

INSPECTION REPORT

**TRENT YOUNG'S ENDOWED CE VA PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Sherborne

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113817

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Cregg

Reporting inspector: John Lilly
12487

Dates of inspection: 9 – 11 October 2000

Inspection number: 224754

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Trent Sherborne Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Edward Alexander
Date of previous inspection:	14 – 17 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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		English	Teaching
		History	Leadership and management
		Special educational needs	
		Equal opportunities	
Ian Blair 11094	Lay inspector		Attitudes and behaviour
			Care and welfare
			Partnership with parents
Jeremy Collins 27736	Team inspector	Science	Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
		Information and communication technology	Assessment
		Design and technology	
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Christina Morgan 12116	Team inspector	Mathematics	Curriculum
		Art and design	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Trent Young's Endowed Primary is a Church of England Voluntary Aided school. It serves the rural village of Trent and three surrounding villages, but about half the pupils come from areas further afield. There are 100 girls and boys between the ages of 4 and 11 years old on the school roll, and the school is smaller than average for schools of this type. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of those needs, is broadly average for schools of this type. When children join the school, their attainment varies widely but is broadly average compared with schools nationally, although lower than the average for similar schools in the local education authority area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average and, although the range is wide, most pupils come from homes that are more favoured in social and economic terms than is the average nationally. At the time of the inspection there were no pupils from homes representing minority ethnic cultures.

The school's mission statement is *Living and learning together, growing in confidence, knowledge and independence, in a Christian family environment*. The current school development plan continues to focus on developing management aspects, but also places priority upon improving standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology and provision for the Foundation Stage.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Trent Young's Endowed Primary School is a very good school with excellent features. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and staff work with a shared sense of purpose and complete commitment to improving standards. Children join the school with broadly average attainment and make a very good start at the Foundation Stage. Pupils usually make very good progress throughout the school, and by the time pupils are eleven their attainment is above and in many areas well above the national average. Standards of literacy and numeracy are already very high and are improving further. Staff promote strong values and consequently the behaviour and personal development of the pupils are very good, and relationships are excellent within a warm yet firm school community. The school provides a rich and deep curriculum and very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The excellent leadership and clear direction provided by the headteacher
- The ways the staff promote the aims and values of the school leading to very good provision for the personal development of the pupils
- The ways very good teaching supports very good learning by the pupils
- The provision for children at the Foundation Stage is excellent
- The rich and deep curriculum, including excellent activities outside lessons
- The complete commitment of staff to continued excellent improvement in standards.

What could be improved

- Governors planning for the continued improvements in standards
- The school's planning for the involvement of parents in their children's learning

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS PREVIOUS INSPECTION

At the time of the previous inspection (1997) the present headteacher was new, and the school was just coming out of a very difficult period of uncertainty and lack of leadership. There were many things to put right. Since that time, there has been excellent improvement. Working one secure step at a time, staff have developed their skills and provision for the National Curriculum and religious education is now in place. Assessment is now a strength. The pupils' attainment by the time they are eleven has improved significantly and is now well above average. The present governing body is determined and works as a team, but has yet to gain the planning skills to be fully effective in raising standards.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A*	A	A
mathematics	C	A	A*	B
science	B	B	C	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

A means attainment is in the highest 5 per cent of schools nationally.*

Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment in English and mathematics have improved at a much faster rate than the national trend, and standards in science have matched the national trend. In national tests in 2000, all pupils by eleven attained the expected level in English and mathematics, and almost half attained the higher Level 5. In mathematics, one pupil attained the even higher Level 6. In science, almost all pupils achieved the expected Level 4, and 18 per cent of pupils attained the higher Level 5. Overall, these results are very high when compared with all schools nationally, and high compared with similar schools. Current attainment overall in all subjects of the curriculum reflects these high standards. Present targets agreed by governors do not provide sufficient challenge, considering the high performance of the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and the life of the school. They are extremely enthusiastic about their school and very keen to take part in all it has to offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in and out of class. The way older pupils care for younger pupils is particularly good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop into caring, thoughtful and independent young people and relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is very good.

The ethos of the school is a considerable strength. Staff provide very fine role models for pupils to follow, and expect the best from all pupils. Rules and values are firmly yet caringly applied, and even the youngest pupils are helped to show independence and individual responsibility. Consequently, staff and pupils work together as a determined team, and yet care for each other as in a loving family.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 6 years	aged 6-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Excellent	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is a significant strength of the school. All teaching is at least satisfactory, and in 90 per cent of lessons observed teaching was good or better. In more than half of lessons, teaching was very good or excellent. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and of the oldest pupils is particularly good. All teachers plan effectively and provide a stimulating range of learning activities appropriate for the age and ability of each pupil, including those with special educational needs and the very able. A strength of the teaching is the way teachers use language that forces pupils to think for themselves. Literacy and numeracy are taught very effectively. Classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. This effective teaching supports very good learning that not only produces rapid gains in attainment, but also thinking young learners who understand the part they need to play.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are very good. A strong feature is the way topics are covered in depth and with rich detail, and are closely linked to the relevant use of literacy and numeracy. Provision for outside-class activities is excellent, and the community makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Special educational needs are carefully considered, and effective plans for support are designed and implemented. Provision is good, and in the case of those pupils facing more serious problems excellent.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision grows from the strong Christian values of the school. Provision for spiritual development is excellent, and for moral and social development very good. Provision for cultural development is good, and improving.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The provision for the welfare, care and guidance of pupils is good with many very good or excellent features.

With the exception of provision for learning to swim, the school meets the statutory curriculum requirements for provision at the Foundation Stage and at Key Stages 1 and 2. The effective teaching of a rich curriculum forms a very secure foundation for learning at the secondary stage. The teaching and curriculum provide for learning that has challenge, balance, breadth, depth and relevance to pupils' present and future lives. This is in the context of perceptive care and guidance for the pupils' development overall, whatever their gender, background or ability. A very positive relationship between home and school has yet to develop sufficiently into a partnership within which both home and school play equal parts in supporting the pupils' learning, for example through homework and the development of reading.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership for a team of committed and determined staff. Consequently the aims and values of the school are completely embedded in every side of their work, and commitment to improvement is absolute.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The membership of the governing body has changed significantly since the previous inspection, but has retained a determination to work as a team. However, they have yet to gain a secure understanding of their role and the skills necessary for its fulfilment. They are very supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	It is a reflective school that uses honest assessment of its performance and the views of others to highlight areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are prudently and perceptive deployed to meet both day-to-day needs and future development needs.

There are sufficient qualified staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum, and resources for learning are mainly good. The school buildings and grounds provide an attractive and stimulating place in which to learn, although the space for the school library is too small. The headteacher provides a strong sense of direction and purpose, and effective policies and procedures are mainly in place. The governing body is supportive, but they recognise that they need to become clearer as to their role and to gain the skills necessary to perform that role. As a whole, the school is open to new ideas and has a good relationship with other experts who can offer advice. Staff evaluate their performance against that of similar schools. Staff and governors share a commitment to providing even better value for the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school and are expected to work hard • Their children are helped to develop maturity and behaviour is good • Teaching is good and their children make good progress • They find it easy to approach staff and discuss concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way home and school could work together to support the children • The way the school explains policies and planning • The continuity between one year and the next • Provision for boys • Activities outside lessons

