge and skills, with good teaching of map reading. The teaching of religious education is planned to cover the programme of study in depth and discussions are handled well. There is a good emphasis on the development of skills in the good teaching that characterises work in physical education. The new scheme of work is supporting teachers in their work in music and giving them the confidence to teach it well.
21. Teachers make good provision for pupils with special educational needs in their planning. They are aware of the learning targets in the pupils' individual educational programmes and give support with them where possible. Many of the targets are literacy based, and the teachers organise support in this area very well. The pupils are taught in small groups outside the classroom, and cover the main teaching points of the literacy lessons as well as receiving direct teaching aimed at their specific difficulties. This is very effective in keeping the pupils motivated to learn and building on their skills at an appropriate rate.
22. Overall, the high quality of teaching is a very significant strength of the school and leads in most lessons to pupils' developing good, often very good, learning skills. They respond well to the expectations of them and work hard in class, concentrating well on their work and making considerable intellectual and, when appropriate, creative effort. The clear instructions they are given ensure that they know what is expected of them. In many lessons, teachers use assessment to help pupils improve, by ensuring that they know what they have to do to raise the level of their work. The school needs to ensure that this is true of all lessons.

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

23. The curriculum has been thoughtfully planned and gives appropriate coverage to all subjects. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. English and mathematics are, appropriately, given additional time and this, along with the effective use of the literacy and numeracy hours, has helped to raise standards. There is as yet no guidance for teaching

personal, social and health education, but this is in the development plan of the school. Religious education is taught to all pupils. The teaching of sex education has been carefully planned and involves the school nurse. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, although it is more comprehensive for the older pupils than for those in Years 3 and 4. The range of musical activities is good and they are attended by a large number of pupils. Other activities include sports and computer clubs and a Bible club.

24. Each subject is planned effectively by teachers. They make good use of the good planning that has been developed by the subject co-ordinators. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when there were imbalances in many subjects. The guidance helps all staff to be proficient in teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum is planned to meet the needs of all pupils, but there are times, in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, when activities are not appropriate for higher or lower attaining pupils. Planning for investigative work in science is less comprehensive than for other areas of the subject.
25. The provision for special educational needs is very good and pupils make good progress. Work is carefully planned in English and mathematics. Individual education plans are in place and parents are involved in reviews effectively. All pupils on the school's register have individual educational programmes, which set out their learning targets. These pupils have access to the full curriculum. Support assistants are skilled in ensuring that pupils can take part in lessons and they support sensitively and unobtrusively. If they are withdrawn from class, it is usually for support with work that the other pupils are doing. When this cannot be arranged, because the support for a few pupils is by visiting literacy and numeracy specialists, all attempts are made to include some elements of the lesson that they are missing.
26. The school has established sound links with the community that enhance the curriculum. There are plans to involve the community further in an audit about how the school can develop. The community uses the school field for football and plans are well underway to involve local people in cricket, using the funding from the lottery. There are links with a local sailing centre and a Bible College.
27. Links with local schools are good. Teachers from the infant and junior schools have taken part in joint professional development and some curricular links have been established. Effective methods are in place to ensure that pupils feel comfortable when they transfer to the secondary schools.

Personal development, including the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

28. Provision for personal development is good, overall. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Assemblies make a good contribution. Much work has gone into planning a coherent approach to assemblies and good guidance has been drawn up. Pupils respect the silence when a candle is lit while they reflect on the theme. In some lessons, pupils are encouraged to think about the wonder of life, such as when listening to music. In a design and technology lesson with Year 3, pupils were entranced when the teacher showed how a cardboard box which they thought was in six pieces, turned out to be made of one piece. However, these opportunities are infrequent and unplanned.
29. Provision for social and moral development is good and, although not planned formally, is an intrinsic part of the school ethos. Pupils are encouraged to work together and collaborate in groups. Assemblies have a strong moral theme - for example, perseverance in the face of adversity. Pupils are encouraged to respect themselves and other. Adults offer good role models for both social and moral development. Pupils are given opportunities to be members of the School Council. They contribute to the school's policies by writing down their ideas and putting them in an ideas box. All teachers give opportunities in their classrooms for pupils to take responsibility as monitors. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when provision was satisfactory.

30. Provision for cultural development is sound. Music and aspects of art contribute effectively. Many pupils learn to play instruments and take part in concerts, which are put on for the benefit of the community. Pupils know about the work of a range of artists and understand what makes their work unique. Pupils study a good range of literature, and paintings and other artefacts are sometimes used as a stimulus for discussion. For example, a painting by Constable was used to stimulate descriptive writing in a Year 6 literacy lesson. These subjects also help pupils to be aware of different faiths and cultures. Religious education helps pupils to develop knowledge of other faiths. Assemblies are beginning to help pupils to appreciate the faiths of others. There are few opportunities to ensure that pupils are aware of Britain as a multi-cultural society, however, and opportunities are missed to enrich the arts curriculum through visits from artists, writers and musicians.
31. There have been good improvements in both the curriculum and in the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school's provision for the educational and personal support and guidance of the pupils is satisfactory, overall, and this has been maintained since the last inspection. The school provides a safe, secure and caring environment. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and pupils turn readily to their class teachers for help and guidance when needed.
33. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. School rules are displayed in classrooms. Good behaviour and achievement are praised during lessons and assemblies and are rewarded by merits and certificates. These mean a great deal to the children who receive them. Clear procedures have been identified for pupils who do not meet the expected standards of behaviour. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection, although parents and pupils report that the school has been alerted to some incidents of bullying. All members of staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are aware of possible problems and keep a watchful eye on behaviour, especially at lunchtimes. Some pupils have made use of the 'ideas box' to register their concerns confidentially to the headteacher.
34. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance, absence and punctuality are good and have improved since the last inspection. Parents are made aware through newsletters of procedures in place to inform the school of absences. The school's administration officer monitors the registers daily. Unauthorised absences are identified and parents contacted. Latecomers report at the school office.
35. The monitoring and supporting of pupils' personal development is good. Teachers get to know their pupils well and give appropriate help and guidance throughout the school day.
36. The school's arrangements for promoting the welfare, health and safety of its pupils are good overall and have improved since the last inspection. There is a child protection policy and a fully trained, designated member of staff responsible for child protection. All members of staff are well aware of their responsibilities to report any concerns, but there has not been any recent training to update staff on child protection issues. There are policies to support health and safety and great care is taken to ensure the medical well-being of the pupils. Pupils have a clear sense of being looked after when feeling unwell. All accidents are recorded and parents are contacted when necessary. A thorough health and safety risk assessment is carried out termly by the governing body.
37. The support and guidance provided for pupils with special educational needs are very good. All members of staff have the best interests of the pupils at heart and get to know their individual needs very well. Pupils with statements of special educational need have very detailed individual learning plans that are closely supervised by learning support assistants under the guidance of the special educational needs co-ordinator. Other pupils have less detailed plans, but these are implemented well. Both parents and pupils are involved in monitoring progress towards the

learning targets. Relationships with outside agencies are good so that the pupils have access to any specialist help and advice that they may need.

