

INSPECTION REPORT

THREE LEGGED CROSS FIRST SCHOOL

Wimborne

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113678

Headteacher: Mrs W Simpson

Reporting inspector: Jennifer Nicholson
23036

Dates of inspection: 20 – 22 November 2000

Inspection number: 224752

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Three Legged Cross Wimborne Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Fishlock
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

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		History	Leadership and management
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Three Legged Cross First School is a small rural school to the east of Wimborne. Just over half the pupils come from the village. Most of the remaining pupils come from the nearby town of Verwood, where there has been a shortage of school places for the last two years. Three Legged Cross is the base school for a number of traveller pupils, currently four per cent. During the year, further traveller pupils are admitted on a temporary basis, 14 per cent last year and 24 per cent in the previous year. Mobility rates are high with about one third of pupils overall joining the school last year, and two-thirds the year before. One hundred and four pupils attend the school at present, fourteen of whom are of non-statutory age and attend for mornings only this term. Children are admitted to the school in the September of the year in which they will be five. Pupil numbers are rising, and boys outnumber girls overall, especially in the reception class. There is a wide social mix and most pupils live in housing association accommodation. Twenty-three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above average nationally. One per cent of pupils is at the early stages of learning English, broadly average. Twenty-nine per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, mainly for moderate or specific learning, or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Just over half of these pupils are on the first two levels of the register. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, above average. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school, but the overall attainment of most children is below what is to be expected nationally, especially with early writing and mark-making skills and in their experience of books.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school achieves satisfactory standards across the breadth of the curriculum, apart from reading and writing in both key stages, which are below what is to be expected nationally. Standards are good in art in both key stages, and in swimming in Years 3 and 4. Personal and social development is good, including for children of non-statutory age. Teaching is good overall, enabling pupils to progress well across the breadth of their learning. In English, at both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress. The leadership and management of the school are good. The comprehensive monitoring programme impacts positively on the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are well organised and fully involved in all aspects of school life. The main strengths noted in the last report have been maintained well. The identified strengths outweigh the weaknesses. The school is effective and gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in art in both key stages, and in swimming in Years 3 and 4.
- Teaching in the reception class is consistently good and in some aspects very good.
- The school is led and managed well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Social inclusion is a strength of the school, and provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good.
- Relationships are very good; behaviour is good and teachers manage pupils in a consistently positive way.
- Partnership with parents is strong.

What could be improved

- Standards in reading are below national expectations in both key stages; pupils are not familiar with a wide range of books; they have a limited range of vocabulary; many are not confident enough in using books to find information.
- Standards in writing are below national expectations in both key stages. Work in pupils' books is often untidily presented, and pupils do not use spellings learnt carefully enough.

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 made satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection in 1997. The previous key issues have been addressed at least satisfactorily. Governors have developed good systems to enable them to be fully involved in all aspects of strategic planning. All subjects have appropriate programmes of work, although, as the school is aware, some are in need of further update in the light of recent curriculum changes. Comprehensive procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are in place, but they are not being used well enough to challenge pupils, especially higher attainers. Although there have been some improvements in writing as a result of training and support and through the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, standards in Year 4 remain below expectations. Other areas with identified weaknesses have generally improved. Standards remain broadly satisfactory as before, apart from reading in both key stages and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 which are now below national expectations. Standards in speaking in Year 4 have improved and are now judged to be generally satisfactory.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	C	E	D	C
writing	D	E	D	D
mathematics	C	E	D	C

Key

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

In 2000, the proportion of seven-year-olds achieving the expected level in mathematics was close to the national average, but as few pupils achieved highly, the overall standard in this subject was below the national average. Similarly, taking results at all levels into account, the overall standards in reading and writing were below national averages; there were few high scores in reading, and none in writing. Science results were well below average overall. Results vary considerably year-on-year as a result of high mobility, and as is expected when the number of pupils taking the tests is small. Results were very low overall in 1999 when mobility was particularly high, but results in 1998 were broadly average in reading and mathematics when the school's roll was more settled. Nevertheless, writing remains consistently below average. Current results show improvement in mathematics scores and in the middle range of writing scores. Results for 2000 exceeded pupils' individual targets. The school's social context is affected by the increasing roll and by high mobility rates, making

meaningful comparisons with other schools difficult to establish. However, taking the school's average rate for free school meals over the last five years, standards in reading and mathematics are in line with schools with a similar free school meal rate, but in writing they are below.

Inspectors found standards to be broadly satisfactory in both key stages. Standards are good in art in both key stages, and in swimming in Years 3 and 4. They are below national expectations in reading and writing in both key stages. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactory standards across the range of their work, although their early writing skills are below what is to be expected. In some aspects they do well, for example in personal, social and emotional development and in music.

The school is keen for pupils to make good progress from their previous learning and has set up a comprehensive individual pupil tracking system, which includes longer-term predictions and shorter-term targets for achievements in reading, writing and mathematics. However, these are not always sufficiently challenging or translated specifically enough into what pupils need to learn next, from lesson to lesson. Pupils' personal termly targets for writing and mathematics are not always challenging or clear enough to pupils themselves. Taking account of the low starting point of most children when they enter the school, particularly in early writing and mark-making skills, their achievements in reading and writing are reasonable, although higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. In other subjects, pupils achieve well overall. Individual targets are met and sometimes exceeded. The school's targets for testing in 2001 are realistic and reflect the current year group. Targeted percentages for higher attaining pupils are challenging and indicate the school's commitment to improvement although implications for work in lessons are not always sharp enough.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils enjoy coming to school. They are interested in their work, and are particularly responsive to those activities which stimulate and fully engage their attention.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils are confident, friendly and polite. They respond well to the school's high expectations for their behaviour. There are identified pockets of challenging behaviour, but these are dealt with effectively.
Personal development and relationships	Good; all pupils benefit from the inclusive and open ethos of the school. Relationships are very good. Pupils respect and value one another and form constructive relationships with teachers and other adults in the school.
Attendance	Attendance is barely satisfactory. There are a significant few that do not attend regularly. Most pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7- 9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. In 62 per cent of lessons seen across the school, teaching was good or better, occurring mainly in the Foundation Stage and in Year 3. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In the two very good lessons, pupils were particularly well motivated to learn by very good story telling and an imaginative and lively approach to the teaching of phonics. The main impact of the good teaching in general is in establishing a purposeful and orderly climate for learning and, as a result, pupils are responsive and ready to learn. Teachers work hard and are successful in settling new pupils quickly and in minimising disruptions from pupils with identified behaviour difficulties. Other strengths of teaching are the consistent use of probing questions that develop pupils' thinking, the secure planning systems that underpin their work and well structured lessons so that pupils are confident within the routines. They try hard and concentrate well. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy in both key stages is satisfactory overall, often with clear direct instruction, although the teaching of handwriting is not structured enough. Teachers' expectations for the way pupils present their work are not high enough and there are few opportunities for pupils to develop enquiry skills. The needs of all pupils are broadly met but information gained from the good assessment procedures is not always used to best effect to challenge pupils, especially higher attainers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; the curriculum is broad and balanced and statutory requirements are met. Tasks are relevant and interesting and motivate pupils to work well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; learning support assistants are well informed and provide constructive support. Time is used well and there is a wide-ranging and well-directed use of external agencies.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; extra help from outside agencies supports these pupils effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; the headteacher and staff provide effective role models for positive relationships. They respect and value every pupil and foster confidence and self-esteem very well. Provision for pupils' social development is very good, as is the way the school encourages their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall; the school is a very caring place and looks after pupils well. The use of assessment to monitor and support academic progress has yet to be fully realised.

Partnership with parents is good. The school works well with parents who feel valued for their good support.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher has a clear vision for the work of the school and gives a strong lead to staff. She is firmly committed to raising standards through improving the quality of teaching and has established good monitoring procedures to this end. Curriculum co-ordinators manage their subjects well overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall; governors are strongly supportive and have good systems in place to uphold the smooth running of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school is strongly committed to evaluating and improving performance but the implications for teaching are not always sharply enough focused.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school's spending decisions are astute and relate closely to priorities. Good use is made of support staff and specific grants. The school is making a sound start in applying the principles of best value.

The school provides a good level of teachers and learning support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum, and to maintain small classes in discrete year groups. Resources are readily accessible throughout the school and used effectively to support learning. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and used well. Outside provision is good. Some classrooms are cramped for active learning and the open corridor is cold during winter months.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school and settle quickly. • The school is very approachable and responsive to concerns and queries. • Teaching is good; the dedicated teachers expect children to do their best and to behave well. • Children with special educational needs receive good support and they progress well. • Behaviour is good. • The headteacher leads the school well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The literacy hour limits the time teachers have to hear children read individually.