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. They did find that the school needs to develop more ways of involving parents in supporting their children's learning, and this includes finding better ways to communicate to parents what their children are doing in school, why they are doing it, and how parents can help. In the main, inspectors find staff are highly effective at helping pupils of different ages in the same class make equally good progress, including the transition from the Foundation Stage to Year 1. In lessons, boys do equally well as girls, and the school makes every attempt to involve people from outside school when providing for boys, for example in a range of sports. Even though some parents were concerned about activities outside lessons, inspectors found that staff arranged a wide variety of clubs and these provided excellent opportunities for wider learning. The school has been planning to extend this provision through an 'after-school' club and has recently received confirmation of financial help to launch this initiative.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children join the school aged four with attainment that is broadly in line with the national average and leave aged eleven attaining very high standards. Pupils at each age and at each level of ability make very good progress, and boys and girls achieve equally well. Standards of attainment and progress have improved very significantly since the previous inspection.
2. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment in English and mathematics have risen much faster than the national trend, and in science improvement has matched the national trend. In national tests and assessments for 2000, pupils aged seven attained standards in reading and mathematics equivalent to the top five per cent of all schools, and standards in writing were very high. Attainment in science was above the national average and matched average performance in similar schools. When compared with similar schools, overall attainment was well above the average for those schools. This high attainment was matched by the attainment of present pupils at Key Stage 1, with continued improvement in writing.
3. In national tests for 2000, pupils aged eleven attained extremely high standards in English and mathematics, and high standards in science. Attainment overall was above that for similar schools. Again, the attainment of present pupils at Key Stage 2 reflects these high standards, and there has been further improvement in writing.
4. Overall, pupils make extremely good progress at the Foundation Stage, and continue to make very good progress throughout the school. Girls and boys of low, average and above average ability make equally good progress, as do pupils with special educational needs.
5. At the core of this very good achievement is the rapid progress in literacy and numeracy. This underpins achievement in all subjects. From the start, children make very good progress in their listening and speaking skills, by the time they are seven these skills are high and by the time pupils are eleven they are very high. This supports very good progress in writing, and attainment is high by the time pupils are seven and very high by the time they are eleven. By the time the most able pupils are eleven, they attain extremely high standards in their listening, speaking and writing. Standards of reading are high at both key stages, but not quite as high as with the other literacy skills. Pupils enjoy books and read very competently, but their reading lacks the very rich variety and very high standards seen in their writing. The evidence of the high standards of numeracy comes in the confident way pupils of all ages use and understand number. Applying their well-developed computational skills and wider mathematical understanding, they confidently solve problems and present numerical data clearly, for example in geography and science. In both literacy and numeracy, pupils use their sound and in many areas highly developed skills in information technology.
6. By the time they are seven, pupils' attainment in art, design and technology, history, geography, information technology, and music at least matches national expectations, and in most topics exceeds these standards. Standards in physical

education are very high. Standards overall are above average, and this reflects the very effective teaching of a rich and balanced curriculum. By the time pupils are eleven, they have made at least good progress in all these subjects. Standards in design and technology match national expectations, and in art, history, geography, information technology, music and physical education the pupils' attainment exceeds standards expected at that age. Attainment overall is very high. A feature of this very positive picture is not only that all pupils attain the expected level, but also that more than half exceed them, and the most able pupils attain very high standards indeed. For example, in a creative writing lesson in Years 5 and 6 based on a history topic, not only were all pupils attaining the expected standards, but most were exceeding them, with the most able pupils attaining extremely high standards. This very high literacy was in the context of very good historical and geographical understanding and knowledge.

7. Therefore, progress is very good throughout the school and across the curriculum, and this leads to very high attainment overall by the time pupils are eleven.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils show a very positive attitude towards their learning. They pay close attention to their teachers, settle to their assigned tasks with commitment and maintain concentration to the end of the lesson. This is due mainly to the generally high standard of teaching, which results in lessons that are well structured and that pupils find interesting and relevant. It is reinforced by the wide range of excellent extra-curricular activities on offer in which pupils participate with enthusiasm. Pupils clearly find that school is a congenial place to be and this is because of the positive Christian ethos that pervades the school. This results in a purposeful and welcoming atmosphere. The school produces the kind of environment one would expect to find in a good Church of England school and pupils respond positively to this.
9. The standard of behaviour of pupils is generally very good. This results from the high expectations, which are articulated in the school's behaviour policy. This is a well thought-out document that outlines the principles of rewards and sanctions but leaves the details of their implementation to the discretion of the individual class teacher. This is a strategy, which was observed to be entirely appropriate and highly effective in a school such as this. For example, even pupils who arrive with bad behaviour records at other schools rapidly settle into the expected pattern of good behaviour. Pupils are very proud of their school and take good care of the premises and equipment. This is exemplified by the virtual absence of litter and graffiti and the way in which pupils clear up after lessons or other activities. The one instance of graffiti that was observed during the inspection was dealt with in such a positive way by staff that it made a significant contribution to the personal development of the pupils concerned. Bullying is virtually unknown at Trent and this is a positive feature commented on by new pupils who have moved from other schools. Staff deal with the occasional problems that do arise promptly and sensitively. There have been no exclusions of either a fixed term or permanent nature during the past twelve months. Indeed there have been none at all during the tenure of the current headteacher.
10. Relationships within the school are excellent and form a major component of its positive ethos. This is a great strength of the school and one that makes a significant contribution to pupils' attainment, attitudes and behaviour. They are

particularly good between class teachers and their pupils and, in many lessons and on other occasions such as in assemblies and extra-curricular activities, the rapport is a delight to behold. Pupils get on well with each other and show an ability to work together co-operatively to the benefit of their learning. Inspectors observed, and more importantly pupils are also aware, that relationships between staff are of the highest quality. Pupils are generally very articulate and are able to converse with adults in a mature yet respectful way. They are able to take responsibility and show initiative by offering their help without having to be asked.

11. Pupils are eager to come to school hence attendance is very good, being well above the national average for primary schools, and lateness is generally very rare. Most instances of authorised absence arise from family holidays taken during term time and if this issue could be successfully resolved then attendance would become excellent. Appropriate procedures are in place for the registration of pupils. Registers are called at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions and in general they are meticulously and neatly kept. The recording of lateness is not counted as unauthorised absence, and the school could be more proactive in following up unexplained absence on the day it occurs. The school does not have an attendance policy and this means practice is too dependent upon the conscientiousness of staff.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. Teaching is a strength of the school and has improved since the previous inspection. The lessons observed were all taught at least satisfactorily, and almost 90 per cent were taught well or better. More than half of lessons were taught at least very well and 22 per cent were taught excellently. Every class was taught well, and the teaching at the Foundation Stage and of pupils in Years 5 and 6 was particularly effective. This improvement is the result of carefully planned staff development and the way teachers plan together, sharing good ideas and helping each other solve problems.
13. All effective teaching has the following features. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and this leads to planning that has clear and appropriate objectives, and introduces the pupils to a depth and richness of information. Teachers know their pupils well and support this awareness with accurate assessment. This allows them to plan effective learning activities that build upon what each pupil knows and offers ways of learning appropriate to the ability and age of each pupil. Teachers teach with pace and enthusiasm, and this enthusiasm transfers to the pupils. A particularly strong characteristic is the way the teachers use language that forces the pupils to think things through for themselves. The teaching has high expectations that stretch the more able, whilst teachers perceptively support the younger or less able pupils, working closely with the skilled classroom assistants. Those pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress in line with their individual educational plans. The pace of the lessons means that everyone needs to concentrate and work hard, and yet few are ever allowed to fall behind. In all lessons observed there was a sense of shared enjoyment and excitement in learning.
14. This effective teaching promotes very good learning. The pupils usually become engrossed in their work, and work hard, fast and with evident care and pride. They have a good understanding of the part they need to play and what they need to learn next. This knowledge and understanding is evident in the monthly targets they agree with teachers, and the way they are excited by seeing their progress

when completing their 'once a month' assessment tasks. They co-operate not only with their teachers but also with each other, often collaborating to produce even better work.