Assessment

38. Assessment procedures in English and mathematics are good and give a good picture of the progress of pupils and where they can improve their work. The assessment files in English are particularly good, giving a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of pupils in speaking, listening and writing. All teachers keep records of reading but these are not yet as comprehensive as for other areas of English.
39. The procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress in other subjects are not yet fully in place, but plans are developing well. This has been a recent focus for development. All co-ordinators know what is needed for the assessment of their subjects. Members of staff have informal systems to assess the progress that pupils make, but do not always use this assessment when planning for the next stage of learning. The policy for assessment, however, gives good guidance for assessment, including how often it needs to take place.
40. The marking of pupils' work is a strength of the school. All teachers write comments that analyse features of pupils' work perceptively and sometimes, but not always, suggest how the work could be improved. Pupils value these comments.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school recognises that liaison between home and school is very important and has worked hard to improve the satisfactory links reported in the previous inspection. Partnership with parents is now good, overall. Most parents report that their children are happy to come to school and value the commitment of the headteacher and his staff and what the school seeks to achieve for their children.
42. An area of particular concern in the last inspection report was the quality of information to parents. This has improved significantly and is now good. There is an attractive prospectus and other good documentation to welcome and inform new parents. The detailed and readable annual report of the governing body provides a good overview of the school year. Parents appreciate the regular school newsletters that keep them in touch with school events and activities. In addition, parents receive each term a year group newsletter. This provides valuable curriculum information in all subjects to ensure that parents are aware of what their children are learning in the classrooms. The school offered curriculum workshops for parents in mathematics and English and these were well attended.
43. The school works hard to involve the parents of pupils with special educational needs as closely as possible in their children's education. There are good channels of communication on an individual basis. All the necessary regular reviews are held for the pupils on the register, to which parents are invited, and parents are kept informed of their children's developing needs and of the arrangements the school is making for their support. There are also good procedures for keeping parents up to date with more general issues in the school, such as workshops to explain how the latest support materials can be used to help the children's learning. The school keeps in very close contact with both the infant and secondary schools and both parents and pupils are involved in monitoring progress towards the learning targets so that the pupils experience the best possible continuity in their education.
44. A significant number of parents who replied to the questionnaire report that they are not kept well informed on children's progress. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters that they are welcomed into school at any time to discuss their children's progress or voice parental concerns. This open-door approach is appreciated by the parents. Consultation evenings are available for parents each term with a more informal open day in the summer. Pupils' annual reports give

parents sufficient information to understand the progress their children are making in all aspects of their work and set targets for the future. This inspection finds that the concerns of parents in this respect are not justified. Parents' responses to the questionnaire also indicate parents' concerns that their children do not get the right amount of homework. The inspection finds that the quantity of homework is appropriate, with younger pupils concentrating on reading, times tables and spellings and the older pupils having written work twice a week. A further concern raised by a significant majority of parents in the questionnaire was the lack of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. The inspection finds that the range of after-school activities is satisfactory, taking into account the size of the school and the number of members of staff available to run them. Those provided are aimed primarily at Years 5 and 6 and, in this respect, the concerns of parents of children in Years 3 and 4 are justified. The school is aware that this is an area for development.

45. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. They are requested to complete a home/school agreement. The school encourages parents to support their children at home, particularly with spellings and multiplication tables. The school values the many parents, grand-parents and volunteers who help in the classrooms and with outside visits. There is an active and enthusiastic parent/teacher association, Friends of Mudeford Junior School, that is responsible for fundraising activities. Substantial funds have been raised by the Friends for much needed resources in the classrooms and they have also contributed funds to furnish the ICT suite. Parents and staff give good support to the Association's activities, which include a summer event, Christmas fairs, discos and quiz nights.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Leadership and management are good overall and have been very effective in taking the school forward over the last two years.
47. The headteacher's leadership, supported very effectively by the new deputy, is very good. He has provided a very clear sense of direction for the school, correctly focusing on the improvement of attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 and the improvement of teaching – both of which were areas of serious weakness at the time of the last report. His rigorous monitoring of teaching and the sharing of the best practice have improved considerably the quality of education that the school offers its pupils. He has used the services of the local education authority wisely and well in this. The authority has conducted audits of teaching in the school on his behalf and supported him in the setting of targets for teachers. He has helped to improve standards of attainment by introducing a much more comprehensive and rigorous system of planning, linked to detailed schemes of work along the guidelines set by QCA.
48. The school has explicit aims and values, including a commitment to good relationships and equal opportunities, that are reflected in all of its work. Just as the headteacher seeks, with success, to enable staff to take a full part in the decision-making process and carry a fair burden of management responsibility, so all pupils have opportunities to take responsibilities and to have their say in the running of the school – through the suggestion box and the School Council. Members of staff with management responsibilities contribute very effectively to the work of the school, because of their dedication, hard work and the good delegation that enables them to provide leadership and take control of their areas. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics have had opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects, but this has not been extended to the other co-ordinators. This is to begin in the current term and a part-time teacher has been appointed to make the time available.
49. Performance management and appraisal are well established in principle within the management systems of the school, and have made a very effective contribution to the raising of standards, although the draft policy for performance management is not yet finalised. The school development plan was prepared two years ago by the headteacher and correctly prioritised the areas for improvement. There has been very good progress on these and the next plan, due shortly, will involve the participation of all staff and governors. In addition, the school regularly

seeks the views of parents on its performance through questionnaires and uses the results to help with the identification of priorities for improvement.

50. There is a strong, shared commitment to succeed and the capacity for further improvement is strong. This is as true of the governing body as it is of the teaching and administrative staffs. The governors fulfil their statutory duties well and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have allocated responsibilities for monitoring some subjects of the curriculum, but this is an aspect of their work where further improvements can be made.
51. The leadership and management of special educational need provision in the school are very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very well informed and keeps all the staff up to date through a good programme of in-service training. All the paperwork related to special educational needs is very well organised, giving an easily accessible and clear picture of what the school is doing to support these pupils. Very efficient use is made of the learning support assistants, who are well trained and very competent and effective. While supporting individuals and small groups of special educational needs pupils, the assistants also give appropriate help to many other pupils in the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises closely and effectively with the governor responsible for special educational needs so that the governing body is fully informed of developments.