The positive comments substantially outweigh the negative ones, and were generally confirmed by inspection evidence. Inspectors found that pupils have opportunities to read during the literacy hour and also at other times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In national testing in 2000, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment overall in reading, writing and mathematics were below national averages taking results at all levels into account. Science results were well below average. An average proportion of pupils achieved at the expected Level 2 in mathematics, but few achieved highly. Similarly few pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading and science, and no pupil achieved highly in writing. Meaningful comparisons with schools in similar circumstances are difficult to establish on account of the school's increasing and fluctuating roll, due to extra pupils from nearby Verwood and the temporary admissions of traveller pupils. Numbers of pupils in each year group are small and each pupil represents a significant percentage. However, taking an average view of the school's social circumstances, results at Key Stage 1 are in line with similar schools in reading and mathematics, but below in writing. Results vary considerably year-on-year as a result of the high mobility factor and small cohorts, but writing remains consistently below average. Results indicate that girls do better than boys, reflecting assessments on entry to the school and national differences. There are more boys on the school's register of special educational needs but, although more girls are identified by the school as 'more able', the upper ability class groups contain reasonable numbers of boys also. There was little observable difference during the inspection between the performance of boys and girls in general.
2. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school, but the attainment of most children is below what is to be expected nationally, particularly in early reading and writing skills. However, these children are making good progress and achieve satisfactory standards in most aspects of their work including reading and mathematics. Although some children are making good progress in writing, overall this aspect remains below what is to be expected from children of this age. Personal, social and emotional development is good.
3. Inspection evidence indicates that at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4, the oldest pupils in the school, standards in science are in line with national expectations, and in mathematics just in line, but in English they are below. In other subjects, standards are at least satisfactory. They are good in art in both key stages, and also in swimming in Years 3 and 4. Standards are broadly similar to the last inspection, although there has been improvement in pupils' speaking skills in Year 4, which are now judged to be satisfactory. Standards in reading in both key stages and in writing in Key Stage 1 are less good than previously when they were judged to be broadly in line. As before, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards in geography.
4. Pupils' speaking and listening skills in Years 2 and 4 are generally satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 talk about characters and events in stories and, in Year 4, they answer questions confidently, although they have few opportunities to ask questions. Pupils in both key stages are developing good listening skills, to teachers and to one another. Teachers encourage these skills well by the way they value everyone's contribution and by their effective management strategies that ensure pupils' close attention.
5. Standards in reading are below national expectations overall although there is a wide range of attainment. Pupils in Year 2 are generally enthusiastic and many read a

simple text and use their knowledge of sounds to read unknown words. Pupils' range in reading is narrow. Higher attainers read with some fluency but do not talk readily about favourite books or authors. In Year 4, many pupils can only read simple repetitive sentences and short stories. Some pupils can locate a book in the library, but few use an index or reference book with confidence. Higher-attaining pupils only reach national expectations, with developing expression and confidence in reading dialogue with understanding.

6. Standards in writing are below national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to write in sentences and to use punctuation although not always accurately. In Year 4, they are beginning to write imaginatively and creatively. However, overall, handwriting and presentation of work are untidy, and spellings learnt for homework are not used to good effect. Standards in literacy overall are below expectations, reflecting the low base on entry, and influencing written communication in other subjects such as religious education and history.
7. Standards in mathematics are just satisfactory and reflect the school's recent improvements in national tests and the emphasis on the subject. Pupils in Year 2 add simple numbers mentally and have a knowledge of odd and even numbers. They identify halves and quarters in a practical context. In Year 4, pupils are becoming familiar with simple tables and understand equivalence of basic fractions in practical terms.
8. Standards in science are satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils in Year 2 observe changes as ice melts and begin to understand the need for fair testing. In Year 3, they predict which rock will weather best. They investigate drainage properties in soils to find which would be suitable for a football pitch.
9. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils in Year 2 confidently handle the mouse, space bar and keyboard. They know how to move images about the screen. In Year 4, they make good use of ICT to support other subjects. They edit with ease and produce interesting newspapers, which they email to other schools. Standards in religious education are satisfactory in both key stages. Younger pupils are familiar with aspects of Bible stories and are developing an awareness of Christian symbols. Older pupils have an understanding of how early Christians felt, worshipping in secret. Across the school, pupils are developing a growing respect for differing religious beliefs, learning about the major features of Islam, for example.
10. In relation to prior attainment, pupils make good progress overall, from below average attainment on entry to the school to satisfactory levels when they leave. In English, however, pupils make satisfactory progress, their standards reflecting the low starting base. Teachers' good behaviour management, well-structured lessons and good questioning skills provide a secure and purposeful learning environment enabling pupils to learn well. The school's very good inclusive policies support effectively the travellers and other pupils who join the school during the year, helping them to be readily absorbed into classes and to settle well to learning in a new place. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their capabilities. They are well supported individually, in small groups and in lessons. Progress for pupils with English as an additional language is good. On entry, they are given effective extra help from outside agencies, which enables them to participate fully in lessons.
11. The school has set realistic targets for testing in 2001, reflecting the current year group and predicting improvements in writing scores in particular. Targets set for

achievement at the higher Level 3 are challenging, but the implications for lessons are not always rigorous enough. Pupils' individual termly targets are not always demanding or clear enough to pupils themselves. As a result, pupils are not sufficiently aware of what they need to get better at in order to improve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive promptly each morning. They wait expectantly for lessons to begin. The youngest pupils come in for mornings only in their first term. They quickly settle and become part of the school. They join in sensibly with older pupils in assemblies, relate well to one another in the outside play area and are at home in their surroundings. Most pupils become involved in activities and lessons which engage their interest and attention. They are responsive to one another and to teachers and other adults in the school. They take advantage of all the school has to offer, and extra-curricular clubs are well attended and enjoyed.
13. Throughout the school, pupils are generally enthusiastic about their work and behave well in lessons. When they are fully extended by challenging expectations, they work hard and with concentration. On occasions, attitudes are less positive and there are instances of slow work rate and untidy standards of presentation. For example, older pupils admit to not trying as hard as they can with handwriting but, in a subsequent art lesson, they work with some care and precision. A significant number of traveller pupils join the school from term to term; others come from circus families. To all these pupils, the school is very welcoming and inclusive. They benefit from the school's careful analysis of their needs and extra support and guidance in lessons. This enables them to settle comfortably, build up long-term friendships with other pupils and to be fully integrated in all aspects of school life.
14. Standards of behaviour are generally good and have been maintained well since the previous inspection as a result of staff awareness and vigilance. On occasion, however, pupils with identified behaviour difficulties can begin to distract the rest of the class. For example, some boisterousness was observed in physical education lessons in Years 2 and 3, mainly as a result of lack of self-control and over-exuberance. Teachers deal with such instances effectively and quickly to enable the lesson to proceed smoothly. Pupils themselves are fully aware of the need to behave well. For example, a group of pupils being given additional support were displeased with a boy who, in their judgement, was behaving in a silly way which reflected on them all. There have been no exclusions in past year. Rather, to the school's credit, it absorbs and supports well pupils excluded from other schools, giving purpose to their learning. Examples of good behaviour include lunchtime where pupils chat amicably to one another, and a Year 4 music lesson where pupils listened quietly and appreciatively to the performance of others. There is sensible movement around the school and conduct is good. The school has high expectations of behaviour and pupils are confident, friendly and polite. No examples of unacceptable behaviour or instances of bullying were observed. This confirms the parents' view that it would not be tolerated in the school.
15. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff are very good. This enables pupils, for the most part, to work well in lessons and to make progress. Not all pupils make good use of their time. As was noted in the previous inspection, pupils of widely differing abilities do show considerable variation in their levels of concentration and effort. Where all pupils are being challenged, as in a Year 1 art lesson, they apply themselves with enthusiasm and work co-operatively in groups or pairs. The challenge enhances their learning effectively. A good example of

collaboration was observed in a Year 2 literacy session, where a small group co-operated to make puppets, then to write a script and to perform a play for the rest of the class. Pupils share resources sensibly and use them with care. A few are developing a good sense of fairness. In Year 2 group work, one girl said 'Let's stop arguing', and guided the group so that each could concentrate on the joint task. In groups and in lessons, pupils listen to one another, take turns when necessary, as in a Year 3 music lesson, where pupils watched and spontaneously applauded the contributions of others. Pupils show respect and value for property. Social courtesy is seen in pupils' readiness to open doors and in their friendliness.

16. Pupils are quick to see and deal with jobs both in classes and around the school. They tidy up equipment before leaving the playground and deal with the washing of paint trays and brushes after the art club. They take registers to the office. Pupils also act as monitors in assemblies, putting on taped music and pulling down the projector screen for the words of the hymns. Few opportunities exist for more formal roles and responsibilities, especially for older pupils, and this weakness was identified in the previous inspection. Although pupils are increasingly involved in setting targets for learning, they are not regularly offered the chance to act on their own initiative or to develop independence in their learning. This inhibits their otherwise good overall personal development.
17. All pupils benefit from the inclusive, open ethos of the school. The overall good behaviour observed in the school derives from the fact that lessons are consistently well managed. This ensures a constructive context for learning and influences the quality of relationships and mainly positive attitudes. The way in which the school welcomes and readily receives additional pupils at short notice impacts well on their overall progress and development.
18. Attendance is barely satisfactory. Overall attendance rates are well below the national average, but this is mainly because Three Legged Cross is base school for traveller pupils who attend during winter months only. Otherwise it is just below average. Despite the good and reliable procedures in place for maintaining and improving the level of attendance, the amount of unauthorised absence is just above average. The overall attendance levels are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils are punctual in arriving at school and settle to lessons promptly. Registers are marked promptly and recording and subsequent storage of attendance information is in accordance with legal requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching in lessons seen is good overall, enabling pupils to make good progress from the low base on entry to broadly satisfactory levels when they leave the school. In 62 per cent of lessons seen, teaching was good or better, occurring mainly in the reception class and Year 3. In the two very good lessons, pupils were strongly motivated by lively and dramatic story telling and by an imaginative approach to learning sounds. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching is good in ICT, religious education, art, history and physical education. The main impact of the good teaching is in raising pupils' attainment, especially in art where pupils do well and in the reception class where children's eagerness to learn is fostered with particular success. It also establishes a purposeful and effective learning environment. Teaching is satisfactory overall in all other subjects, including English. The newly-qualified teacher receives good support, enabling her to develop her skills effectively.
20. The quality of teaching in the reception class, the Foundation Stage for children under five, is at least good and sometimes very good. The teacher's strong emphasis on developing self-esteem and confidence enables these children to be settled and secure in school. Her lively, imaginative approach and the provision of relevant and interesting practical tasks engages the children's attention very well and stimulates their curiosity, promoting good progress overall in their learning.
21. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good. Their needs are well identified and set out in individual education plans. They have clear literacy and numeracy targets, which set out the next steps in their learning. The teaching and learning of pupils with English as an additional language are good. These pupils are well integrated into lessons and generally appropriately supported.
22. Teachers' lesson planning is effective and is closely based on longer-term subject guidelines and plans. The focus for each lesson is clearly identified and shared with pupils, and relevant tasks are set. Planning in literacy and numeracy suitably takes account of pupils with differing abilities, but in other subjects the same work is too frequently given to the whole class. Support staff are fully briefed and used well, and as a result make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The way teachers put their plans into action is good. Clear explanations and instructions and good questioning techniques are effective in encouraging pupils to build on previous learning and develop their thinking. Teachers support pupils well when they are working in groups, intervening and moving learning on. Lessons are structured and organised well, and pupils are secure within the routines. However, much of the work is directed by teachers, with few opportunities for pupils to investigate and find out things for themselves.
23. In general, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is satisfactory. The instances of good subject knowledge, for example in art, physical education especially swimming, and history, clearly motivate pupils and promote their learning well. In Years 2 and 3, teachers make good use of competence in ICT to promote pupils' learning in design and technology and music. In the Foundation Stage, the teacher's secure knowledge of the newly revised curriculum, The Early Learning Goals, and very good understanding of the active and practical way that young children learn, enables them to progress well. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall although, in literacy, insufficient attention is paid to the development of handwriting. In general, teachers' direct approach, often in small teaching steps together with reinforcement and clear questions to check understanding, encourages secure learning.