15. This effective teaching encourages pupils to see the importance of listening for meaning, and speaking not only clearly, but also in ways that explain and justify their views. They learn to ask pertinent questions and are not afraid to try out ideas verbally. Similarly, they see reading and writing as tools for understanding as well as finding out and describing, and this reflects the teachers' focus on creative writing in a range of contexts. An area for development is the use of extended reading in the same way that teachers use extended writing.
16. Similarly, numeracy is taught effectively with a focus on speedy mental calculations as well as more measured computation. As with literacy, these skills are not taught in isolation, but as integral parts of other learning, for example history and geography when collecting, analysing, recording and presenting data.
17. The teachers have to teach two or more years in the same class, and their carefully considered planning ensures that each pupil is learning at the level they need. This planning shows the skills of these teachers in assessing what pupils already know and what they then need to learn. It is only on the very rare occasion that the teacher teaches one age or ability level better than another; when it did occur, either the older or the younger pupils did not have sufficient challenge.
18. The most effective teaching had all the above strengths, but at the same time, and whatever subject was being taught. These strengths produce learning at a level significantly above that expected of the age of the pupils, for example in a Foundation Stage and Year 1 numeracy class that included estimating, in a Year 3 and 4 history lesson on the Victorians that led pupils to create sophisticated historical hypotheses, and in a creative writing lesson linked to a Year 5 and 6 geography and history topic when some pupils not only described the scene but helped the reader understand what it was like to be there.
19. Although assessment is more developed for some subjects, for example English, and less for others, for example design and technology, overall it helps teachers accurately and progressively track the growing skills of each pupil, for example in information technology, a subject that is having a developing and increasingly positive impact on learning. Teachers are skilled at feeding back orally to pupils why they succeed or meet problems, and what they need to master next, but marking, although conscientious, too rarely includes helpful comment to guide the learning forward. Teachers set regular homework tasks, but this has yet to become a sufficiently powerful opportunity for learning.

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

20. In the main, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The one exception is the lack of provision for learning to swim. There has been very considerable improvement since the previous inspection. This programme of learning strongly reflects the aims and values of the school as presented in the school's mission statement. The school provides an interesting, stimulating and demanding programme for pupils that effectively promotes their intellectual,

cultural, physical and personal development, and pupils with special educational needs, low, average and high ability pupils have equal and appropriate access to the opportunities to learn. The school has introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to good effect. Lessons are carefully planned and structured, and promote learning objectives that cater for the needs of all pupils. Within subjects, there is a good balance between aspects of the programmes of study. In most subjects, but in English, mathematics and science in particular, there is an appropriate emphasis on investigation skills and pupils are encouraged to apply their knowledge and understanding of basic concepts in a variety of different situations.

21. The school has also managed to maintain in-depth coverage in most of the other subjects of the curriculum. In history, geography and art, in particular, sufficient teaching time is allocated for topics to be covered in considerable depth. A rolling programme of topics ensures that pupils in mixed-age classes do not cover the same work in subsequent years. The school is particularly aware of the problems of having Year 1 and Year 4 pupils in different classes and is continuously monitoring the situation with the aim of resolving any problems as they arise. With the youngest Year 1 pupils who work with children at the Foundation Stage, this arrangement helps them feel secure before moving on to more demanding work, and able pupils in Year 4 are helped to forge ahead by working with Year 5 and 6 pupils. Teachers plan lessons in detail and are beginning to be sufficiently confident to modify their planning in the light of on-going assessment. Some monitoring of teaching has already taken place in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The school is already developing this into a more detailed and comprehensive system that will eventually be extended to all subjects of the curriculum. Although meeting in the main the requirements of the most recent national guidelines for the curriculum, detailed consideration is at an early stage. In some areas, for example design and technology, an absence of clear policy and schemes of work place continued success at risk.
22. The curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage fully meets the requirements of the new Early Learning Goals except for one aspect of physical development, where pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their co-ordination skills through using large-scale play equipment. In all other respects the school provides a stimulating and demanding range of activities designed to prepare the youngest pupils for the next stage of their education.
23. Personal, social and health education is promoted well throughout the school and aspects of it are incorporated into other curriculum areas rather than being formalised into a separate time slot. An annual visit by a Life Education Exhibition provides a specific focus for drugs and health education, but pupils' health and well-being are so integral to the aims of the school that most aspects are dealt with as a natural part of the curriculum. Development of education for citizenship is at an early stage.
24. The school provides a wide range of high quality extra-curricular activities, including supporting a French club, and providing a cookery club, gardening club, walking club, music and sports activities. In physical education lessons, the school provides a very wide range of activities and is also involved in sporting events with other local schools. At present, however, there is no provision for swimming. A former Somerset county cricketer provides pupils with ten sessions of coaching in the summer term, and boys from a local school help provide sporting activities especially appropriate for boys.

Enrichment through links with the community and other schools

25. There are several local trusts, which make a significant contribution to the work of the school and the education of its pupils. For example, the Young's Endowed Trust, who own the school's site, has funded improvements to the school buildings and pays for cricket tuition after school during the summer term, in addition to supporting other extra-curricular activities. The education officer of the Ernest Cook Trust comes into school twice each term to run an exciting programme of environmental projects for pupils. Also, the parochial church councils of the parishes within the catchment area of the school make annual donations to the school's budget. The school has a good working relationship with both the local education authority and diocesan advisors, and these make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school.
26. There are no state nursery schools in the area but the school receives pupils from a number of local private playgroups. There is also some interchange of pupils with the independent sector, which has a strong presence in this part of the country. A number of pupils arrive each year in the reception class having spent two years at a pre-preparatory school and some, typically three per year, leave at the age of eight to go to a preparatory school. This causes some anxiety amongst staff and governors concerning recruitment and retention of pupils, and consequent disruption to the pupils' learning.
27. There are regular visits to places of historical and environmental interest and a representative of the Ernest Cook Trust is closely involved in helping older pupils to develop an understanding and appreciation of the local area. Visiting artists and musicians come into the school and extend and enrich the curriculum.
28. The school is an integral part of the village community and links with the church and local residents are strong. Elderly residents are invited to school events and act as a valuable source of information in topic work. Pupils investigating the evacuation of children to the countryside in World War 2 were able to gather first hand accounts from local people, and local people provide excellent mementos and artefacts to support the study of the Victorians. The links established have grown into a warm and mutually appreciated relationship.

Provision for personal development

29. The school's provision for personal development is very good and the school has developed the already high values found in the previous inspection. 'I can sit and think', a remark made by an older pupil, reflects the deeply spiritual and thoughtful atmosphere found in the school. This forms the foundation for excellent provision for spiritual development. In lessons and in the school assemblies pupils are challenged to consider their goals in life. They show great concern over such things as the suffering in the world, think deeply and relate these to their own moments of sorrow and suffering. These attitudes found in the pupils are the result of excellent spiritual provision through good religious education, class discussions and creative writing, effective assemblies, fine adult role models and very good teaching. The teaching constantly reinforces ideals of respect and friendship in a gentle, caring and concerned way that leads pupils to consider and then embrace meaning and purpose in their own lives. Such teaching, where respect for the pupils is of a very high order, builds up respect, trust and friendship, which permeate the school. The active spirituality found within the school not only causes the pupils to know right from wrong but also builds up a similar respect for their peers. This is shown by their attentiveness in listening to their friends when offering suggestions in class and assemblies. An example of the pupils' concern for one another is the way they ensure that each of them have a turn when conducting experiments in science, a product of their reflection on what lives should achieve, rather than simple application of values of right and wrong.
30. Very good provision for moral development is strongly related to the spirituality found in the school. There is no apparent specific teaching found in the school. It is built on the very fine role model of the teachers themselves. When pupils in discussion make mistakes they are not ridiculed by others; pupils and the teachers maintain pupils' self-esteem by pointing out the worth in the contributions made. Self-esteem is paramount in teaching styles. When there is misbehaviour, reproof is immediate and effective but still reflects the goodness of the pupil's intention. The teachers lead the offenders to reflect on their own actions.
31. Spiritual and moral provision have a great impact on the very good social provision. They reflect the underlying feeling of care for others, found in the pupil's social attitudes. Skills are developed very successfully through working co-operatively in virtually every subject area and excellently in the team games provided by the school. Here the pupils showed great spirit playing outside in the rain and the wind.
32. The cultural development for the pupils in the school is good and improving. The religious education curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about Islam, Buddha and Buddhism as well as Christianity. In their learning, pupils reflect well on the teachings of the different religions and how they would react to them as members. Through musical appreciation, singing, dance, history and art, pupils are led to appreciate and value a wide range of cultures from different places and periods. In particular there was a splendid display of Victorian life with many contributions from the community. The countries of Ghana and Kenya also play a large part in the school's curriculum this year and pupils will be introduced to Ghanaian dance. An excellent exhibition of textiles and artefacts from Ghana was arranged through partnership with other schools, and makes an