Finance

52. The school budgets systematically and well for all expenditure. The headteacher and the governing body allocate major funding decisions according to the priorities outlined in the school development plan and always seek best value in the allocation of contracts. They have a good understanding of the principles of best value. Subject co-ordinators similarly seek to maximise the value they can get from their funding in terms of the effectiveness of the resources they purchase. Overall, the quality of educational provision has benefited from the careful management of the budget. Funds have been allocated successfully to areas of educational priority. This has proved to be successful in raising standards and the quality of educational experience for pupils. The improvements in information and communication technology resources, for example, have helped to raise standards. The new computer room is a very good resource and attainment in information and communication technology has risen since the last report partly as a result. The quality and rigour of financial management is good: the last auditors' report was very satisfactory.
53. The school makes effective use of new technology. It is used well for administration and in many subject areas. The local education authority regularly audits the school's records and the school ensures that all funds that are allocated to special educational needs are spent appropriately. The governing body regularly monitors special educational needs provision. There is regular review of the effectiveness of spending decisions by the senior management team and, informally, by governors as part of the review of the school development planning. Overall, taking account of the progress made by pupils, the quality of teaching, the good personal development of pupils and the costs of the school, the school gives good value for money.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

54. Accommodation in the school is satisfactory. The site is large and the fields provide plenty of space for healthy exercise. There is a welcoming entrance area for visitors. The hall is a good size and is used for dining, assemblies and physical education. Year group classrooms are grouped together, which helps to provide cohesion and the efficient use of resources. The cloakroom areas are small, however, and cramped at peak times. The shared practical areas are difficult to supervise and the facilities they provide for art and craft activities, such as sinks, are limited. The computer room is large enough to take a full class easily. The library areas are well organised.
55. Outdoor facilities for physical education are good. Inside facilities for all subjects are adequate, overall, with some strengths. The hall is of a good size and is well equipped with large apparatus. The classroom areas are small for the number of children – more than 30 in every class – and this makes them cramped. It is difficult to use the areas flexibly and regrouping pupils for literacy and

numeracy takes time. The lack of solid walls (parts of these open-plan classrooms are divided from each other by curtains) means that it is difficult at times for the teacher to hear the pupils and for the pupils to hear each other. Valuable teaching time is wasted because answers to questions have to be repeated. The standard of cleanliness in all areas of the school is very good, with very little litter in evidence. Displays are of high standard both within rooms and along corridors. All walls and notice boards are used well for displays. These help to create a visually rich learning environment and to celebrate pupils' work.

56. Learning resources are satisfactory, overall. Resources for information and communication technology are good, the central facilities being extensive, with a variety of appropriate software. There is, generally, a satisfactory supply of textbooks. The library is well stocked with a variety of books, including an adequate range of reference books.
57. The school has sufficient appropriately qualified teachers to meet curricular needs. Professional development is thorough and well organised and includes a continuing programme of appraisal of teachers. The support for newly qualified teachers is good. There is an adequate number of learning support staff, appropriately trained, who give good levels of support, as does the clerical and administrative staff. All other adults who work in the school, including cleaners and the site manager, make a valuable contribution and help to ensure that the work of the school proceeds smoothly.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to continue to improve and to raise levels of attainment and the quality of education in the school, the governors, headteacher and teaching staff, with the support of the local education authority, should:
 - extend the use of assessment information, now good for English and mathematics, to the other subjects of the curriculum to increase the awareness of teachers of the prior attainment of their pupils and of the progress pupils are making; (paragraphs 5, 18, 22, 24, 39, 40, 70, 85, 90, 92, 96, 100, 107, 112.)
 - provide opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor the quality of learning and teaching in their subjects, as set out in the current school development plan. (paragraphs 48, 84, 90, 92, 112, 118.)
59. Other areas for development, which have been noted by the inspection team, that the governors may wish to include in their action plan, but which have not been picked out as key issues, are:
 - The need for development of teaching and learning strategies to include more research and independent learning tasks, in order to provide greater levels of challenge for the two or three per cent of very high attaining pupils (paragraphs 5, 24, 82, 96.);
 - Improvements in the provision for art, design and technology and some aspects of music in order to raise levels of attainment to the standards elsewhere in the curriculum (paragraphs 4, 86, 91, 92, 102, 103.);
 - Improvement of the accommodation so that all pupils can hear the teacher and each other - the curtains dividing classrooms are not sufficiently sound-proof. The large numbers of pupils in some classes mean that they are cramped and this can restrict opportunities for movement and flexible teaching; (paragraphs 54, 55, 71, 78, 85.);
 - The need to put in place further strategies to enable the governors to monitor the curricular provision in the school (paragraph 50.).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 53 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 24 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2 | 19.5 | 54 | 24.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | Y3 – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | N/A | 262 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | N/A | 14 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | Y3 – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | N/A | 15 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | N/A | 79 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 11 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 7 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.6 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.5 |
| 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 | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | 1999 | 34 | 29 | 63 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 27 | 30 | 30 |
| | Girls | 24 | 24 | 28 |
| | Total | 51 | 54 | 58 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 81 (67) | 86 (48) | 92 (69) |
| | National | 70 (65) | 69 (59) | 78 (69) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 26 | 26 | 28 |
| | Girls | 24 | 24 | 25 |
| | Total | 50 | 50 | 53 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 79 (68) | 79 (62) | 84 (64) |
| | National | 68 (65) | 69 (65) | 75 (71) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 1 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 257 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 9 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25.8 |
| Average class size | 32.3 |

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 14 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 184 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999/2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|--------|
| Total income | 432145 |
| Total expenditure | 391178 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1578 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 0 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 40967 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 258 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 141 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 40 | 50 | 10 | 1 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 42 | 50 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 29 | 64 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 14 | 51 | 29 | 4 | 2 |
| The teaching is good. | 34 | 57 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 19 | 55 | 22 | 4 | 1 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 48 | 36 | 13 | 1 | 3 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 50 | 38 | 8 | 0 | 4 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 17 | 51 | 17 | 6 | 9 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 36 | 46 | 7 | 4 | 7 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 25 | 64 | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 14 | 48 | 28 | 4 | 6 |