24. Teachers' expectations for behaviour are generally high with clear, consistent strategies and positive feedback, which are almost always effective. They deal sensitively and competently with the occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour, minimising the disruption to learning. Teachers manage pupils well overall, and with the utmost respect, valuing each pupil's contribution. Relationships are very good. Consequently there is a good climate for learning established and pupils have good attitudes to their work, carrying out their tasks purposefully. Teachers' expectations for what pupils can achieve in their work are satisfactory overall. Sometimes, however, tasks are not matched closely enough to pupils' differing abilities, for example with work that is too complex, as in a mathematics lesson, or in English when reading books are not demanding enough. Sometimes the work for higher-attaining pupils does not move on briskly enough, for example, when pupils need to complete too much familiar work with fractions before moving to a more difficult task. The school's new policy for more able pupils is not yet fully established. Teachers' expectations are not rigorous enough for the way pupils present their work, for example in science, or for its quality and quantity. Teachers present pupil's work well through a wide variety of interactive displays which contribute effectively to the attractive and stimulating learning environment.
25. Teachers' use of assessment of work in progress is satisfactory overall with some good examples of adaptive practice, as in mathematics in Year 4 when pupils did not understand a task as well as anticipated. Teachers' marking is positive, although sometimes the praise is over-high. It reflects what pupils have learned, but does not always indicate clearly to them what they need to do next to improve.
26. Provision for homework is good, with a clear programme for all year groups and a variety of interesting tasks as well as spellings, tables and reading. It supports the work in school effectively, and even the youngest children are keen to carry on their learning in class at home, proudly bringing in their 'writing', for example. The homework policy has been shared with parents, who support the school's approach.

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

27. The school provides a full and varied curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is good and includes appropriate sex education and teaching about the misuse of medicines. Religious education is based on the locally agreed scheme. The curriculum is well balanced and provides a broad range of activities in each subject, reflected in the attractive and interesting displays of work around the school. Cross-curricular links are used effectively to reinforce learning, for example in art and design technology. However, opportunities for pupils to carry out independent research and investigations are underdeveloped. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented appropriately. The school takes very good steps to ensure that the curriculum is equally accessible to all pupils. This is a particularly good feature, which enables the large number of children who come and go during the year to be quickly and fully included in the life of the school.
28. All curriculum subjects have satisfactory policies. The school has adopted a range of published schemes of work, which are combined with schemes developed in the school. These support teachers with guidance on the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils develop as they progress through the school. This was an issue in the previous inspection report, which has been fully addressed. A satisfactory

overview of the curriculum ensures that the whole curriculum is covered without any repetition. This is then used to plan work in more detail each half term. Teachers plan work carefully each week and display plans for parents to see in the school entrance. Tasks are designed to be relevant to the interests of the pupils and motivate them to work well. However, because planning does not yet clearly show exactly what pupils need to do in order to move on from their achievements to the next stage of learning, the pace of their progress is restricted.

29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual needs are identified early and responses are well directed. Teachers liaise effectively with the well-trained and informed support staff. These staff make valuable contributions to the detailed records kept for each pupil. Constructive guidance is given in classes while some pupils benefit from small-group work in the library. Other pupils have well targeted individual help to meet their specific needs. Time and resources are effectively used for these pupils. There is wide ranging use of external agencies and very good monitoring procedures and review arrangements. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is well informed and has a constructive approach.
30. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good with clubs for craft, art, recorders, football and games. Pupils in Year 4 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit, which greatly enhances their personal and social development. A wide range of visitors bring their talents to the school to enhance the pupils' awareness of the wider world, for example a theatre group, a visitor from the Bournemouth Mosque and circus parents who show how candyfloss is made. Very good liaison with other schools is fostered when children participate in arts and music festivals as well as football tournaments and a swimming gala. Together with the good community links, this all prepares pupils well to move on to the next stage of their education.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is an improvement on the good provision noted in the previous inspection. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The inclusive character of the school has a spiritual dimension. This is apparent in daily acts of worship, where pupils join together to reflect and explore feelings. It is reinforced in lessons, as in art in Year 1, for example, where pupils are asked to say 'nice things' about each other's work. In the same lesson, an instance of awe and wonder occurred when the teacher showed her own made shoe box theatre. All the pupils simultaneously gasped with pleasure and excitement. It is borne out in the very good relationships and the sharing of simple prayers in which all pupils appropriately respond. It is given tangible form in a variety of displays, which reinforce themes relating, for example, to feelings and raise pupils' spiritual awareness.
32. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The headteacher and all other staff provide good role models, and expectations for behaviour are made explicit in all classes. Pupils know what is expected of them and have clear understanding of right and wrong. They are praised and rewarded for maintaining appropriate standards. Pupils are guided by the School Code. It is simple, direct and relevant to their age and understanding. They are enabled to make sound choices every day. They have good rapport with one another and with staff. They treat staff, visitors and other people with kindness and courtesy, and property with respect. This reflects and adds to the positive ethos of the school.
33. The school makes very good provision for social development. It is a friendly, harmonious community and all pupils, whether in school permanently or for

temporary periods, are very well integrated. There is mutual respect and value. Pupils are secure, out-going and form constructive partnerships, both in lessons and outside. For the most part, pupils collaborate well with each other and willingly accept responsibility, although the range is narrow, especially for older pupils. All pupils benefit from the values and expectations of the school, which are closely linked to behaviour management. The impact is especially evident in pupils with special educational needs, who are helped to grow in confidence and self-esteem. The strong inclusive character of the school provides a good context for learning.

34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are aware of their own cultural traditions through participation in local events such as the Dorset Young Artist of the Year competition in which pupils recently won a prize. They also contribute to cultural activities, taking part in the Wimborne Arts Festival with a cabaret based on the sea. Links are made with history as pupils in Year 4 learn about Tudor music for a forthcoming event, Music of the Ages, an annual show comprising pupils from local schools. There are visitors to the school, for example to work on aspects of the school environment, and residential visits beyond the school for older pupils. Owls from a nearby Owl Sanctuary are brought into school for study. A theatre group has performed The Pied Piper for pupils in school. Aspects of other non-western cultures are fostered through music, literature, and the study of Islam, and through the work of artists from around the world. There are visits to the National Gallery and to a Mosque. Pupils in Year 1 study Picasso paintings and make excellent recreations. Good quality display is effectively used both to reflect the range of pupils' experience and to inform them further. In the best examples, there is an interactive quality which arouses interest. The previous inspection judged that the multi-cultural dimension was not sufficiently considered. The school now has more books which reflect the diversity of cultures, including traveller culture.
35. The school has established good links with the local community and there is evidence that there has been some improvement in this area since the last inspection. Many local organisations use the schools' facilities outside of school hours and this includes clubs offering opportunities for pupils to take part in activities that extend the schools' educational provision. Meetings for local residents interested in regenerating Three Legged Cross village are held immediately after school to enable parents to attend, and the school has become involved in this project. There are plans for the community and the school to engage in further collaborative work with contributions from pupils. The school also displays an interest in the wider community with its work in preparing Christmas shoeboxes for less fortunate children in other countries.
36. The school has very good relationships with partner institutions and these are a strength of the school. The school enjoys very good working partnerships with the other local schools in the same education group as Three Legged Cross First School. Arrangements and provision for the smooth transfer of pupils to the middle schools are well implemented and there is very good liaison with the local middle school to which most pupils transfer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. There are many aspects of support for pupils' welfare that provide a positive contribution to improving the educational standards and since the last inspection the school has maintained its strength in this area. The school has a friendly ethos marked by the provision of a clean and ordered environment in which pupils can learn effectively and in which parents are made very welcome. Arrangements to promote pupils' well-being are good and, as reported at the last inspection, teachers and

teaching assistants know their pupils well and are supportive of their academic and pastoral needs. The atmosphere within the school is caring, welcoming and supportive.

38. The school has appropriate arrangements for child protection although, as the school is aware, more formal training needs to be undertaken at the earliest opportunity. The headteacher is the designated person for all matters concerned with child protection. There are good arrangements for dealing with first aid, accidents and emergencies. Fire drills take place on a regular basis and are very necessary as the school relies on three Klaxons to alert pupils, staff and visitors in case of fire. The school is fully aware of the need for the installation of a modern and comprehensive fire alert system. No other health and safety issues arose during inspection.
39. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour, and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. These encourage high expectations and there are no incidences of exclusion recorded or complaints of unchecked bullying. The use of many support staff contributes positively to the well-being and progress of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs related to behaviour management are given very effective support, which enables them to take part in lessons on a normal basis without unduly disrupting others.
40. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good and effective. They are consistent and are well supported by the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and the Traveller Support EWO. Registers are completed and stored in accordance with statutory regulations, although at the time of inspection it was noted that there was no centrally held, secure system for permanently recording the time and reason for pupils needing to leave (and return) to school during the school day. The school works hard at improving the attendance and punctuality of all pupils. The EWO visits the school regularly and is active in following up those parents who need to be reminded of their legal duties to ensure that pupils attend school and of the educational consequences that often follow pupils with records of poor attendance.
41. Good procedures are in place to promote and monitor pupils' personal development. Teachers know their pupils well and give them good support and guidance. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils effectively during lessons when they continuously monitor, assess and guide them in their tasks. Pupils' attainment is assessed carefully on entry to the school. This assessment is used effectively to help identify those with special educational needs at an early stage. These baseline tests are followed by regular, systematic testing as pupils move through the school. The good assessment systems are used well to record and track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. They are used to good effect, given the school's high mobility rate, to track the progress of different groups of pupils, for example those who have attended the school from the reception class, and those who have joined later. Assessment and recording in other subjects is still being developed. These comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress are not yet being used sufficiently well to guide teachers when planning their lessons so that what pupils need to do in order to attain higher levels in the future is explicit. As a result, tasks sometimes lack challenge and pupils do not make sufficient progress. An original, school-devised system known as 'critical pathways' shows the suitable levels of attainment that the school expects each pupil to reach at stages through the school. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is carried out to a good standard and individual education plans contain good targets for progress. The school reviews them regularly and effectively. Since the last inspection, assessment

procedures have developed well but full use has not yet been made of information gained.