excellent contribution to the pupils' appreciation of creativity and achievement in other cultures. The high quality of teaching in geography and history enables pupils to consider other cultures with a critical understanding of wider issues, and assemblies, for example 'harvest', build this understanding. The pupils' own achievements within their home communities are recognised and celebrated, for example in assemblies.

33. The success of the school's provision for the pupils' personal development is summed up by a pupil's comment, 'One thing about me is, I always try my hardest'. Overall, the curriculum and provision for personal development provide a very secure foundation for learning at secondary school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school provides a very safe and secure environment for its pupils. Indeed one of the first things to be noticed on arriving at the school is the high level of security of the premises; the only entrance being through the front door which is operated by a key pad or which is opened from the inside only once the visitor has been identified. The perimeter of the grounds is also very secure and provides an effective deterrent to intruders. There are emergency exits from all teaching areas, although at present they are not correctly labelled. Fire drills take place each half term. An adequate number and range of fire extinguishers are checked annually. These are strategically placed, as are fire alarms and blankets. All members of staff, and also some parents, have undergone basic first-aid training. There is, however, no dedicated medical room hence minor casualties are usually dealt with in the staff room. Although there are adequate toilet facilities for pupils, some of the cubicles do not have locks and this was a cause for concern raised by pupils. Inspectors also noticed that toilet facilities for adults are rather limited and this could give rise to some minor inconvenience at certain times of the school day. There were no significant health and safety issues observed during the inspection.
35. Overall, the arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The headteacher is the 'responsible person' and although she has had some limited experience in this area she has received no formal training. All staff have been briefed orally on the steps to be taken should they have any concerns over a pupil but there is no written account of this to which they can refer. One action in the school development plan is the production of a staff handbook that would include a summary of these procedures.
36. Pupils are encouraged to develop an independence of mind both in their learning and also in their participation more generally in the life of the school. For example, they are expected to think and act for themselves in lessons, to be able to find things out on their own and to see what needs to be done without being told. Pupils respond very positively to this encouragement, notably in their very good attitudes, behaviour and attendance. It is also clearly apparent in their maturity, which is noticeable even amongst the younger children. Those pupils joining from other schools, including from the private sector, are often taken by surprise by this culture of independence though they rapidly settle to the expectations. Another aspect of the personal development of pupils to which the school has needed to give attention is the provision of male role models in a school in which all staff are female. This has been satisfactorily addressed in a number of ways. For example, a father of one of the pupils runs a football club once a week after school (for both boys and girls), the vicar leads the assembly each Friday, a group of

sixth-form boys from Sherborne School come in as part of their community service programme and the male education liaison officer from the Ernest Cook Trust does project work with pupils twice a term. However, it was observed that when teachers were engaging in 'question and answer' techniques in lessons and assemblies, they sometimes ask girls more often than boys.

Assessment and guidance for pupils

37. The standard of assessment of pupils' work has improved greatly since the previous inspection. There is a very good and comprehensive policy showing full understanding and also the commitment of the staff to assessment. The assessment programme developed by the school is very good because it focuses on individual needs, informs planning and targets areas of weakness. Baseline assessment is used well to arrive at targets in learning for the younger children in the Foundation Stage.
38. At Key Stage 1, staff collect informative portfolios of pupils' work, and through the three top classes pupils complete a 'once a month' book, which shows progression in creative writing throughout their schooling. The teachers make good use of these procedures to set targets for the pupils' work, and pupils enjoy seeing their achievements over time. The pupils also work to targets related to the standardised tests at the end of the key stage.
39. At Key Stage 2 there is also very good provision as pupils have a portfolio of work in which samples of work are entered during each term. The 'once a month' book is a very valuable means of showing progress over time. Pupils use these together with other evidence to set their own targets in consultation with the teacher. In Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils have tests similar to the national tests, and from results in these tests targets for pupils are also set. There is, in addition, a good tracking of progress, including towards targets, on standardised sheets for each pupil from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. This good practice has had a significant and positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress. An assessment task is set at the end of topic work in geography and history and also in religious education. In Year 6, pupils have a very good self-evaluation sheet in information technology. They show their strengths and consider their weaknesses, which the teacher quickly addresses either for a group or individually. The skilled use of assessment benefits pupils with special educational needs. This helps teachers identify problems early, and design support and individual education plans to meet each pupil's needs. An example of this was the excellent support for a pupil with serious learning needs at the Foundation Stage based upon a very perceptive individual plan helping several professionals work as a supportive team, whilst fully involving the family.
40. On-going oral assessment given in the classroom is good but the marking of books lacks sufficient information for the pupils to improve their learning. Where there is some positive direction, pupils take note and reconsider their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Overall, parents have a high regard for the work of the school. In particular they feel that standards are good, pupils are well taught and that the attitudes and values, that the school promotes are excellent. Parents are fulsome in their praise of the current headteacher for the way in which she has improved the school since the previous inspection by raising standards, refurbishing the

premises and putting in place a wide range of policies. In general, inspectors would agree with these positive perceptions of the school. Although parents appreciate the necessity for the security measures that the headteacher has put in place, many feel that the restriction this inevitably puts on their freedom of access has resulted in some 'distance' between them and the staff. Inspectors find that whilst relationships between parents and teachers are reasonably good, they do lack the warmth and closeness that one often finds in primary schools. The partnership between home and school has yet to develop sufficient involvement of parents in their children's learning, and consequently misses opportunities to bring about even higher standards.