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

ENGLISH

60. At the end of 1999, results in the National Curriculum tests show that attainment in English was well above average for schools in the country as a whole and was in line with the average of similar schools. Boys and girls performed equally well. The inspection found that attainment is similar to that of last year. Pupils make very good progress, including those of higher and of lower attainment. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was found to be below average. The reasons for the improvement are the good planning of the work by teachers and the successful implementation of the literacy hour.
61. Attainment in speaking and listening at the end of the Key Stage 2 is above average. Many pupils are highly articulate and confident speakers who use a wide range of vocabulary. They are often able to justify their point of view. Some pupils are quiet in class and reluctant to contribute to discussion. These pupils are articulate and are able to respond at length when pressed. Teachers have good methods of encouraging them to develop their responses, by good use of questioning, for example.
62. Attainment in reading is also well above average. Many pupils are confident and fluent readers who cope well with complex texts that they have not met before. The reading of many pupils has good expression, a reflection of the expressive reading that they hear from their teachers. Many pupils are skilled at using alphabetical order to locate information in dictionaries and thesaurus. They understand how to find a reference book in the library and how to use it to seek information. Many have favourite authors or genres and enjoy reading. Lower attaining pupils make good progress and enjoy reading.
63. Attainment in writing is below that of reading, but is above average. Many pupils write effectively in a range of styles and show good awareness of their audience. A Year 6 girl wrote;
- Clear blue seas
Crashing against rocks
Sunshine glistening on waves
Keep seas clean.*
- Sticky starfish
Gently spinning
Pushing past the thick water
Keep seas clean.*
- Children playing joyfully
Kicking at the water's edge
Paddling on the shimmery sea.
Keep seas clean.*
- Oil surrounding
Heavily killing
Choking and murdering.
Keep seas clean.*
64. Many pupils use a good range of vocabulary and use the structures of English successfully. They are, at times, more aware of the need to use adjectives or similes than the need to consider the meaning or feeling of the writing. Observation of lessons indicated that this improves as pupils are encouraged to think about improving their choice of vocabulary. The sample of work from last year showed that not all teachers are concentrating sufficiently on the skills of redrafting work to improve communication skills. There were times when more attention was given to technical accuracy than to the equally important meaning, purpose and effectiveness of the writing.

65. Pupils use their skills of literacy well in all subjects, such as for research in history and geography and for the presentation of information. Pupils are encouraged to write books about topics they have studied; the Aztecs, for example. These are often of high quality. Pupils take pride in presenting their work and their handwriting is of a good standard, although many pupils make mistakes in spelling, not transferring their learning from spelling tests into their writing.
66. Most pupils enjoy English, particularly when they hear stories read. They often listen to these with rapt attention. They are generally responsive, although there is a significant number who are content to listen and not respond and a small number with poor skills of listening and of concentration. They work well together in pairs and groups and generally respect each other's views and opinions. Behaviour is generally good, because all teachers have high expectations of behaviour. They are confident to make mistakes as relationships are good and so they feel comfortable in class. Pupils are often enthusiastic about their work, particularly when the teacher is enthusiastic. One example was in two Year 3 lessons on writing the setting for a story. The teacher's enthusiasm ensured that pupils were highly motivated and they wanted to contribute.
67. The quality of teaching is good. The subject guidance is effective in ensuring that all teachers are confident to teach the subject. All teachers have high expectations of the work of their classes and pupils respond well to this. A Year 6 class produced descriptive writing of high quality on the subject of a painting by Constable because the teacher refused to allow pupils to sit back and rely on the answers of their friends. Many teachers ask questions that extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and make them think hard, as in the previous example. A Year 4 class, studying how authors portray feelings, learned how to read a poem closely in order to understand its deeper meaning through the thoughtful questions asked by the teacher.
68. Time is used well because of the effective planning and many teachers use deadlines effectively to maintain the pace of the lesson and the motivation of the pupils. In another Year 6 class, in which the pupils studied *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, the teacher successfully used the planning to maintain a good flow to the lesson. As a result, pupils learned much about how a work of literature is constructed.
69. Activities are well planned to meet the needs of pupils with differing attainment. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, often unobtrusive and sensitive, which enables them to take part in the lesson and thus increase their self-esteem. A sensitive pupil, who could have caused disruption, was skilfully kept interested and involved in the lesson by the learning support assistant.
70. Records of pupils' progress are good and continue to develop well. Each pupil has a book in which is placed samples of their writing from a range of subjects. Teachers have begun to write comments in these books about their achievements in writing. The record also includes information about attainment in speaking and listening. The assessment of reading is not as advanced, although the co-ordinator has good ideas about how attainment should be recorded. Marking comments perceptively on aspects of pupils' work that they have done well. This motivates the pupils. A few staff comment on how the work may be improved, but this is not consistent, although all teachers make helpful, spoken comments in discussion with pupils.
71. The subject is led effectively and much work has gone into preparing the subject guidance and ensuring that resources are suitable. There are occasions when the problems with the accommodation mean that it is difficult for pupils to hear the teacher, or each other.