42. Target setting is developing well, as the school evaluates and refines its arrangements. Year-group targets are set for national testing and also individual termly targets. Pupils are involved in setting and reviewing personal targets but they are not always aware enough of them as they go about their daily work. Many pupils exceed their targets, suggesting that they are perhaps not always demanding enough. All pupils have their work marked regularly and thoroughly. Teachers make encouraging comments but there are few suggestions of what pupils need to do in order to improve their work, for example in presentation. Portfolios of work contain examples and descriptions of the levels of work displayed, for example in literacy and science. They ensure that all staff share an accurate and consistent understanding of the levels of work that their pupils have achieved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The school enjoys good effective links and partnerships with parents and these make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning, attainment and personal development as they help to enrich the curriculum. Parents are very supportive of the school, pleased with the friendly atmosphere and are satisfied with the education provided. These judgements are in line with the findings of the last inspection, and work in partnership with parents remains a strength of the school. Contact with parents prior to the inspection showed that they feel welcome in the school and cite good relationships between them, the headteacher and staff. Most parents feel that the school is very approachable and responsive to their concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs feel that they receive good support. The school welcomes a number of traveller children to classes during each school year, and parents value the opportunity this affords their children to learn to share with and include those who come from a different culture from themselves. Parents are satisfied with what the school provides, including the extra-curricular activities on offer.
44. The quality and quantity of information the school provides for parents are good overall. Parents are provided with newsletters, letters on specific topics, curriculum information and reports on pupils' progress. Reports are informative and give pupils' National Curriculum levels in English, mathematics and science, although some comments are too generalised. Both pupils and parents are suitably invited to respond to reports, enabling targets for improvement to be identified in partnership with the school. The governors' annual report and school prospectus offer parents other useful information, but neither of these publications totally complies with statutory regulations because of a few minor omissions. The school has offered parents a home-school agreement, and all parents have been very co-operative in returning these.
45. The school has an open-door policy for parents wishing to discuss matters or make complaints. There is a very active Friends of Three Legged Cross (FTLC), and many parents are willing to help raise funds for the school and to take part in social events. Meetings are held informally in parents' homes and open to anyone interested in helping. The FTLC arranges a variety of events so that all parents and friends may find something they might like to attend or take part in. Money raised is going towards buying a multimedia presentation package, and in the past has gone towards projects such as refurbishing the adventure playground.
46. The parents' involvement in their children's learning is good. Parents of pupils with a

Statement of Special Educational Need receive appropriate information through annual reviews and are invited to attend meetings to discuss them. Parents agree that the school works closely with them and many are supportive of school productions and other activities. They are willing to help in school to support teaching by listening to reading, helping when pupils go swimming and on school trips. Many parents also help their children especially by listening to reading. All these links between the school and parents make a positive contribution towards the quality of pupils' learning at school and at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides clear direction for the work of the school with a strong commitment to improvement. She is very supportive of staff and leads the team effectively. The school is well placed to build on its current provision and improve further.
48. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. The weakness from the time of the last report when governors did not have a clear enough strategic role has been addressed effectively. Good systems are now in place to give them an appreciation of the school's work and to enable them to provide sound support in shaping its future work. They have a secure understanding of the strengths of the school and work hard to improve the provision, especially the environment. The school is strongly committed to the provision of very good quality support for pupils with special educational needs, and its arrangements are effectively managed. Provision for these pupils is very good and the Code of Practice is carefully followed.
49. Subject co-ordinators support colleagues effectively through informal advice and discussion. They have clear plans for the future work to be done in each subject within the school's cycle of development. They monitor planning to check suitable progression through the subject guidelines.
50. The headteacher has established a well-organised and comprehensive monitoring cycle, which involves all areas of school life, for example lunchtimes as well as teaching and learning in the classrooms. All teachers are observed each term teaching the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science, mainly by the headteacher, who provides constructive feedback. Plans are in hand for the new co-ordinators for English and mathematics to monitor teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy, as did the previous co-ordinators. The mentor monitors and supports the work of the newly qualified teacher. Indications are that teachers find the process effective in improving their practice, requesting, on occasion, a monitoring visit to gain an objective view of an issue or concern. This may include other subjects, but in general monitoring of subjects other than English, mathematics and science is less well developed. Governors are suitably involved also in the monitoring cycle which include observing teachers and pupils in class each term and, more recently, looking at samples of work. The headteacher has also established a comprehensive tracking system to monitor each pupil's performance as s/he moves through the school and to predict performance in national testing.
51. The school's aims are fulfilled in almost all respects. They permeate the life of the school well, especially with regard to welcoming and including all pupils, valuing the contribution of each one and developing self-esteem.
52. The school's current development plan suitably arises from consultation with staff and governors, and appropriate priorities are set. It is a clear document that identifies

issues that need addressing, outlines steps to be taken, and identifies responsibilities, timescales, some costings and success criteria. However, it is for one year only and lacks the longer-term view of the development of the school's work.

53. The school provides a high level of teaching and trained support staff to enable pupils to be taught in small classes and in discrete year groups. Teachers are suitably qualified with a wide range of experience to meet the demands of the curriculum. As a result, the school is well placed to absorb the fluctuations in pupil numbers, for example when traveller children are in the school. Some extra teacher support is also provided at these times by the Traveller Support Service. Newly-qualified teachers and other new staff follow a well-structured induction programme and quickly become established in the school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well.
54. Learning resources are generally satisfactory for the school's curriculum and range of pupils. Computers are now available in all teaching areas. Some resources for English are under-used, for example new sets of books and plays. Reasonable use is made of the library. Pupils have use of a leisure centre pool for swimming, and scope for adventure activities is provided on site in the school grounds. The school is currently developing a pond that will aid many aspects of learning.
55. The school's accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively and is satisfactory overall. It is used well. The grounds are well presented, enclosed and are used well to support pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, the school has enlarged the available teaching space, but accommodation for pupils in Year 1 and Year 4 is cramped and there is an open corridor that is cold during winter months. The school is planning to further improve the buildings in the near future.
56. Spending decisions relate closely to school priorities; money is directed towards the clear educational goals set out in the school development plan. The governors and headteacher, in their decision making and purchasing, satisfactorily apply the principles of best value, for example in decisions about library stock. Prudent planning has resulted in a surplus. The balance is held over each year to fund and support the decision to maintain high staffing levels, discrete year groups and small classes. This enables classes easily to absorb the influx of traveller children without overcrowding or disrupting educational standards. Specific funding, for example to support pupils with special educational needs and staff training, is used well. Day-to-day finances are managed effectively. The governors monitor spending appropriately. Since the last inspection, they have begun to challenge and discuss spending more assertively. They are now more aware of the process by which the budget is set, received and spent, and better organised to undertake their responsibilities and to understand the procedures for financial control. However, they acknowledge the need for further training to increase their understanding so that they can become more effective in financial planning and in using this to support the school's educational priorities.
57. Performance management is a current priority in the school development plan. The newly-produced policy outlines procedures to be followed and identifies the associated roles and responsibilities. The cycle of review is well linked to annual monitoring arrangements. The policy documents include forms for teacher appraisal and guidance, for example on lesson objectives. The school and the governors are well prepared for the process of performance management and for recording the outcomes.

58. In view of:

- high average costs per pupil,
- pupils' good learning in many subjects and their satisfactory learning in English, where standards remain below national expectations, reflecting inexperience on entry with books and in early writing skills,
- the overall good teaching, impacting well on behaviour and work attitudes and the inclusion of all pupils, minimising the turbulence effect,

the school gives sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to build on the existing good features of the school, and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should, as already identified in the school's development plan:

(1) improve standards in both key stages in reading by:

- actively promoting a love of reading;
- introducing pupils to a wider range of books, including non-fiction;
- extending the range of vocabulary;
- developing pupils' skills of locating and using information;
(Paragraphs 5, 72, 73)

- (2) improve standards in both key stages in writing by:
- making better use of spellings learnt;
 - carefully structured development of handwriting skills;
 - closer attention to standards of presentation.
(Paragraphs 6, 74)

In addition to the issues above, the following points should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- use the comprehensive assessment and tracking procedures to raise expectations and challenge pupils further;
(Paragraphs 11, 28, 41)
- fully implement the new policy for more able pupils;
(Paragraphs 1, 24)
- increase opportunities for independent research and enquiry.
(Paragraphs 22, 27, 88)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	56	38	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	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	97
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	24

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	29

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	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	10	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
	Total	15	15	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (79)	75 (67)	90 (67)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	15	17	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (79)	85 (71)	80 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Numbers for girls and boys are not included as there are fewer than 11.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	89
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2
Average class size	19.6

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	134

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	235242
Total expenditure	231437
Expenditure per pupil	1979
Balance brought forward from previous year	32734
Balance carried forward to next year	36539

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	104
Number of questionnaires returned	23

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	91	9	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	78	22	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	35	0	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	39	0	0	4
The teaching is good.	83	13	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	83	9	4	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	96	4	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	87	13	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	74	17	4	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	83	13	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	87	9	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	70	17	0	0	13