42. The school has appropriate procedures in place to keep parents informed about their children's progress and the life of the school. The quality of the information provided is judged to be satisfactory overall. There is an annual written report on each pupil at the end of the school year and these are of a high standard. They give a perceptive analysis of each pupil's strengths, weaknesses and areas for development, correctly record their attendance record and contain a helpful summary table which includes the extra-curricular activities in which they have been involved. Evening meetings take place at regular intervals throughout the year to enable parents and teachers to discuss pupils' progress and parents generally find these useful. The school prospectus is good and the regular newsletters, which are sent home to tell parents about school activities, are well received. However, parents say they would like to be better informed on what their children are doing in school and on current educational practice, in particular what the 'level' and 'key stage' system actually means, so that they are better able to help their children with their work at home. In other areas, communication with parents offers areas for development; for example, the reading record books miss opportunities to build a learning partnership between home and school. Although homework is set, communication of what the pupils are asked to do, why they are set each task, and how parents can help, is not effective. Pupils agree monthly targets, but again these are not effectively communicated to parents. The governors' annual report to parents, although containing much useful and relevant information, does not quite meet the legal requirements in that it omits a comparison of the school's results with the national average. Also, there have been concerns about its style and presentation and inspectors agree that the information needs to be clearer and made easier to understand.
43. There is an active parent-teacher association, which raises considerable sums of money for the school. This is done through a programme of events throughout the year, including a popular sheep race, which are strongly supported by parents and the community. Other types of activity, such as a forum for parents to raise issues, are less successful as such evening meetings tend to be poorly attended. As is often the case, the association is driven by a small group of committed and dedicated parents. Parents make a significant contribution to the educational provision of the school by supplying artefacts for use in lessons. For example, during the inspection an impressive display of Victorian objects was observed in classrooms being used in support of the current history project. Some parents are directly involved in school activities such as football coaching and acting as escorts on school trips. There are only a few parents who help in school during the day, even though both staff and parents say they would like this area of the school's life and work to grow. This way of involving parents in their children's learning offers a significant area for development, since the present situation represents a lost opportunity for the school to take advantage of the wide range of

expertise and experience that exists within the parent body. Overall, the partnership between the school and its parents is judged to be satisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. Staff and governors took time to develop reflectively the school mission statement and, consequently, it has enriched and firmly guided the work and life of the school. This mission statement adds a deep sense of meaning and purpose to the leadership and management of the school and leads to clear aims and values. These are very effectively implemented and create an excellent ethos for learning.
45. The excellent leadership of the headteacher has created a strong team of teachers and assistants that is certain of where it is going, shares good ideas and solutions to problems, and includes everyone in creating clear planning and helpful policies to guide and manage the work of the team. The headteacher has begun to delegate key areas of responsibility, and colleagues have accepted these responsibilities willingly. Overall, subjects are well managed, although some require further development. Step-by-step, policies and procedures are being put in place, with a clear and agreed plan for the next step. Where policies are less useful, the staff recognise they were written in a hurry, but this is rare. The school makes good use of outside experts to enhance its work and evaluate its performance. Overall, the leadership and management of the school have improved very significantly since the previous inspection.
46. The school development plan runs from 1999 to 2002 and, whilst detailed for the current year, provides a sensible outline pattern for the future. It is a secure and effective basis for action, and agrees relevant costs, ways of rigorously monitoring success or failure, realistic time-scales and necessary staff development. It includes targets for pupils' attainment that are prudent predictions, but do not sufficiently reflect the increasing effectiveness of the school. The plan covers all areas of the school's work and maintains development when several years are needed, whilst setting well considered priorities for each year. At present, governors are insufficiently involved in the development and monitoring of this plan.

The governing body

47. The membership of the governing body has changed significantly since the previous inspection. At that time the governing body was judged to have weaknesses in the way it monitored, evaluated and supported the work of the school. There has been development, but not sufficient improvement. Even so, in the main, the governors meet their statutory responsibilities, with the exception of provision for swimming. The remaining weaknesses have continued since the previous inspection, namely, the way governors assess the strengths and weaknesses of the school as the basis for clear planning for the future, for example creating policy for greater involvement of parents in their children's learning. The governors are only just beginning to understand their role in providing a strategic direction for the school. Similarly, they are just starting to understand that their decision-making needs to be based upon the informed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses that comes from their systematic and on-going monitoring and evaluation of standards. The governing body now has a sensible pattern of working parties to oversee the relevant areas of the school's work and their responsibilities, but is only just beginning to arrange for on-going monitoring visits to the school. They have plans to address the need

to create specific policies, in particular those concerning their own role, and then have a review cycle. However, these plans are still at an early stage. They say that training has helped, but that they feel they are still confused and have a great deal to learn. Inspectors agree, but recognise that governors are determined to improve their effectiveness and gain a better understanding of their role. One result of this 'steep learning curve', as a governor described it, is that although there is a supportive relationship between staff and governors, especially as regards the relationship between chairman and headteacher, this overall relationship has yet to build into a sufficiently effective partnership to drive the school forward to even higher standards. Governors and staff have anxieties concerning their respective roles and these anxieties hinder the development of an effective working partnership.

Financial management

48. Overall, the school's management of its financial resources is satisfactory. The finance committee of the governing body sets the budget each year and has a satisfactory understanding of the principles of financial planning. However, an overly prudent approach is adopted to the predicted annual income. For example, it is based on the minimum number of pupils likely to be in the school over the year and no presumption is made of future donations from private sources such as the parent-teacher association and the parochial church councils of the parishes within the catchment area. In the event, these assumptions usually turn out to be pessimistic and hence the school always operates well within its budget. Indeed, it normally runs at a greater than the national average surplus of income over expenditure of about ten per cent. Some of this surplus is allocated to a building fund that the school is accumulating in order to construct a new classroom, which the governors believe, and the inspectors agree, will considerably enhance the school's capability to teach its curriculum effectively. This extremely prudent planning that relates to some uncertainty as to potential and actual changes in revenue, leads inspectors to find the level of surplus at which the school operates reasonable, whilst also finding that governors as a whole do not have sufficient understanding of why it arises and the best objectives for its use. The day-to-day control of expenditure is generally well managed by the headteacher and the school secretary, with best value for money being sought.

49. A few aspects of the school's financial management are not fully satisfactory. Most of them are covered in the recent audit report of June 2000. Many of its twelve recommendations are relatively minor, though nonetheless important, but there are two which the school has not addressed sufficiently. The first is to ensure that accurate and up-to-date information is presented to the governing body for the purpose of budget monitoring. This leads to insufficient involvement by governors in monitoring the budget as opposed to monitoring solely by the headteacher. The second is to adopt the practice of committing expenditure against budget headings at the time that an order is placed so that the likely financial out-turns are more clearly appreciated. With the exception of some members of the finance committee, neither governors nor the senior management are sufficiently conversant with the principles of budget setting. This caused some difficulty in presenting the budget for the current year to the satisfaction of the inspectors, though this was eventually achieved.
50. Governors have innovative ideas as to how to maintain and increase revenue, but this area of planning has yet to be fully developed. Effective and appropriate use is made of specific funds allocated to the school, for example funds to support pupils with special educational needs.

Resources

51. The school has attractive but cramped buildings that have been well developed to provide a stimulating and effective place in which to learn and teach. Good use has been made of inconvenient places, for example for computer work and for a school library, even though the latter is still too small. However, even with these limitations, the buildings, on balance, enhance rather than detract from the pupils' learning. The school grounds are extensive and provide good green areas and hard-play areas, and a well-used wild-life area with a pond. Effective use is made of the surrounding locality, especially through the help of a local trust. However, a hard area adjacent to the Foundation Stage classroom is not put to satisfactory use, for example for children to learn through using large equipment and controlling wheeled vehicles. Similarly, the school swimming pool has been out of use for some time awaiting renovation, and even if renovated would not be an effective resource for school pupils learning to swim. The school has not sufficiently sought other ways of meeting the requirement to teach the pupils to swim. Other than for swimming, one aspect of learning at the Foundation Stage, and resources for design and technology, resources are of adequate and often good range, quantity and quality as a result of prudent planning, and are used effectively to support teaching and learning.
52. The school has adequate teaching and support staff to cover the required curriculum, and they are very effectively deployed. The school has an excellent staff development policy, and this produces well-planned and useful staff development activities. Consequently, staff expertise has improved and continues to improve. Opportunities are created for teachers to support colleagues, but the headteacher has insufficient opportunity to work alongside colleagues, making clear what works and what needs to be improved. Procedures for the appraisal of teachers and for improvements in their performance have been implemented, but are still at a comparatively early stage of development.