MATHEMATICS

72. The attainment of pupils in mathematics in the National Curriculum tests at the end of 1999 was well above the average nationally and above the average for pupils in similar schools. Not only was the percentage of pupils attaining level 4 or above, the expected level for pupils at the end of Year 6, well above the national average, but also the percentage of pupils attaining level 5 was well above average - 41 per cent as against 24 per cent nationally. The provisional results for the year 2000 show similarly high levels of attainment. Over time, attainment in mathematics has increased significantly. At the time of the last report, it was described as below average. Performance in the national tests in both 1997 and 1998 was below average. Boys were significantly below the average for boys nationally in 1998 and girls well below average in 1997. Both improved significantly in 1999 and the average scores for both boys and girls were well above the national averages.
73. The finding of the inspection is that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average. Pupils in Year 6 can use and apply mathematics well. They can use different approaches to find ways of overcoming difficulties and checking their work. They check complicated addition and subtractions calculations by using the inverse rule - seeing if they get the same answer by doing the calculation in reverse. They present their work in clear and well-organised ways. Almost all children work neatly and methodically. The higher attainers can form their own conclusions about how mathematical calculations work and explain why they have worked a problem out in a particular way. Pupils in Year 5 can multiply and divide numbers by 10 and a 100, many can multiply and divide by even larger numbers in their heads. Almost all in Year 6 can add and subtract decimals up to two decimal places and recognise and describe number patterns. Many pupils have a very good command of numeracy and work confidently with fractions, percentages and decimals. All can draw and measure angles and understand rotation and symmetry. There is evidence of work with graphs, in numeracy lessons as well as in science and information and communication technology, in which pupils have measured and then constructed graphs to help to show their results. They are skilled at representing data diagrammatically and interpreting these diagrams.
74. Across the key stage, pupils are making very good progress. They enter the school with attainment levels in mathematics in the end of Key Stage 1 tests close to the national average for children of their age, in most instances. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, their attainment in the national tests is well above average, overall. The school is now following the National Numeracy Strategy schemes of work. This has been implemented well and teachers have a very good understanding of how to teach the principles underlying it. The medium- and short-term planning is very thorough. This is helping to ensure that in each year the work increases in difficulty in order to improve the rate of pupils' progress. Tasks for pupils are graded in difficulty according to their abilities. Some good examples were seen of work being well matched to pupils' abilities. The use of target setting is helping to increase pupils' rate of progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress.
75. Another important factor that helps to explain the very good progress pupils make is the very positive attitudes that pupils have towards their lessons and the efforts they all make to give their best. Their behaviour is very good. Younger pupils learn to share and take turns in pairs. They are learning to work independently in small groups. Pupils encourage each other and appreciate each other's efforts when work is shared with the class or individuals attempt to answer teachers' questions. All pupils listen carefully to their teachers' questions and explanations, although some of the pupils with learning difficulties can become restless after long periods of listening. Individuals are pleased to be asked to show their work and explain their thinking. All pupils are frequently asked to work collaboratively, often in pairs. They work effectively to complete tasks and generally co-operate very well in their groups. Year 6 pupils work efficiently to complete their tasks to deadlines. Pupils throughout the school understand what is required of them in all lessons and they try hard to achieve what is expected.
76. The quality of teaching is good, overall. In a quarter of lessons seen, it was very good. One satisfactory lesson was observed and the rest were good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.

Teaching and learning are well planned, with a good emphasis on whole-class teaching, mental mathematics and the direct teaching of skills. All teachers agree that the recent training they have received for teaching numeracy is helping them to improve their teaching of mathematics.

77. Teachers' use of questioning is usually very good, with questions pitched at the right level of difficulty. They help pupils to understand as well as test their knowledge. This is a particularly successful aspect of the teaching in all years. Teachers ensure that all pupils are involved in the question and answer process. All teachers place good emphasis on the use of correct terminology. Instructions to pupils are clear and usually understood by them. All teachers expect pupils to work hard and to behave well. They make the learning objective clear so that pupils know what is going to be taught and what they are expected to learn. Lessons move along at a good pace. In the good lessons, and particularly in Year 6, pupils are also expected to think and to use their skills creatively. This is reinforced in plenary sessions, when teaching points are made and what has been achieved is reviewed.
78. The resources for mathematics are good. The curtain divisions between classrooms are not sound-proof and this sometimes means that pupils are distracted by noise coming from an adjacent classroom. There is good evidence of homework being set regularly, especially in Year 6. There is a direct link between good assessment and the good progress being made. Teachers assess pupils' progress by using the key objectives of the Numeracy Strategy and pitch class work and questioning at levels that challenge pupils and extend their thinking, although sometimes more could be demanded of the most able.
79. The subject manager has monitored the teaching and has given good advice to help teachers improve the quality of planning and the pace of lessons. The quality of the leadership and management of the subject is very good. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve the standards of attainment in mathematics further.

SCIENCE

80. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests for 1999 were well above average compared with all schools nationally, with 86 per cent of pupils reaching the expected level 4 in the national tests and over 40 per cent exceeding it and gaining level 5. The overall performance of the school was in line with that of other schools. Following a dip in 1997, the school's results are on an upward trend. The 2000 results confirm this, with 95 per cent on pupils achieving level 4 and 54 per cent level 5. There are no national figures available for 2000.
81. The inspection evidence confirms that the pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are well above average. This represents a significant improvement on the last inspection, reflecting the vastly improved teaching and curriculum. In all year groups, the pupils' written work reflects systematic teaching of all the areas of knowledge. The pupils present their work neatly and explain what they know and understand. Much of the learning is through experimentation, which is another good improvement since the last inspection. From the very early stages in Year 3, the pupils are taught to set up experiments, predict what will happen and say whether the results are what they expected. At this stage, the pupils have very good experimental skills for their age. The pupils develop and use their literacy and numeracy skills well, for example by making notes or explaining their findings using correct vocabulary and representing their results using charts and graphs. Computers are not yet used as effectively as they could be, however, to collate and represent data from experiments. In the attainment targets for living things, materials and forces the pupils demonstrate a very good breadth of knowledge. Their understanding of how different forces work is particularly strong, enabling them to describe the science behind a range of physical phenomena from the action of air resistance on parachutes to the effect of up-thrust on floating objects. They also develop a very good understanding for their age of light and sound and how they travel as well as of the workings of the solar system. Pupils of all attainment levels reach good standards in all these areas, reflecting the high expectations of their teachers. Teachers and learning support assistants give good support to those who need it.

82. The pupils' skills in experimentation are consistent throughout the school, but these skills do not develop at the same rate as their knowledge and understanding. This was an area of weakness identified by the last inspection in which improvements are still needed. For example, the work samples from Year 6 indicate that all the pupils carried out the same experiments using the same apparatus to answer the same questions on most occasions. At this stage, however, higher attaining pupils are expected to generate their own questions to investigate and select their own method and apparatus. They would also be expected to repeat measurements and explain patterns that emerge. While there is much good work, for example in the drawing of line graphs to show how an elastic band stretches when weights are added, there is often insufficient discussion of the implications of the results. There is no discussion, for instance, of why this particular graph is the shape it is and whether or not the trend in the graph can be used to predict further increases. This is an area of the subject that is not measured in the national tests, and explains why some of the inspection judgements may be at odds with the school's very high test results.
83. The standard of teaching is good throughout the school. The teachers have a range of very secure teaching skills. Relationships are good in all lessons and often very good, and the teachers manage the pupils well, achieving good standards of behaviour in lessons. They set high expectations, particularly for the amount of work to be covered and recorded in the pupils' books, and for neatness of presentation. The pupils respond by working conscientiously at their tasks and taking pride in the presentation of their work. On occasions, however, in getting all the class to record an experiment fully and neatly, the teachers lose sight of opportunities to discuss the science involved and extend pupils' thinking. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are supported very effectively in lessons and make very good progress relative to their prior attainment, along with the other pupils.
84. During the inspection, teaching was always at least satisfactory and was good in one third of the lessons seen. The overall judgement on teaching is based on wider evidence than this, however, including pupils' workbooks from previous years, and shows that teaching is generally better than these lesson grades, from early in the academic year, suggest. The marking in the books shows that the teachers often challenge the pupils to think about what they are doing and compare their findings with their own experience and expectations. This kind of marking is particularly effective in the earlier years of the key stage, for example when individual pupils are asked if what they discovered about the weight and hardness of stone and metal samples was what they expected. The teachers plan their lessons carefully from government guidelines, and teachers in each year group plan together. This ensures that the pupils acquire knowledge and understanding about living things, materials and forces systematically as they move through the school. Some of the lessons seen were not as effective as they should have been, given the natural skills of the teachers, because of a lack of expert guidance in deriving lessons from the guidelines. However, a new co-ordinator is now in place. She is a subject specialist and has some very useful ideas on how to improve medium-term and short-term planning and incorporate more teaching of age-appropriate investigative skills.
85. The teachers know their pupils well, and continually assess their progress during the year. They make good use of this information, especially to support slower-learning pupils. However, assessment is not yet used effectively enough, especially for the measurement of pupils' investigative skills and the setting of challenging new learning targets. One impact of this is that teachers have to spend time assessing the skills of the class they are beginning to teach this year without the aid of useful assessment information. Although there are adequate resources to support lessons, the range of books and computer software currently available needs to be widened in order to enable sufficient research and investigation to take place. The cramped nature of some of the classrooms also restricts the range of activities that can be planned, further limiting the development of individual and small-group investigation and experimental work.