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. The satisfactory standards of attainment at the time of the last inspection have been maintained overall apart from writing, which is judged to be below expectations. Personal, social and emotional development remains good. Teaching has improved and is now consistently good and sometimes very good. Planning is very thorough and takes full account of the newly revised curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage.
62. The attainment of most children when they start in the reception class is below what is to be expected, especially early writing skills and experience with books. However, in the short time they have been in school they are already making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals, especially in personal, social and emotional development and in reading. Children are stimulated to learn well through lively and imaginative teaching and by the strong emphasis the teacher gives to the development of self-esteem and respect for one another. At present there are 14 children in the reception class who attend for mornings only this term. A well-briefed full-time teaching assistant supports the children effectively in their learning. She contributes positively to all aspects of teaching, including daily written, informative observations of children's achievements. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly, and planned for and supported very well.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Personal, social and emotional development is good. Children have good attitudes to their work and are keen and interested, being motivated well by interesting, relevant and practical tasks. They settle readily to activities and work purposefully and companionably, as when sorting words into a sentence. They relate well to each other and to the staff, encouraged so to do by a kind and sensitive approach. Children are confident and friendly. They are consistently well behaved and take turns sensibly, encouraged effectively by praise and positive reinforcement. The 'Caring Caterpillar' book, for example, made by the teacher and containing examples of helpful behaviour such as tidying up, motivated children well to want to be helpful and thus included in the book. Children become absorbed in their play as in the vet's surgery although, in general, opportunities are limited for children to select and use activities independently. Children are secure within classroom routines and in other sessions such as playtime and gymnastics. They are reasonably independent in changing for gymnastics or putting coats on for outside play. Teaching in this area is very good, with a strong emphasis on settling, valuing the personal contribution of each child. Consequently children are secure, confident and eager to learn.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Standards in this area meet expectations overall. However, despite the good opportunities provided, writing skills remain below expectations, reflecting the children's low base in this aspect on entry. Many children have not yet developed a secure correct pencil grip and their mark making is still random. Higher-attaining children hold their pencils more firmly and are beginning to write letter-like shapes. Their name writing shows good improvement since starting school and is now mostly accurate. Staff encourage children's early writing skills effectively through the provision of daily opportunities for practice in directed activities and by acting as

scribe for their ideas. In addition, writing materials are available in other activities such as the reception area of the vet's surgery and in the office, and children 'write' lists and names. They are keen also to practise writing at home and proudly bring it into school as their homework. Children's good progress in early reading is promoted well by a daily emphasis on sharing books and regular, structured teaching of sounds. All children enjoy the range of books and stories. They listen well, show understanding by their relevant comments and know that print carries meaning. With an imaginative approach, including practice and reinforcement, many recognise and are beginning to use initial sounds. Some higher-attaining children recognise familiar words. Many children talk to the whole group with assurance, for example about news of a new baby. They converse with each other, as in the vet's surgery, encouraged by the good range of realistic resources. Reluctant children or those with little or unclear speech are encouraged sensitively and gain confidence. The teacher extends vocabulary effectively, for example finding words to describe the hedgehog. Teaching in this area is good with a strong daily emphasis. Story telling is very good, lively and dramatic, delighting the children and engaging their attention very well.

Mathematical development

65. Standards in this area of learning are satisfactory in aspects seen. Most children count to ten, forwards and backwards. Many count to 20, supported well by the teacher's animated approach in the use of different voices. Routines such as registration are used well to practise counting. With support, many children follow numbers along a line to 13. The teacher fosters a good awareness of numbers and children spontaneously count, for example round the milk table, and higher-attaining children correctly identify numerals on the pages of a book. All children are developing an appropriate understanding of simple pattern through the teacher's active approach, for example making a standing up / sitting down pattern. The children quickly grasped the sequence and almost all could confidently predict the position of the next child in the line. With support, they transfer this knowledge of a simple repeating pattern to threading two colours of beads alternately. In physical education sessions, many children know that mats are rectangular in shape and clearly understand simple language of position such as 'over', 'under' and 'along'. Teaching and learning in this area are good, with an active practical approach that clearly promotes children's understanding and enables them to extend their learning and apply it in other situations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Standards in this area in aspects observed are satisfactory. The teacher fosters children's natural curiosity effectively by providing interesting objects such as a sunflower with hand lenses for them to talk about and explore. She motivated them particularly well with the hedgehog by creating suspense and wonder before lifting it from the covered box. They made good gains in their learning as they carefully observed, suggested descriptive words, and asked relevant questions. Many children returned spontaneously to look again, touch gently, and make detailed drawings. Daily observation of the weather encourages children to notice changes, begin to recognise key words such as 'cloudy', and record their observations on a simple chart. Children use the computer, some with confidence, moving images about the screen to dress the teddybear. Daily news sessions effectively encourage children to talk about important events in their lives, such as the birth of a new baby, and evidence from planning indicates suitable provision for talking about important events and customs of other people. Books and pictures on display include homes in different places, near and far away, and including in a trailer. Teaching and learning in

this area are good with a wide variety of practical activities to broaden children's experience and stimulate their curiosity.

Physical development

67. Standards in this area are satisfactory overall in aspects observed. In gymnastics, children attain well, jumping backwards and forwards, wriggling along the floor, and doing 'bunny hops'. Using the good variety of large apparatus in the hall and outside, they use their bodies effectively. For example, they balance or pull themselves along benches, climb steps, slide, step carefully along log 'stepping-stones' or sometimes swing from a horizontal beam. However, there was no evidence of children using the large apparatus adventurously or imaginatively. Children are aware of each other and make good use of space. They respond quickly to instructions. They use their hands appropriately, threading beads with support, for example. Higher-attaining children hold pencils and crayons correctly and make firm marks on paper in their drawing and writing. They use glue sticks appropriately. Some children, however, are still developing a secure grip, as when using paintbrushes. The marks they make in pictures and writing are more hesitant. Teaching in this area is good, with clear direct instructions and good attention to safety. Children know what they need to do and progress well, especially in whole body movements.

Creative development

68. Standards are satisfactory overall. In musical aspects they are good. Most children join in the wide range of rhymes and songs, and many include actions as well. They make good attempts at clapping three times in response to the teacher. They are beginning to know the names of basic musical instruments such as the triangle. Suitable songs such as 'This is the way I play' (the triangle / drum) encourage children to play a simple musical accompaniment. By turn, they experiment with playing different instruments, for example the tongue drum. Standards in art are satisfactory. Children enjoy applying paint boldly, in large movements, with brushes and sponges. Sometimes their pictures are more representational as when painting the sunflower. Higher-attaining children can print with support. Imaginative and role play are encouraged effectively through the well resourced vet's surgery, including, for example, suitable dressing-up clothes, realistic instruments such as a stethoscope and hypodermic syringe, and a notebook for the receptionist. As a result, two girls in particular became fully absorbed in their roles of vet and client with a poorly cat. Good support from the teaching assistant as she joined in with the imaginative play developed their ideas effectively. Teaching and learning in this area are good, with a wide range of experiences and a variety of resources used to good effect.

ENGLISH

69. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 national tests, results in reading and writing were below national averages overall. The proportion achieving the higher Level 3 in reading was well below the average, with no pupil reaching Level 3 in writing. Scores for reading are in line with those of similar schools, but they are below for writing. The girls have performed better than the boys over the four years 1997 – 2000, reflecting the national picture. Results have been consistently below average in writing during this period, but reading, although below average overall, shows some improvement. Writing scores in the middle range show improvement in 2000, as a result of increased school emphasis.
70. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. With extra support and individual teaching most of these pupils achieve standards in line with their capabilities. There is good provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Their attainment and progress are in line with the majority of pupils in the school. The school has appropriately identified priorities in the subject, for example the raising of the attainment of boys and of standards in writing. There is now better co-ordination and monitoring of results, which is seen in the detailed pupil tracking procedures and the setting of targets for improvement.
71. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory overall at both key stages. Pupils have regular opportunities in a range of contexts to comment, answer questions and to discuss their ideas. In Year 1, pupils describe their activities in the course of making box theatres. They begin to evaluate each other's work. There are pupils in each class in the school who have a particular weakness in pronunciation. They are given suitable opportunities in lessons to practise aloud and to gain confidence. As pupils move through the school they become more skilled in answering questions. They are being required to recall characters and events in a story in Year 2. In Year 3, they begin to find information and to identify and infer from texts and to explain. Not all can give reasons for their choices. Most pupils have a limited range of vocabulary. The most able pupils are fluent and confident in presenting their own ideas and opinions. In Year 4, for example, one pupil made perceptive responses to a painting in an art lesson. She attempted to explain the intentions of the painter. While a majority of pupils are confident in answering questions, they have few opportunities to ask questions. They are developing good skills in listening both to teachers and to one another.
72. Through both key stages, pupils' reading is below national expectations. In Year 1, few pupils can read a sentence with confidence. The majority read with support. They are aware of sounds and are developing phonic skills. As pupils progress through the school, they develop a wider range of reading strategies. At the end of Key Stage 1, in Year 2, standards are below expectations, reflecting the low baseline on entry, but there is slow, but satisfactory progress. Progress for higher-attaining pupils is good and they read with some fluency. They make comments on the books they read, including fiction and non-fiction, but do not mention favourite books or authors. For pupils of all abilities, the range of reading is narrow although pupils are generally enthusiastic. The impact of the literacy strategy is beginning to be seen in their awareness of grammar and punctuation.
73. In Year 4, reading standards are below expectations overall but for higher attaining pupils standards are just in line with national expectations. Pupils are more aware of books and authors, referring, for example to Roald Dahl, AA Milne and Lucy Daniels. Many pupils can only cope with simple, repetitive sentences and short stories and

there is wide variation in attainment within classes. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to use their reading skills for a purpose, for example to find out about history and famous people. They are ready to move on in their reading. All refer to a broadening of their reading in Year 3, and most are familiar with plays and poetry. Some pupils can locate a book in the library and begin to look up information. Only a few are able to use an index correctly, are secure in finding information and in using reference books. The library is well stocked and there is ease of access. It is under-used to support the development of independent study and library skills