Value for money

53. The school's income per pupil is slightly above the national average for primary schools and pupils' attainment on entry is about average. However, the outcomes in terms pupils' progress, behaviour and personal development are so good that overall the school is judged to give very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. Standards overall have improved very significantly since the previous inspection, and the commitment and expertise of staff means the school is very well placed for future improvement. Many aspects of the school's work, for example planning, teaching and assessment are developing well. However, three areas remain that require significant improvement because at their present stage of development they are hindering developments in other areas. What follows should be not be seen in isolation, but as key areas that will enrich and enhance all the other areas of the school's work.

To raise standards further, governors and staff should:

- (1) Improve the way the governors support the continued development of the school by:
 - ensuring they know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school through systematic monitoring and evaluation; (Paragraph 47, 48 and 49)
 - increasing their understanding of their role as governors, for example in forming a clear and long-term direction for the school and in enabling the involvement of parents in their children's learning; (Paragraphs 47, 41 and 46)
 - using this knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and improved understanding of the role of governors to become more closely involved with the school's improvement planning, especially for the longer term; (Paragraphs 41 and 46)
 - using their increased knowledge and understanding to specify more challenging and precise targets and objectives for improvement; (Paragraphs 46 and 47)
 - ensuring that policies that are essential for the smooth and effective running of the school are in place and regularly monitored and reviewed. A first priority should be those policies for which they are directly responsible. (Paragraph 47)

- (2) Increase and improve the ways in which the school involves parents in their children's learning by:
- ensuring that governors and staff formulate plans and policies for developing the involvement of parents more fully in their children's learning;
(Paragraphs 43 and 47)
 - providing more frequent opportunities for discussion between parents and teachers concerning the day-to-day learning of pupils;
(Paragraphs 41 to 43)
 - improving and increasing communication between home and school on what, why and how the pupils learn. This should include clearer information as to homework and targets for pupils, and promote the equally important roles staff and parents need to play;
(Paragraphs 41 to 43)
 - improving communication between home and school as to reading, providing further support for parents concerning ways they can support their children's progress;
(Paragraphs 41 to 43, and 75)
 - increasing opportunities for parents to help with the learning of pupils within the school day.
(Paragraphs 41 to 43)
- (3) Whilst addressing the above areas for improvement, governors and staff should:
- ensure that pupils are taught to swim;
(Paragraph 135)
 - improve planning and resources for design and technology;
(Paragraph 108)
 - increase opportunities for foundation age children to learn through use of large-scale and moving play equipment;
(Paragraph 64)
 - improve aspects of financial management.
(Paragraphs 48 and 49)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons or parts of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
22	29	38	11	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	100
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	21

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	8	13	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	21	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	95 (86)	100 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	19	21	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (93)	100 (93)	95 (93)
	National	84 (82)	87 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Data for boys are not given because the sample size is too small.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	4	7	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils and NC level 4 and above	Total	11	11	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (89)	100 (93)	91 (89)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (77)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (95)	91 (95)	91 (95)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Data for boys and girls separately are not given because the sample size is too small.

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	100
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	181408
Total expenditure	178775
Expenditure per pupil	1843
Balance brought forward from previous year	19445
Balance carried forward to next year	22078

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	100
Number of questionnaires returned	45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	41	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	45	2	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	27	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	29	9	0	6
The teaching is good.	62	36	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	51	9	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	33	9	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	34	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	40	42	16	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	58	33	2	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	47	11	2	11

Other issues raised by parents

- Some parents were concerned whether pupils made steady progress in a school where each class included pupils of different ages.
- Some parents wanted more involvement in their children's education, for example helping in school during the day.
- Some parents wanted the school to explain more fully what the pupils learned.
- Some parents were concerned about the provision for boys, for example the range of sports.

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

55. Provision for the Foundation Stage is very good with many excellent features. Children join the school in the September before their fifth birthday. At first they attend only in the mornings and the teacher perceptively decides when a full day is appropriate. They learn alongside the youngest Year 1 pupils, and this benefits both age groups. When they join the school, the children's attainment range is very wide, but on average it matches the level expected nationally aged four, although children's speaking and listening skills tend to be below average.
56. Teaching is of the highest quality, and this includes close co-operative work with the classroom assistant and outside specialists. The style of teaching creates a firm, extremely challenging and very effective ethos for learning. There is an extremely effective balance between, on the one hand, firmly enforced routines and challenging learning objectives and, on the other, a determination that children think for themselves and learn independence and personal responsibility.
57. Staff plan a rich and extensive range of suitable activities that support the areas of learning and the Early Learning Goals, although present policy and planning do not address the most recent national guidance in detail. Even so, children make very good progress across all the required areas of learning, and at a rate that reflects their individual abilities. This is especially true for children identified as having special educational needs, including those pupils with statements of those needs.
58. The foundation class is accommodated in the older part of the school, but this provides a bright and stimulating place to learn. It has adjacent refurbished toilet areas, and has easy access to the school hall. This link to the main school is an important part of the provision, and allows both for young children to use the facilities and take part in assemblies, and also for older pupils to play a part in caring for the children. There is a hard-play area with easy access from the classroom but it is not used.
59. By the time children move into Year 1, most have exceeded the learning goals for pupils aged six. Particularly strong are their literacy, numeracy, personal and social skills, and these skills form an excellent foundation for future learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Provision for personal development is excellent. The staff create a firm structure of routines within which children feel secure and quickly learn what happens when and where, and why each activity is planned. They learn why certain behaviours are right or wrong, and that behaviour must be fair. Together, these routines build their confidence and their trust in their teachers. This confidence and trust allows staff to build very high independence within these secure routines. Children are expected to find things for themselves, to work at solving problems themselves or with others, and to take responsibility for their actions. It is the perceptive balance of control and freedom that makes the provision so powerful, firm discipline and sense of purpose within a very loving, encouraging and responsive ethos. As a result, children show high confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, they are not only willing to work hard and follow instructions, but also accept the challenges

they are given. They are unafraid to get something wrong but also keen to get things right. Children are encouraged to 'perform', reading their 'news' and rhymes, and showing others what they have made or painted. Learning often moves beyond the classroom to include the social skills needed when playing outside with older pupils. Similarly, pupils discuss the wider world within daily 'news' sessions and these sessions build the children's personal awareness and sense of identity. This social learning is strengthened by role play within the 'make believe' house, and imaginative play growing from music and story telling. This creative and positive ethos for learning allows the teacher to build on the ideas that come bubbling out of the children, and the children's joy and excitement in their achievements are almost tangible. Learning in this class is fun, and helps children enter Year 1 with good social skills and an eagerness to learn more.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Provision for language development is excellent, and closely related to personal development. Speaking and listening are at the core of the provision. Each day starts with 'chart' time and this is usually followed by 'news'. These are times when the teacher, through familiar routines, encourages children to talk about their experiences and the changing days and seasons. This talking and listening leads to lively discussion, where the teacher helps each child not only to express ideas, but also to give examples and justify ideas. The teacher is extremely skilled at using whatever idea a child raises to lead to new learning, and dropping in a problem for the children to solve. These sessions, along with others, lead children to listen intently both to adults and to each other, since they realise each new idea is exciting. They also know that their teacher will check that they have been listening and have thought hard about what they have heard. This rapidly developing speaking and listening leads naturally to reading, and the children take sufficient time to search out with their teachers every exciting and interesting fact from every part of a book, including the cover. They soon learn to love books, and that text has meaning. Teachers use every opportunity to encourage children to suggest the next stage in a story, and what can be discovered by looking at pictures. These newly acquired skills are particularly evident when young children 'pretend' read, and their good speaking skills come through as they make up what they pretend to read. They are taught the sounds of letters; most by five can read simple words, and most by six can read simple texts using the sounds of letters. This good progress in reading is supported by regular and frequent reading with an adult, occasions when children not only read but also discuss what they are reading. Writing skills develop rapidly. Many opportunities are provided for children to learn how to control a pencil and form letters correctly. These are always in context so that the children want to write for a purpose, for example to go with their 'news' pictures, or write a word on the board when discussing matters as a group. By six, most children can write simple sentences and read back what they have written. For almost all children, attainment by six is above national expectations.