ART

86. It was possible to observe only one lesson in art, because it was being taught in rotation with design and technology in the lower juniors and not timetabled on the days of the inspection in the upper juniors. Discussion with pupils and staff, study of work around the school and of documentation indicate that there has been sound improvement since the last inspection and that attainment is now in line with what is expected of eleven year olds whereas it was below average in the last inspection. Much work has gone into writing subject guidance that is of a high quality, and that is now available for staff. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when there was no guidance.
87. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 could discuss with perception the work of well-known artists. Although they could not remember their names, they could discuss features of their styles. Many pupils are skilled in using a range of techniques and experimenting with a range of textures to produce interesting work. Observational drawings are often detailed. The school values the work and attractively frames pupils' work of good quality. Pupils have worked in the style of Van Gogh and their work displays intricate brush work and careful attention to detail. Information and communication technology is used effectively, for example in the bookmarks that were produced by Year 6 pupils using desk top publishing. These showed individuality of design. Although it was not possible to see much three-dimensional work, pupils talked about their models, and masks of Aztecs were of a satisfactory standard.
88. Pupils are proud of their work and in the lesson that was observed, worked carefully with attention to detail. They collaborated well, chatting amicably about what they were doing.
89. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching because so little was observed. The study of work would suggest that it is at least satisfactory, and the subject guidance supports teachers' understanding of the subject well.
90. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce guidance and has good ideas about how the subject needs to develop further. This includes the introduction of a sketchbook in all classes that is to act as an ongoing record of attainment and progress. Currently, there is little assessment in the subject and the co-ordinator has had few opportunities to monitor work. Art makes a good contribution to the cultural development of pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Very little design and technology was seen during the inspection. Judgements on attainment rely on the evidence of a small sample of previous work done by the pupils, which is of the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils use careful observations of real-life products as the starting point for their designs. They decide which materials to use within their design, based on the required properties, such as strength or flexibility, and use an appropriate range of tools and equipment. The models of fairground rides from last year included the use of battery-powered motors and belt-driven pulley wheels, for example, and the pupils wrote evaluations of their work with suggestions for improvement. Some higher attaining pupils had modified their designs as they went along and showed a good understanding of the limitations of the finished product in their evaluations.
92. Only one lesson was seen; in it the teaching was good. A good learning ethos was established with high expectations for good behaviour and attention, which were achieved because the lesson had a clear purpose and relevance. The teacher managed the pupils well and used searching questions to keep them on their toes. The co-ordination of the subject has lapsed during recent staff changes, and is currently in the process of being re-established. The school has done well to maintain satisfactory standards during the changes that have occurred. Signs are that the good teaching currently in place will enable the school to benefit from whatever impetus the newly appointed co-ordinator will provide. The pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. They put effort into their work and show genuine pleasure in discoveries they make – that a box has been made out of one piece of cardboard, for example. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are extended well. For example, they have to explain their thinking, make careful measurements and

draw designs accurately and to scale. Assessment procedures are not yet in place, so teachers have no way of knowing and recording exactly what level the pupils are at in order to plan for extending their learning at the right pace. This is an aspect of the school's overall provision that it is aware needs improving.

GEOGRAPHY

93. Attainment is above expectations. The pupils have good skills that enable them to make very effective use of a variety of sources of evidence to learn about different environments. The good standards at the end of the key stage owe much to the good grounding the pupils receive in the basic skills of enquiry from the start of their time in the school. They use secondary sources, such as photographs, as well as the evidence of their own first-hand observations to describe the key features of their environment, for example. The pupils draw or make maps and plans in a variety of scales and they show a good understanding of them. Map skills are well developed through the school. The pupils use plans and maps in different scales to put their own locality in the context of the immediate area, the country, Europe and the world. By the end of the key stage, pupils understand a range of physical and human processes, such as erosion caused by weather, the movements of rivers, and how the development of industry affects an area. They make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills to communicate their findings clearly, using appropriate language illustrated with charts and graphs. The work samples reflect positive attitudes to learning that were confirmed in the lessons seen. Behaviour is good and the pupils concentrate well, get on with each other and develop a good sense of personal responsibility for their work.
94. The standard of teaching is good, overall. It was satisfactory in half of the few lessons seen and good in the other half. Evidence from the pupils' samples of work reflects consistently good teaching. Teachers plan their lessons very thoroughly and use a variety of methods to interest and motivate the pupils. For example, some Year 4 pupils were engaged in writing a letter to the headteacher asking for specific improvements to the playground, following class discussions. These lessons illustrate the attention that is paid to developing the pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology skills. The teachers guide the discussions effectively, encouraging the pupils to argue for their own ideas and to use computers to write their letters. They are also asked to consider the likely cost of each proposed improvement in order to decide whether or not it is a realistic suggestion. Marking is used well to suggest improvements to the content and presentation of the pupils' work. The pupils respond well. They produce a good quantity of neatly presented work. Teachers use displays of the pupils' work effectively to illustrate and consolidate their learning and show how their skills can be applied to real life. For example, Year 4 pupils have recorded the journeys they have made during a school day as lines joining different areas on a plan of the school to show which are the most used areas and routes. The teachers use day-to-day assessments effectively to gauge the pupils' understanding, but do not yet use formal assessments to set challenging targets in their medium-term plans. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons because of the good quality support that they receive. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last report.