74. Pupils' attainment in writing is below national expectation throughout the school. Some improvement is taking place at both key stages. There are, for example, stimulating tasks in Year 2 which require pupils to work together, make decisions and to record and order information. In Year 3, descriptive writing is developing as is shown by the harvest poems where the phrase 'ripples of wheat' is used, or 'slithering, snake, slippery smooth' in a shape poem. Pupils are beginning to show control of sentence structure, as was observed in the play script being put together by a group in Year 2. By the time they reach Year 4, pupils are beginning to write imaginatively and creatively. In a task linking art, music and literacy, they respond to visual and sound effects to convey atmosphere in pictures. The ideas generated, for instance of 'A Chinese Dragon on the Great Wall in China' and 'A Skeleton's Wedding', are then used to create a class poem. Some pupils are introducing conversation to their writing, which is correctly punctuated with the use of exclamation marks as appropriate. Pupils can spell familiar words, but in all classes their choice of vocabulary is restricted. In a well-presented Alphabet of Feelings, older pupils all draw on the same range of words, with only a few examples of more adventurous use of words such as 'victorious' or 'frustrated'. Spellings learnt for homework are not always used to good effect. Most pupils in both key stages are beginning to punctuate accurately but, for a small, significant number of pupils in each class, writing is not adequately punctuated or legible. Standards of handwriting and presentation are poor overall in both key stages. Older pupils are aware that they are being careless, not meeting their own targets, and that they could do better. However, recent emphasis on handwriting and presentation in Year 4 is beginning to have an impact. Appropriate use is being made of ICT to enhance pupils' work. Skills in writing are shown in other subjects, for example science and history, which help pupils to express their ideas and to organise their work. Pupils are able to write a simple letter of thanks. There is also informational, instructional and poetry writing. A sense of structure is seen in Year 2 instructions for making breakfast. In Year 4 story plans for Jack and the Beanstalk, pupils have the opportunity to draft and edit their writing.
75. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are always satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers' lesson planning is sound and clearly arises from the National Literacy Strategy. They prepare good quality, interesting resources, which focus pupils' attention. Teachers use their resources effectively to reinforce sounds, spellings, punctuation and writing as well as to show ways of recording.
76. Strengths in lessons at both key stages include well-structured and organised lessons with good control and management of pupils so that they can get on with their work. Teachers generally maintain a good pace in their teaching. Less good teaching is associated with insufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. At both key stages, this means that the work rate for pupils is sometimes slow and there is a lack of quality in their learning. Most lessons include opportunities for pupils to make comments and observations and to answer questions. In Years 2 and 3,

quite demanding questioning motivates pupils and prompts their thinking. In Year 4, effective strategies are being used to support lower-attaining pupils and to build their confidence and self-esteem. This enables them to make progress in their learning. At the same time, the open dialogue, which is characteristic of this class, is helping all pupils towards good structures of thought and speech. There are few opportunities in all classes for pupils to ask and seek answers to their own questions. All teachers set clear targets and objectives, which are shared with pupils and which lay the foundation for their learning. Relationships are very good and this makes pupils keen to participate in all lessons. At the end of lessons, the plenary session is used well to evaluate what has been achieved and allows pupils to check their understanding. However, day-to-day observation and assessment are not being effectively used to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented well and has a positive impact on the structures of teaching and learning. There are good opportunities to apply literacy skills, for example in history in Year 1, where pupils write simple sentences about toys. However, in general, pupils' weak writing skills restrict the quality and quantity of written information in other subjects.

77. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work. They enjoy lessons and behave well. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They are keen to participate both in oral work and within groups. Most pupils can sustain their interest but not all maintain enthusiasm. This may be because they are tired after swimming, for example, or find the work too difficult, or lack individual help. The small classes and good support for groups and individuals ensure that pupils are known well by their teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils gain from this knowledge and understanding of their needs. Some higher-attaining and well-motivated pupils are developing independence in their learning through the setting of their own targets. Most pupils co-operate well in groups or in pairs and share resources fairly. For example, in one group in Year 2, there was help from one pupil to another who did not understand how to record his work. The very good relationships, the additional support given by learning support assistants and parent helpers, all have a positive effect on pupils. As a result they make satisfactory progress with their learning.
78. The recently reviewed policies and schemes of work in English support teachers in providing a range of worthwhile learning opportunities to develop literacy skills. The subject is well managed, and though the co-ordinator is new to the post he has set clear priorities for the further development of the subject. It fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Care and thought has been given to the subject guidance by the co-ordinator, in particular, that it should meet the wide-ranging needs of all pupils. However, in general, insufficient attention is given to levels of presentation at both key stages, and to the development of handwriting skills. In addition, the lack of opportunities for all pupils, especially older higher-attaining pupils, for independent work to extend and reinforce what has been learnt in lessons, restricts the learning pace. All teachers use the same assessment format to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. They record well what work has been done but the identified targets are not always sufficiently challenging for the next steps in pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning within classrooms. Work from each class is examined to gain an overview of standards. The satisfactory range of resources, including the good selection of books, non-fiction, stories, poetry and plays, are used well to support learning. The previous inspection judged standards to be variable and satisfactory overall. There remains a wide variation in standards, but they are now judged to be below expectations overall. There are still weaknesses in Years 3 and 4 in writing but improvements are evident though the pace is slow. Progress remains satisfactory

overall. There are still issues in respect of reading. There is insufficient active promotion of books and a love of reading.

MATHEMATICS

79. Most pupils in Year 2 just attain the standards that are expected for their ages in mathematics. This broadly reflects the average proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 in national testing in 2000. Few pupils attained highly in the national tests. Results vary year on year as is expected when the year group is small and pupil mobility is high. Results for 2000, however, show improvement from the previous year due to the high priority given to the subject by the school and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Results for 2000 are in line with those of similar schools. Standards of pupils in Year 4 broadly reach expectations. Standards overall reflect those reported at the last inspection. Inspection evidence indicated little observable difference between the performance of boys and girls, apart from the higher proportion of boys with special educational needs.
80. Pupils with special needs are enabled to progress well overall in their learning by effective small-group and individual support. Travellers make similar progress to the other pupils. Higher-attaining pupils do not always make sufficient progress as their work sometimes lacks challenge and pace.
81. Most pupils in Year 2 can add one-digit numbers mentally. They identify correctly odd and even numbers. They double simple numbers, and higher-attaining pupils understand the links between doubling, halving and the two times table when finding one half of a number, middle-attaining pupils with support. Pupils understand simple fractions practically by folding basic shapes, lower-attaining pupils with effective small group support. Most pupils know why the fractional notation is written as it is. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to express fractional proportions of shaded sections on a paper strip, identifying, for example, when two-thirds is coloured, or three-quarters. With support they write the correct notation. They talk about what they are doing, although some have difficulty expressing their thinking clearly. In Year 4, pupils are becoming familiar with simple tables with good and lively reinforcement from the teacher. They halve simple numbers confidently and make reasonable attempts to read and order mixed fractions. They recognise the equivalence of basic fractions in a practical context and discuss with each other how to fit fractional shapes such as quarters and eighths onto a board. Higher attaining pupils work with more demanding shapes and smaller fractions. Pupils recognise reflective symmetry and make appropriate patterns on paper.
82. Standards in numeracy are broadly satisfactory and similar to the time of the last inspection. Pupils use mathematics to help learning in other subjects, for example when constructing a transport graph, or using simple co-ordinates on a map in geography. They use ICT to good effect to produce symmetrical and repeating patterns, linking with work in art, and also with work on Islamic patterns in religious education. They also use ICT to practise number facts. Pupils use measuring skills appropriately to support learning in design and technology.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Sometimes it is good. One of the key strengths of teaching is the consistently positive way that teachers manage pupils. In this they are almost always effective and successfully create a purposeful learning environment in which pupils are attentive and keen to answer questions. Teachers' planning is secure and supported effectively by the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are well organised, carefully structured and with an

emphasis on practical understanding. Sometimes games are used to good effect, as in Year 4. Teachers' good questioning techniques stimulate and extend pupils' thinking, as in Year 3 when encouraging pupils to find different ways of combining numbers. Mathematical vocabulary is suitably emphasised. Plenary sessions are used satisfactorily to reinforce learning. Sometimes plenaries are used well, as in a Year 2 lesson, when the teacher encouraged pupils to make links with other related aspects of mathematics. Teachers appropriately identify different tasks for groups of differing abilities. Sometimes the tasks are demanding, such as the complex fraction game for higher-attaining pupils in Year 4. But sometimes the work is not demanding enough and pupils do not move forward quickly in their learning. For example, in Year 2, some pupils spent too much time drawing and cutting out shapes which restricted time for work on fractions. Also, on occasion, the task is not matched well enough to pupils' abilities, and they become restless, hindering learning.

84. Teachers check pupils' understanding in lessons through targeted questions, adapting planning for the next lesson if necessary, as in Year 4 when introductory work on fractions was too advanced. Their marking is positive and confirms what pupils have learnt but does not generally identify what they need to do next to improve. Good assessment arrangements enable teachers to record pupils' attainment in a structured way, and comprehensive tracking systems predict pupils' future performance. However, the steps needed to reach predicted levels are not identified clearly enough. Teachers set individual termly targets for improvement but targets are not always sufficiently demanding or clear enough to pupils.
85. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The new co-ordinator suitably monitors planning, and plans are in hand for her to continue the previous co-ordinator's programme of monitoring teaching and learning in lessons. She has a clear view of future developments in the subject.

SCIENCE

86. Standards of attainment in science in the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below the national average. Results were also below average compared with similar schools. A smaller proportion of pupils than previously reached either Level 2 or the higher Level 3. This appears to be a decline in standards from 1999 when results were well above average at both Levels 2 and 3. These results, however, reflect the nature of the school's intake and the variation to be expected when year groups are small. For many pupils, their lack of experiences outside school, together with their weak writing skills, result in lower standards. The picture is made more complicated because of the turbulence of the school population, with a high proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school during each academic year. Evidence during the inspection, however, from lesson observations and the work seen in pupils' books, shows that attainment in science is satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave the school at the age of nine. This represents good achievement from their low attainment on entry. This maintains the position found by the previous inspection.
87. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about themselves and enjoy showing how some are taller than others by referring to their display of photographs. They extend their thinking to consider changes in their pets as they grow. They label body parts correctly and think carefully about the food that humans and animals eat. In Year 2, pupils learn about how ice melts and make close observations both with naked eye and hand lenses to discuss changes when salt is put on ice. They begin to grasp the idea of fair testing knowing, for example, that pieces of ice for the experiment must be

the same size before they start, and they make thoughtful predictions about the outcome of experiments.