Mathematical development

62. Provision for numeracy is excellent. The children from the very start of each day are given opportunities to 'play around' with numbers, counting, putting in order, adding, taking away, identifying odd and even, and which numbers can be grouped in halves. Consequently, children develop a considerable sense of number and several ways of calculating. This confidence with numbers allows children to gain the high-level skill of estimating, a skill not usually expected until children are older. They reinforce this high level of understanding by sorting things by size and shape, and this learning builds naturally into other creative work, for example when playing with sand or liquids, painting or making things. The teacher continually switches from the concrete, for example counting and grouping teddy bears, to the more abstract world of number. She continually poses the questions, 'I wonder if?' and 'I wonder why?'. This encourages children to grapple, and grapple successfully, with high-order number skills. Many children by the time they are six have a developing understanding of tens and units. Attainment by six is well above national expectations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. The provision for learning about and understanding the world is very good. This starts each morning with 'chart and news time'. As the children's language skills are developed, these skills help them understand and describe their wider experiences at home. They gain a sense of place, for example at home, at school and going on holiday, and then practice this understanding by learning the place for activities in the classroom and the school. They begin to gain a sense of time by thinking about what they have done recently and some time ago, and by looking at displays such as a 'toy museum' collected by the Year 1 pupils. Supporting their social learning, they begin to learn about the wider world and cultures, for example through 'harvest festival' assemblies that show that gifts may be different from different places, and why people in different cultures may need different gifts. They learn to design simple toys and artefacts, such as books, and can evaluate designs when they make the objects. Similarly, they use their skills of asking 'what if?' and 'why?' when investigating the natural world, and make simple records of their observations. They use construction toys and equipment sensibly, and are confident users of the computer, for example typing their name. All children meet the learning goals for six-year-olds, and most exceed them.

Physical development

64. Provision for physical development is good, with many very good features. Children are encouraged to move around and move objects while being conscious of others; this encouragement extends beyond the classroom to the rest of the school site. In physical education sessions and games, children learn to control their bodies, jumping, turning, and moving fast and slowly. Using larger equipment, they learn to balance and jump. They are beginning to control, throw and catch a ball. In a lesson that included sound and story, children showed they could move expressively, miming the story and reactions of the characters, including hugging the bear! The questioning style of teaching makes them think about what they are doing, evaluate their performance by watching others, and think about how exercise affects their bodies. An area for development is the use of large-scale equipment and wheeled small vehicles such as tricycles. In this respect, the provision does not provide sufficient opportunity for children to learn

through investigating their ability to use large equipment independently and to control and steer vehicles for a purpose, for example driving along a simulated road. Attainment by six matches the early learning goals for this age.

Creative development

65. Provision is good. The children have many opportunities to explore the world and their imagination through skilful and varied use of paint, textured materials and music. This provision, along with the wider learning through other areas, makes a significant contribution to the children's spiritual development, inspiring a sense of wonder. They are encouraged to do this freely and yet with a concern for performance, product and quality. They are helped to reflect on what they create and see ways to improve. There were many examples of good observational drawings on display, including special displays for their Year 6 helpers. Paintings show a developing understanding of colour and form. This creative learning is set in the context of many opportunities to develop imagination and empathy through story and imaginative play. The attainment of most children is in line with standards expected at six, and several children exceed this standard.

Summary

66. The provision is excellently managed and led, with a very strong sense of team amongst the adults involved. The policy for the Foundation Stage is brief, and does not, as yet, sufficiently address the most recent national guidelines. Teaching is usually very good or excellent, and extremely well planned. Extreme care is taken at the induction stage, and there is a positive relationship with pre-school providers. There is a good relationship with parents, but too few opportunities are provided for them to be involved with their children's learning. Children make very good progress and by the time they are six, their attainment is above the standard expected at that age. The resources for learning are of good quality, but in some areas, for example large play equipment, too restricted in range. Accommodation is adequate and is used effectively.

ENGLISH

67. Provision for English and literacy is very good. Teaching throughout the school is very good. Children join the school aged four with broadly average attainment overall, although their speaking and listening skills tend to be lower than expected nationally. They make a flying start at the Foundation Stage and by the time they are seven their overall attainment is above average. This good progress continues and by the time pupils are eleven their overall attainment is well above average. This represents significant improvement since the previous inspection.
68. In national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 between 1997 and 1999, standards in reading improved but in writing they declined. In 1999, standards of reading matched the average in similar schools but standards of writing were well below the average for similar schools. However, in 2000 all pupils attained the nationally expected level in reading and a third attained the higher Level 3, and almost all pupils attained the expected level in writing and 5 per cent reached the higher Level 3. Attainment in reading was well above the average for similar schools above this average in writing. Overall, results in tests between 1997 and 2000 show an improving trend and a picture overall of attainment that is much higher than the national average, and higher than the average standards in similar

schools. These improved standards are reflected in the work of current pupils, with significant further improvement, especially in writing.

69. In national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 between 1997 and 1999 attainment overall in English improved significantly, and attainment in 1999 equalled that in the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally and was well above the average for similar schools. There was further improvement in 2000, and all pupils attained at least the expected level, and almost half the pupils attained the higher Level 5. This very high attainment reflects the very high standards seen in the current Year 6, with evidence of further improvement in speaking, listening and creative writing.
70. These results show that pupils make very good progress throughout the school. They join the school with attainment that is slightly below the national average and leave aged eleven with very high attainment. A feature of this good progress is the relative performance of each level of ability. The most able pupils forge ahead, and there are pupils aged 10 who are already attaining the higher than expected Level 5 for eleven-year-olds, and promise to reach the very high Level 6. Pupils aged ten of average ability are already close to the expected level for eleven-year-olds and seem set to achieve the higher Level 5. Those of below average ability, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and make good progress. Almost all are attaining the level expected of their age. Boys and girls do equally well, including those with special educational needs.
71. This good learning results from very effective teaching throughout the school. In the reception and Year 1 class, the teaching demands that pupils listen carefully and think out for themselves the meaning of what they hear. They become good listeners. In the Year 1 and 2 class, this probing and challenging approach continues, and pupils by the age of seven are intense listeners, realising why this is how they learn. In Years 3 and 4, whatever the subject, teachers use a form of language that explains things clearly and checks continually that pupils have not only heard, but also understood. By this time, pupils have learned to check their own understanding, and if in doubt they ask or discuss the topic with a neighbour. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have gained the very good skills of listening, not only to their teacher but also to each other, skills that allow instant understanding and very productive discussions, for example concerning the various ways Pliny and Tacitus reported the last hours of Pompeii.
72. These high listening skills support the development of equally good speaking skills. In the reception and Year 1 class, even very young pupils are required to speak clearly and encouraged to speak confidently. They are helped to explain their answers and give examples. This approach is at the heart of all the teaching. Consequently, pupils move into the Year 1 and 2 class with very well developed speaking skills. By the time pupils are seven, they speak confidently and at length. They do not simply respond, but take a full part in discussions, asking questions and trying out ideas. Their careful listening begins to draw together ideas they have heard, and helps them make spoken contributions that bring these together as an coherent report. They often use this overview as the foundation for new ideas. These speaking skills grow and flower at Key Stage 2, particularly through the in-depth discussion in other subjects such as history and geography. By the time pupils are eleven their speaking and listening skills are very high overall. In discussion, these pupils show they not only enjoy listening to others and making their own contribution, but have also grasped that productive conversation is a very important activity.