HISTORY

95. There have been good improvements in the teaching of history since the last inspection that have led to higher standards. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different periods of history that they have studied is above expectations for their age by the end of Key Stage 2, and they place the different periods in proper sequence. They also have good skills of historical enquiry, knowing how to use a variety of sources to obtain evidence for what life was like in different historical periods. For example, Year 6 pupils last year listened to a tape recording describing aspects of life in a workhouse in Victorian times, made notes and then wrote their own account. There is evidence from past work that pupils undertake their own research and present their findings on different issues, such as the development of industry in Britain since 1930. Attainment is also good further down the school, with current Year 4 pupils having a very good

awareness of ancient history. Their enthusiasm for the subject and good levels of knowledge reflect some skilled and innovative teaching, including the use of drama. Pupils who had participated in role-play in Year 3 last year on the theme of invasions, for example, could discuss in detail and enthusiasm what they had learned about the Romans, Britons and Celts. In the lessons observed on Ancient Greece, Year 5 pupils showed a good understanding of how to compare aspects of life then with the present day.

96. From the few lessons seen and the evidence of work produced by the pupils in each year group last year, the standard of teaching is good. Only two full lessons were seen, so the judgement on teaching relies heavily on evidence from the samples of pupils' work from last year. These reflect good planning, good direct teaching of a broad curriculum and due attention to the skills of enquiry. A good range of teaching methods is used to broaden the pupils' learning. For example, pupils argue for or against an issue, such as: "should women have the right to vote?". This forces them to think for themselves and gives them a deeper understanding of historical processes. Some of the lessons seen were introductory and the teachers were still settling their new classes into their routines. The full range of their teaching skills was not on display, but the teachers managed to keep the pupils' attention focused on the subject and draw them into useful discussions. In Year 6, the teachers were making good use of artefacts the pupils had brought from home to gather evidence about recent decades of this century. On occasions, the discussions were too dominated by the teacher and the pupils' contributions were limited to one-word or short phrase answers. However, the presence of an observer in the lessons so early in the term obviously inhibited the pupils, and more group discussions took place after the observation had finished. Teachers make good use of the subject to enable the pupils to improve and apply their literacy skills, for example by writing as if they were a particular character or type of person, such as a Greek or Spartan soldier. Information and communication technology is also used well as a learning tool. Pupils listen to tapes, use CD-ROM and the Internet to develop their skills of enquiry. Teachers' management of pupils is good. The teachers set high expectations for work-rate and presentation, which are generally met. All the pupils make good progress. There is very good support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs. The learning support assistants assigned to pupils with statements of need are very effective, and the teachers use a variety of methods to support lower attaining, for example by engaging them separately in group discussions. The teachers know their pupils well, and can therefore gauge how well they are learning. However, formal assessments of the pupils' skills are not yet in place, and this inhibits progress, particularly for the older, potentially higher attaining pupils.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

97. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below national expectations and there were serious shortcomings in the curriculum for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and in the planning. What was taught did not sufficiently match the requirements of the National Curriculum. Information technology was prioritised by the school as an area for improvement. Considerable work has done to increase the knowledge and expertise of teachers, although some members of staff still lack confidence in using ICT. Over the last year, an excellent computer room has been established, with enough machines, all with CD-ROM and Internet facilities, for a whole class to use at once. The equipment is up-to-date, in good condition and backed up with a very good range of software. There has been considerable improvement in provision, teaching and standards since the last report.
98. Standards are now above those expected at the end of the key stage. All pupils can log on to the system and open the program of their choice. Older pupils have good word processing skills. They use publishing programs well to print written work, using graphics, a wide range of fonts and graduated colour extremely effectively. The finished products have considerable visual impact and the designs are suited to the content of the writing. By Year 6, pupils are familiar with spreadsheets and can record data onto them, express the data in graphs and interpret the graphs correctly. They can e-mail messages and access them. Attainment in using ICT hardware and software for control and measurement is well above average. Year 6 pupils were observed using sensors to measure the heating and cooling of liquids, calibrating the sensors accurately and

using the computers to record their measurements onto a spreadsheet. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 know how to save and retrieve their own work and access information using CD-ROM and the Internet. Pupils use LOGO well to control the movement of an on-screen cursor, but there is no provision yet for the use of control technology for more practical purposes. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language make progress at similar rates to other pupils and attain standards that are close to national expectations for all pupils. Overall attainment since the last inspection has clearly improved considerably and the school now meets the statutory requirements for ICT in the National Curriculum.

99. Pupils enjoy the subject and their behaviour in lessons is good, overall. They co-operate well when sharing a computer, tackling tasks as genuine partners. They display very good relationships by offering suggestions and taking turns. These good attitudes contribute strongly to the quality of learning as they share their knowledge and help each other. Pupils treat the computers with care, using them sensibly and looking after them well.
100. Teaching in the lessons seen was good. Teachers often show pupils how to use programs by instructing the whole class. A lesson to pupils in Year 6, which took place in the computer suite, was particularly effective. The teacher gathered all the pupils into a position where they could see, and demonstrated how to use a program to find mean values from a spreadsheet. The screen on which he was working was projected onto the wall so that all could see. All pupils were then able to practise the required skills for themselves. Similar examples of teaching skills to whole classes are common and the use of the new resources for whole-class teaching has improved the progress pupils make and the range of skills they are acquiring. In all cases, teachers' lesson plans, knowledge of the subject and management of pupils lead to good learning. However, ongoing assessment is not sufficiently systematic to provide good information on which to base future planning. Improved assessment systems are planned.
101. Co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator has very good knowledge of what is required to teach the subject effectively, and is able to offer strong leadership and advice. As a result, general levels of confidence among the staff have recently improved rapidly.