88. Older pupils learn about different rocks and minerals. They make interesting predictions about which rock weathers best. They examine soil samples carefully to describe similarities and differences and they successfully experiment to see which soil makes the best football pitch because it drains readily. Pupils build on their previous learning in Key Stage 1 to name the bones of the skeleton, and experiment to see if teachers and helpers have larger head circumference than pupils. Throughout the school, good emphasis is laid on health and safety aspects of science; pupils are clearly taught how to handle substances such as soil and salt for experiments with care and respect. Pupils cover an appropriate range of topics throughout their time in school in all aspects of the science curriculum. The organisation of the topics within the science curriculum ensures that pupils build on previous learning as they progress through the school. They make good progress in understanding basic scientific concepts such as fair testing and predicting what will happen in experiments. Although pupils have the opportunity to experiment in science, there is a tendency for experiments to be over-directed by teachers, with insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to carry out their own investigations and explorations. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language learn effectively with the support of classroom assistants. However, apart from the older pupils, the presentation of pupils' work in books is disappointing.
89. Pupils enjoy the more practical science activities. Their natural enthusiasm and interest in the subject means that they generally learn effectively even when opportunities for experimentation and investigation are limited. Attitudes towards learning are good overall, but become less acceptable when pupils have too little practical involvement in the lesson and their attention wanders. The great majority behave well in their lessons and they work sensibly and co-operatively.
90. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge of science, which is well communicated with pupils. Lessons capture pupils' interest although they do not have sufficient opportunities to become involved in practical activities. Most commonly, all pupils engage in the same activities. The only differences in the tasks set are when pre-prepared worksheets are given to help pupils with lower levels of writing skills. Regular assessments of pupils' work are carried out in order to track their progress in science well. However, these are not yet being used to inform detailed planning for exactly what pupils need to do in order to move on to the next stage of learning. Planning is based satisfactorily on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work supplemented by another commercial scheme. Resources for science are satisfactory and are organised well to encourage their efficient use. The co-ordinator is continuing the successful work to broaden the science curriculum with very good plans to develop the school grounds, which are being well supported and encouraged by governors.

ART AND DESIGN

91. Evidence from past and current work indicates that the standards achieved by pupils in both key stages exceed expectations for their ages and they make good progress. Standards have improved overall since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have a stimulating range of experiences to help develop their techniques, knowledge and understanding.

92. In Year 1, pupils successfully combine materials and techniques to produce theatre sets. They show good understanding of the simple mechanisms required to introduce moving characters. They work in well-supervised small groups to apply skills and to act creatively. All pupils are willing to experiment making effective use of the good art area facilities. They enjoy activities such as cutting paper to create three-dimensional effects, which excite the interest of other pupils. Older pupils are interested to look at the techniques used by artists over several centuries and from different cultural traditions. They make very good small-scale reproductions of chosen paintings showing care and precision. In discussing their own efforts they pay attention to detail and are developing a good sense of form and colour. Purpose is given to the task, as the pupils are to use the finished paintings to make Christmas cards for visitors to the school. Pupils listen to and share each other's ideas. In Year 4, pupils have favourite artists and respond appreciatively to the work of others. They are encouraged to make thoughtful observations.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are stimulated in art because their teachers show interest and ensure that all pupils are encouraged and effectively supported. Pupils' work is well displayed to give it value and to further direct their imaginative responses. The teaching observed in both key stages is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and levels of effort. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and make appropriate links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 made a lively three-dimensional display of The Great Fire of London and pupils in Year 4 are encouraged to use ICT to generate wallpaper designs. Work is well planned for continuity and pupils make good progress in developing skills and techniques. Schemes of work are currently being reviewed to include working with clay and use of the kiln to extend the range of pupils' experiences. Assessment is informal through observation and, in Year 3, the collecting of samples of work in pupil portfolios. Lessons are well organised with good use of high quality resources. Effective use of the art room space enables pupils to have fun both in lessons and in the art club. In all contexts, levels of concentration and interest are high. There are good expectations of what can be achieved and pupils are being encouraged to be independent in their thinking and in expressing and exploring ideas. They talk confidently about their work. Older pupils have recently won prizes in a local art competition, which motivates all. In art lessons, there is particularly sensitive use of praise and encouragement for lower-attaining pupils, for traveller pupils and for those with special educational needs. Their interests and aptitudes are being well directed. The subject contributes appropriately to work in other subjects. For instance, pupils produce examples of calligraphy in the study of Islam, which helps pupils to understand aspects of non-western cultures. The role of a parent helper and also learning support assistants, in preparing materials, working with groups and helping with display make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning of all pupils.
94. The subject is well managed and schemes of work are under review to take account of the new nationally recommended schemes of work. This is helping to identify future developments, such as the increased use of portfolios to retain samples of pupils' work and use of the kiln, and more work in three-dimensions. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and, together with the headteacher, provides informed guidance for the teaching of the curriculum for art. Well-linked to work in literacy, the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular clubs, and by visits for older pupils to the National Gallery. Areas for working are clean, inviting and well equipped. The school is building up resources to cover all that is required in the new curriculum. There is now better planning for the development of skills than was observed in the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. Standards in design and technology are satisfactory throughout the school. This maintains the position found by the previous inspection.
96. Younger pupils successfully make simple card and stick puppets to use when retelling stories in literacy. They use junk modelling enthusiastically to make theatres with moving parts on sliders, and show real delight at the teacher's prepared example. Pupils imaginatively combine art with design and technology when they insert moving parts into their paintings in the style of Picasso. Very good attention to the design process is seen in Year 2 when pupils draw careful and detailed plans of vehicles that they are going to make. They use their plans to make the chassis for their vehicles with very good sustained concentration and independence, and are thoroughly absorbed in their work. They are pleased to be able to discuss and explain their designs, and very proud that 'I've done it on my own'. In Year 4, pupils continue to design and make products such as containers for money, although the success of the task is limited due to the difficulties of working in close weave fabric with large needles and thick cotton making it very hard for pupils to stitch. Food technology is linked well to work in literacy when pupils make cakes and milkshakes by following sequenced instructions. However, this area of design and technology is currently under-developed. Construction kits are available throughout the school but there was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on their use. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
97. The quality of teaching and learning in design and technology is satisfactory. Sometimes it is good as in Year 2, when probing questions effectively promoted pupils' learning about constructing a chassis. The task was demanding and pupils responded with enthusiasm and sustained interest. In general, teachers' planning is sound and ensures that an appropriate emphasis is made on the design element of the subject. However, teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' written work are not always high enough. Due to staff changes the subject is being temporarily co-ordinated by the headteacher. The school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme to support and guide teachers to ensure that skills are developed as pupils progress through the school. Resources are satisfactory and include an appropriate range of tools for young children to use, but the fabrics available for stitching are limited and not conducive to good work. Design and technology is very well supported by a well-attended craft club where skills are further developed through a variety of interesting activities.

GEOGRAPHY

98. The last time the school was inspected, there was insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement about standards in geography. This remains the case as no geography lessons were scheduled during this inspection. Evidence from talking to pupils and from looking at samples of work indicates that standards in geography are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 have an awareness of places that are near and far away, gained in particular through the travels and diary of Barney Bear. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use keys and basic symbols in mapping, and locate places on a map. Older pupils using simple co-ordinates on maps and also practically in the school grounds. Through looking at different sized maps of the local area, all of which include the village, they are gaining an early understanding of the purpose of scale in mapping, although they are not familiar with the term. Overall, weak writing skills limit the quality and quantity of pupils' written information about the subject.

99. Although no direct teaching was observed, indirect evidence indicates that teaching is satisfactory and pupils are making appropriate gains in their learning. From talking to a small group of pupils their interest in the subject was evident. Long-term planning is secure with appropriate coverage of the newly revised curriculum clearly in place. Work is suitably alternated with history to give pupils a steady experience of the humanities as they progress through the school, increasing skills and developing understanding. Pupils are given experiences outside the classroom, in the school grounds for example. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are suitably assessed at the end of each unit to contribute to the overall end-of-year picture. The subject is managed effectively with a clear understanding of its future development with an emphasis on pupils progressing well in their learning.