MUSIC

102. In the last inspection, music was a strength of the school and it continues to make a strong impact on the cultural development of pupils. Teaching continues to be good overall. Attainment is in line with what is expected of eleven year olds, although it is uneven across the different aspects of the subject. Pupils achieve highly in performance, but achievement in appraisal is below the expected level.
103. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils have satisfactory skills in listening. In assemblies, many listen carefully to the music that is being played. During the week of the inspection, the works of Beethoven were featured. Many know the names of instruments and can distinguish between tuned and untuned percussion. Overall, however, there are too few opportunities to develop pupils' appreciation of music. The quality of singing is good. Pupils sing expressively and with appropriate volume both when accompanied and when unaccompanied. Their enjoyment of singing is clearly evident. This is because much of the teaching is enthusiastic, which motivates the pupils, and teachers have high expectations so the pupils continually strive to improve the quality. Many pupils enjoy composition and a few show good imagination. Pupils in Year 6 composed an ostinato to accompany *Them Bones*. Many showed good skills in selecting sounds and words to compose an appropriate ostinato.
104. Generally, pupils enjoy music and work well together when they are asked to work in groups. They handle equipment with care and listen courteously to others when they are performing. They persevere with their work and will try to improve it when asked. Boys and girls have equally positive attitudes. The boys in Year 6 were highly motivated by the work on an ostinato and performed it with enthusiasm and flair.

105. The guidance that has been produced for teachers effectively supports their confidence in teaching the subject and, as a result, teaching is good, overall. There is a range of expertise, but all teachers follow the plans well and teach effectively as a result. Pupils in a Year 4 class studying crescendo and diminuendo learned more effectively because the teacher explained carefully to them at the beginning of the lesson what they were expected to learn. Teachers who are less confident with the subject sometimes fail to encourage pupils to review their work with a view to improving it. However, in many of the lessons, teachers ask questions that encourage pupils to evaluate their performance. All teachers ensure that pupils behave appropriately so that an environment is created in which all can listen and learn. The good relationships ensure that pupils feel confident to learn by their mistakes.
106. Pupils are often encouraged to work independently, which helps their skills of creativity because they have the confidence to try out new ideas without recourse to the teacher. This was observed in the Year 6 lesson above and with Year 4 pupils who were asked to compose a melody. Each group produced work of originality.
107. The subject is led effectively and the co-ordinator is aware of how the subject needs to develop further, particularly in the area of assessment. However, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last report.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. By the end of the key stage, attainment is above national expectations, with some pupils attaining very highly. In swimming, for example, some pupils can swim five hundred metres by the end of Year 4 and almost all exceed the National Curriculum expectation of being able to swim 25 metres. Standards have improved since the last inspection across the whole range of physical education skills. Pupils work enthusiastically to improve their techniques in gymnastics. Almost all show good control of body movements, have good balance and a good awareness of space and the ways they move through it. Year 6 pupils were observed performing a range of rolls and balances to a good standard, with developing skill and confidence. Games skills are developed well and almost all pupils by the end of the key stage can throw and catch accurately. They can kick a football to a partner, and trap and control it when it is returned to them. Most show good skills and control when handling and passing a rugby ball. They play touch rugby with energy and enthusiasm and some show good levels of skill in running with the ball and avoiding tackles. Dance skills are developed very well, especially in Year 5. Pupils can move fluidly, linking dance movements well. They keep time to the music, develop creative and imaginative sequences of movements and work well as an ensemble in whole-class work. Attainment in dance is well above the level expected for children of this age.
109. The majority of pupils of all abilities make good progress. Skills, knowledge and understanding are improved over time. During lessons, pupils make good progress as teaching points are made to guide them on techniques. Teachers assess their pupils' performance and comment to them on it. Pupils also assess their own and each other's performance. Pupils with special needs are well integrated into the lessons and make good progress.
110. All pupils fully understand the health-related benefits of exercise to improve their fitness and know the effect of vigorous exercise on their bodies. In all lessons, pupils are keen to take part and all wore the appropriate kit.
111. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Of the lessons observed, two thirds were very good, with one example of excellent teaching. Teachers have a good rapport with pupils and make clear their expectations about the standards of participation and behaviour. There is good emphasis on the need for pupils to improve the quality of their performance. Teachers are willing and able to demonstrate skills to set high expectations and to ensure that pupils understand clearly what they have to do. Pupils are used well to demonstrate their achievements when it is appropriate to do so. Lessons usually take into account the prior attainment of all the pupils and this has a positive effect on attainment and progress.

112. The school has introduced a balanced range of activities that conform to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Athletics, dance, gymnastics, swimming and games are scheduled over the three terms each year. There are not yet consistent methods of recording and assessing pupils' attainment, but this is planned for the near future. The subject is led well by the subject co-ordinator and there is a good scheme of work. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching across the school, however.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. At the end of the key stage, standards of attainment are above the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. There has been good improvement since the last report. At the end of the key stage, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the major world religions. They are able to engage in enquiry and evaluation. This is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last report. Attainment was then described as satisfactory, but there were weaknesses in teaching. Now, the detailed schemes of work ensure that teachers cover the religious education syllabus thoroughly. These give good guidance to teachers for the knowledge and understanding to be developed each term. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the Christian faith appropriate for their ages and abilities. In addition, they have good knowledge of Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.
114. The pupils are less experienced at enquiry and evaluation in their religious education work. There are many opportunities for pupils to ask questions, but few chances to do their own personal research until they are in Year 6. By then, pupils respond well to open ended questions and, with skilful teaching, develop meaningful ideas and express opinions.
115. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. Year 3 pupils learn to appreciate stories from the Bible. They recall what they have learnt from the story of The Good Samaritan and are beginning to understand the concept of forgiveness. All year groups continue to build on their knowledge of Christianity, as well as learning about other religions. Year 6 pupils consider changes and the changes that all people go through in life. They begin to understand the feelings and problems faced by people at stages in their lives very different from the pupils' own – the elderly, for example, or the very young.
116. Pupils listen attentively in all lessons and assemblies. They reflect quietly when given the opportunity. In discussions, they are co-operative and respect the opinions and beliefs of others. Pupils in all years have accomplished a wide range of tasks and the pace of work is generally good in all classes. They take care over the presentation of work and this reflects the pride they have in their achievements. Their enjoyment of the subject is evident in the drawings and colourful illustrations they have produced to accompany their written work.
117. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers' good subject knowledge and their effective use of resources lead to interesting lessons that challenge and extend their pupils' skills. Good opportunities are created in lessons to extend pupils' personal and social development. In the two lessons seen, teachers valued pupils' comments and this helped the pupils to learn to respect the opinions of others. On occasions, the planning of the lesson does not focus securely enough on the learning objectives, so that pupils are distracted from the true aim of the lesson and make little progress. Religious education contributes to the development of pupils' literacy, oracy and artistic skills.
118. There is scope for improving pupils' ability to debate. Further opportunities are needed to carry out independent study and use research to develop pupils' investigation and interpretation skills. The co-ordinator is newly in post and has not had an opportunity yet to monitor teaching and learning in the subject. She is enthusiastic and is beginning to provide clear educational direction for work in religious education.