HISTORY

100. At the time of the last inspection, standards in history were satisfactory at both key stages. Only two lessons were seen, both in Key Stage 1, and none were observed in Years 3 and 4. However, from talking to pupils in both key stages and looking at samples of work, indications are that standards are still satisfactory across the school. Pupils in Year 1 can distinguish between old and new when sorting toys and give simple reasons. In Year 2, pupils have a clear understanding of aspects of the past, as in the Great Fire of London. They can sequence the main events and record them, and higher attaining pupils make reasonable attempts to do so in diary form in the style of Samuel Pepys. In general, however, the weak writing skills of most pupils restrict the quality and quantity of the written work. Pupils' understanding in history is better than their recording. They are beginning to understand why people acted as they did during the fire, encouraged effectively by previous role play. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrate an understanding of aspects of the life of Henry VIII. In Year 3, pupils find historical evidence from a picture and, in Year 4, they use the Internet for their research. Looking at previous work shows that older pupils have an appreciation of differences between eras in the past such as the ancient Egyptians and the present day.
101. There is insufficient evidence to form secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Indications from lessons seen in Key Stage 1, talking to pupils and looking at their work, and from planning documents, are that teaching is good overall, and pupils make good gains in their learning. Planning is secure and based on a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Expectations for what pupils should achieve were high in lessons seen, for example in Year 2 for pupils to empathise with people in the past. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to foster pupils' understanding of the past, including looking at historical sources, as in Pepys Diary, and artefacts, as in the wide range of toys in Year 1, and also through role play in Year 2. Teachers manage pupils well and sensitively, although sometimes pupils with identified behaviour difficulties distract and disturb other pupils. A high level of classroom support contributes effectively to the consistent and positive management of behaviour. As a result, pupils almost always are fully engaged with the lesson and maintain interest well. Pupils with special educational needs and travellers make similar progress to the other pupils. Assessment arrangements at the end of each unit suitably inform pupils' end of year reports.
102. The subject is managed well by a history specialist who has a good understanding of its future development. She supports colleagues through informal discussion and suitably monitors planning and samples of pupils' work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. Attainment in ICT is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave school at the age of nine. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This maintains the position found by the last inspection.
104. Pupils in Key Stage 1 confidently handle the mouse, space bar and keyboard. They can explain clearly how to choose icons to change font, letter size and colour to write their names. Pupils move images around the screen to dress a teddy and show great enjoyment when using the computer for increasingly difficult sums. In Years 3 and 4, good use is made of ICT to support other areas of the curriculum. Pupils use a drawing program competently to make repeating designs for wallpaper. Good links are made with religious education when pattern designs are used to draw Muslim prayer mats. Pupils progress from this to being able to draw more complicated designs with rotating patterns of symmetry in mathematics. Good use is made of the Internet when pupils undertake research about Henry VIII in history. Pupils edit text with ease, and compose their own interesting newspapers, which they share with other schools in the area by sending it to them by email. They appreciate how quickly technology develops when comparing newspapers printed by pupils in previous years with only black and white text and pupils' drawings rather than imported photographs using digital cameras. Music programs are used to help pupils compose their own pieces. However, the lack of headphones makes the task too noisy for them to be able to hear what they are doing properly. Because of the structure of the ICT curriculum, there were no opportunities to see pupils using programmable toys. However, it is clear from teachers' planning and talking to teachers and pupils that they are used for directional work in mathematics and geography, and that pupils understand how to make the toys follow instructions.
105. Progress in using the skills of ICT is steady throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make good progress. The current range of computers have not been in the school for very long but their use is beginning to make an impact across the curriculum. Pupils all enjoy using the computers and are confident when exploring programs. They listen carefully, concentrate well and co-operate sensibly with one another when sharing a keyboard. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use the computers independently in the course of their daily work.
106. The quality of teaching in ICT is good. The school has made a conscious decision to site the computers around the school rather than have a suite and teachers make the best use of the computers that they have in their rooms. An adequate supply of software allows teachers to make constructive use of the computers to support learning in other subjects. Teachers have had effective training recently. The main impact of the good teaching is in teachers' confidence and competence when planning their work and communicating with pupils, and their effective use of ICT across the curriculum. Pupils are learning satisfactorily as the good teaching becomes embedded, but there are few opportunities yet for pupils to explore and experiment for themselves and their previous learning is not yet being capitalised on well enough. The school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work and has a satisfactory overall curriculum plan to ensure that pupils' skills are developed as they progress through the school. However, the use of assessment to plan the next stage of learning is not yet consistently applied. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject and a very good action plan to continue the positive developments in the future.

MUSIC

107. There was insufficient evidence gathered during the inspection to make a judgement on standards across the range of music for younger pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. Older pupils achieve standards in line with national expectations. They build on this and make at least satisfactory progress. This confirms the findings of the previous inspection and music still has an established place in school life. Evidence gained from lessons, assemblies and class singing shows that all pupils now benefit from the renewed emphasis on singing. Standards are good in recorder playing. Pupils in Year 4 sing with developing tunefulness and obvious pleasure. They are beginning to recognise and follow musical notation and competently to explore pentatonic scales. They demonstrate their understanding in composing simple patterns and beats on chime bars. They then combine with recorders to accompany class singing. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as a second language make satisfactory progress in the subject.
108. There is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. However, in sessions observed, the pace is brisk and maintains the momentum of pupils' learning effectively. Levels of attention are good and contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of musical terms. Even the youngest pupils learn songs quickly, for example in joining in with songs in acts of worship. They enjoy performing together, can respond to a signal and keep time. Teachers develop pupils' skills by setting high expectations and by establishing a good working atmosphere. Older pupils are being encouraged to use ICT in the subject, are familiar with using computers and audiocassettes for musical activities and are competent in following instructions. Where the teacher has good subject knowledge and confidence there is enthusiasm and pupils are keen to participate. All pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder and players are encouraged to contribute to assemblies and in class lessons. This has a positive impact. Good links are made with other subjects. In history, for example, Year 4 pupils learn about Tudor music in order to perform in an annual show for local schools on Songs of the Ages.
109. Pupils' attitudes to music are good. They behave well and handle instruments with care. They enjoy music and have fun by listening to the teacher, repeating and readily joining in. Older pupils value each others' contributions and applaud good performances, as in Year 3 when pupils worked in groups to link sounds and animal movements. They clearly gave careful thought to the task and their efforts were fully appreciated by both the teacher and other pupils.
110. The subject is well managed. It is enthusiastically led by the co-ordinator. The new nationally recommended scheme of work is being incorporated into the existing scheme and is in the early stages of implementation by all teachers. The curriculum is enriched by good opportunities for public performances, which include the recent successful participation of older pupils in the local arts festival. This adds a rich dimension to the pupils' experience as they enjoy involvement with the wider community. Resources for music are satisfactory, well displayed and easily accessible. The co-ordinator is well informed and has clear priorities for the development of the subject in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards which are at least in line with national expectations for their age in all aspects of physical education. As they progress through the school, pupils reach standards which meet or exceed national

expectations. This reflects the judgements made in the previous inspection.

112. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 show particular strengths in swimming and enjoy the challenges that are presented to them. They swim throughout the autumn term and observations made at the swimming pool show that all pupils are making good progress. A significant number are able to swim confidently across the pool using both crawl and backstroke techniques. Some higher-attaining pupils are developing a good style and movement in the water. Pupils in Year 2 are developing control and co-ordination of large balls. They move and bounce the balls in team games and then apply these skills with increasing confidence in games of interception. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 3 devise different combinations of shapes and movements on apparatus. They give thought to the task and make an effort to be creative in their choices.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There is particularly good use of the local leisure centre swimming pool where specialist teaching staff is well directed to give challenging instruction. The pace is brisk for all pupils, time is used well and school staff make a significant contribution to pupils' confidence and expectations. Teachers are well prepared and become actively involved in physical education lessons, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs and with English as a second language. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and confidence. All lessons are firmly managed so that all pupils can safely and appropriately participate. There is praise and encouragement for those who are reluctant and they are well supported towards personal achievement. The pace of lessons is generally satisfactory and teachers both explain tasks and give time for pupils to evaluate and improve their performance. An example was seen in the Year 2 games lesson where pupils were impressed by the intercepting skills of a boy who worked with the teacher to demonstrate the task. As a result, all pupils enjoy lessons and gain in confidence. The very good quality of relationships also has an impact on positive attitudes. One or two instances of over-excited behaviour were observed, but were not allowed to disrupt the lesson. In these cases, pupils have not yet the self-discipline required to operate in the freer space of the hall.
114. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They try hard to improve and to devise imaginative movements and actions. They can engage in self-evaluation at the end of lessons which enables them to set targets for their own performance and to seek to extend themselves.
115. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes outdoor and adventurous activities. Arrangements for swimming are good and the confidence gained in the pool has an impact on work in other subjects. The recently revised schemes of work are relevant to the ages and needs of pupils and include compass work and map skills, for example. The schemes reflect the new nationally recommended curriculum. The subject makes a significant contribution to personal and social development as pupils work together, follow rules and combine in teams. In the course of activities, they learn about and discuss aspects of health and safety. Extra-curricular clubs are offered which include football for boys and girls and an introduction to competition in matches with other schools. This lays a sound foundation for later life and for leisure pursuits.
116. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is developing subject knowledge and leadership skills. Both outdoor and indoor facilities are good and there are satisfactory resources and equipment for all activities in the subject. They are being effectively used. The outdoor area is equipped particularly well to

provide a variety of adventurous activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

117. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils make satisfactory progress. This maintains the position found by the previous inspection.
118. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 reflect positively on their own experiences of celebrations such as birthdays and christenings. They are beginning to develop an awareness of how common symbols are used and link this to a sound awareness of the cross as a Christian symbol. They listen well to stories from the Old and New Testaments and remember clearly the main points in the story of David and Goliath. When listening to the story of Zacchaeus, very good story telling encourages children to participate thoroughly in role play. Through this medium, they reflect on the events and meaning of the story, showing maturing values and response towards others when talking about the way in which the crowd treated Zacchaeus. In Year 3, previous work on Christian signs and symbols is developed when pupils thoughtfully consider the feelings of the early Christians when they had to worship in secret. Effective links with literacy are made when pupils consider the meanings of religious metaphors and write their own to express their feelings. Pupils in Year 4 learn about the major features of Islam such as prayer, festivals and about the mosque. This is brought to life for them when a visitor from the local mosque comes to talk about what it means to be a Muslim. Throughout the school, pupils are developing awareness and growing respect for the values and beliefs of others and the impact of those values on family life, for example learning about respect for parents in Muslim families.
119. At both key stages, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress, reflecting limited previous experience. Good links are made between religious education and other areas of the curriculum. Pupils use computers to draw symmetrical patterns that could be used as prayer mats. Assemblies contribute to religious education when they focus on festivals such as Christmas and encourage the children to think about why gifts are given. Their social and spiritual development is enhanced by the way in which pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own values and respect those of other people. Visits to the local church, Wimborne Minster and the mosque all contribute to the good attitudes that pupils have in lessons. However, the presentation of pupils' written work tends to be rather untidy.
120. The quality of teaching in religious education is good overall. Lessons are thoughtfully planned with clear objectives. Teachers approach the views and beliefs of pupils and others with sensitivity that develops pupils' respect for the values of others and supports their spiritual, social and cultural development. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and a valuable part of lessons is the guided discussions about values and beliefs. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' work on display and teachers' planning, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor religious education teaching. Very good medium-term plans for religious education incorporate areas where the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils can be enhanced. There is a system for recording pupils' attainment in religious education, but this is not yet fully developed in all classes. The provision of resources and artefacts is satisfactory.