73. Standards of writing are good throughout the school, and very good by the time pupils are eleven. As with speaking and listening, these high standards owe much to the way teachers throughout the school encourage pupils to use language creatively to find solutions and to analyse, explore and express ideas. In the reception and Year 1 class, pupils learn to form letters accurately and are soon forming these letters into words and in some cases simple sentences. Even at this age, teachers encourage the pupils to use their writing for a purpose. By the time pupils are seven, all can write at length and for a variety of purposes, for example stories, reports and descriptions of simple scientific experiments. The most able pupils write cursively, and are beginning to form a personal style, whilst most pupils are beginning to write cursively. Pupils write at length, using well-constructed sentences that link together and are sensibly, if not always correctly, punctuated. Spelling is rarely arbitrary, and if wrong, words are spelt phonetically. Pupils know how to use dictionaries and word-cards to check spelling and do so. At Key Stage 2, writing skills develop rapidly, and by the time pupils are eleven all pupils are confident and extensive writers. They write in a well-developed style, and for a good range of purposes and audiences, for example detailed reports, newspaper articles, stories and poetry of beauty and moving power. By the time they are eleven, the most able pupils are writing to a standard expected of pupils aged 14, most are writing to a standard expected when they are 13, and all achieve at least the standard expected of their actual age, namely eleven. Word-processing using computers is beginning to play a positive part in developing this creative and purposeful writing.
74. Standards of reading are at least satisfactory and usually above this standard throughout the school. In the reception and Year 1 class, pupils recognise that books are important and learn very quickly that text provides meaning. They have gained a joy in reading. They soon learn that stories have a sequence, and begin to talk about character and plot. The more able can suggest the way stories might end and why things happen. By the time pupils are seven, most reach the expected standard and about one third read at a higher level. By the time pupils are eleven most are confident readers, and almost a third can read texts more difficult than usually expected of that age. Although the more able readers have various strategies to understand new words, the pupils of average and below average ability tend not have sufficient strategies. Therefore, these pupils often pass over words they do not understand, and lose the power and richness in the text. Pupils' ability to find information from libraries and books develops satisfactorily as they move through the school, but by the time they are eleven few have skills higher than expected for their age. At each stage, pupils read a satisfactory range of texts and books in class, but this tends not to extend to their private reading, even though many use both the school and public libraries.
75. The overall picture is of a strong learning chain between listening, speaking, writing and reading, with reading a sound rather than strong link. Investigation of teachers' planning and discussion with pupils suggests this comparative weakness in reading is for the following reasons. Pupils throughout the school have insufficient opportunities to read to another person and discuss what they read. The reading record books provide insufficient opportunity for comment by teacher and parent and, for older pupils, the pupils' own comments, and therefore misses important opportunities to build the learning partnership between home and school. The overall planning insufficiently guides the reading of each pupil to select an appropriate but ever widening range of text and books of increasing maturity.

76. Teaching is very good throughout the school, and the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very effectively. All the lessons observed were at least satisfactorily taught, almost 90 per cent were taught well or better, and over half were taught very well or excellently. When teaching was only satisfactory, the objectives of the lesson were not clearly focused in the planning, and this lack of clarity led to confusion in the minds of some pupils. When teaching was excellent, the aims were extremely clearly expressed and, therefore, each pupil knew what they needed to achieve and why. A feature of these very effective lessons is the way the teachers use language to make the pupils think for themselves and to use in their own work the examples provided by the teacher. Teachers orally help pupils understand why they succeed or meet problems and what they need to learn next, but written comments too often miss opportunities to be equally helpful. Accurate and detailed assessment allows teachers to track the progress of each pupil and adapt teaching and learning targets when necessary. This careful assessment of pupils' progress leads to very good individual action plans for pupils with special educational needs and focused support from classroom assistants. Homework is set, but has yet to become a sufficiently powerful way of extending the pupils' language skills.
77. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their language learning and their behaviour is very good. The creative nature of their speaking and writing makes a significant contribution to their personal development and written work shows care and pride in achievement.
78. The subject is well led and managed, but the co-ordinator has yet to monitor standards of teaching rigorously, feeding back to colleagues what works very well and what does not. There are helpful policies and a sensible scheme of work, although the policy for reading is not sufficiently developed. Resources for learning are accessible, of good quality and range, and adequate quantity. However, the library is rather cramped and this restricts its use. Pupils, both orally and in their written work, show considerable pride and care, and relationships between teachers and pupils, and amongst pupils, are excellent.

MATHEMATICS

79. Provision for mathematics is very good. Standards of attainment in mathematics are very good overall, and provision has improved since the previous inspection. The results of national tests for seven-year-olds in 1999 show the numbers of pupils reaching the required standards in mathematics as well above the national average with over one third of pupils reaching the higher level. There was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. These results were broadly in line with other schools with a similar intake, although at Trent Young's school more pupils achieved the higher level than in comparable schools. Since 1996, the school's results have been consistently above the national average but the results in 1999 represented a significant improvement on previous performance. The school's results in 2000 continued this upward trend with all pupils reaching the nationally expected level and a third of them exceeding it. This represents attainment that matches the performance in the top five per cent of all schools nationally, and well above the average for similar schools.
80. The results of national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999 show the numbers of pupils reaching the required standards in mathematics as well above the national average, with one third of pupils reaching the higher level. Again there was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. These results were broadly in line with other schools with a similar intake. In the national tests in 2000, all eleven-year-old pupils reached the nationally expected level and half of them exceeded it. This again represents attainment equivalent to the top five per cent of all schools nationally, and above the average in similar schools.
81. Evidence gathered during the inspection confirms that standards of numeracy are very high and that pupils' understanding of number concepts and their application is generally secure across the curriculum. Children enter the school with broadly average attainment in mathematics, although there is a wide spread of achievement. From the first few weeks in the foundation year onwards they make rapid progress and there is a continuing improvement in pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills as they move through the school.
82. Within a few weeks of starting the school year, the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are already working at the expected standard for seven-year-olds in certain aspects of number work. They have a good understanding of place value and can confidently add numbers to 50, using a variety of methods. All pupils are learning how to develop their own strategies for solving mental number problems. A few pupils, however, are still dependent on a range of apparatus, such as number lines, counters and linking cubes to support their learning.
83. Pupils in Year 3 confidently double numbers, identify odd and even numbers, and begin to generalise theories from the patterns times-tables make on a hundred square. Pupils in Year 4 can identify the sequence of numbers in different number series and the more able can extend the sequence into negative numbers. By Year 5, mastery of basic number skills is sound, although some pupils do not have a secure, quick recall of times-tables facts. By Year 6, most pupils are beginning to solve multi-stage number problems expressed in words. The more able pupils are already confident in identifying which processes to use and have secure strategies for checking their answers.

84. Throughout the school the quality of presentation in mathematics books is very good. This reflects the high expectations teachers have and the pride pupils take in producing work of a high standard. Pupils are encouraged to organise their work accurately and think through problems logically, explaining their reasoning at each stage. From the foundation year onwards, pupils are encouraged to be independent learners. Pupils are provided with the resources and support to develop their mathematical knowledge but equally they are taught how to learn, how to structure their thinking and how to evaluate their own performance.
85. The quality of mathematics teaching was good or very good in two thirds of lessons seen and never less than satisfactory. The best lessons were those where teachers managed to provide equally challenging and interesting tasks for the different age groups and abilities within the class. In all classes, a variety of activities ensures that tasks are precisely focused and targeted specifically to the needs of different groups of pupils, but occasionally activities are not equally demanding, interesting or meaningful for both age groups. The pace of most lessons was brisk and purposeful, but on occasions the introduction was too lengthy and pupils lost concentration. This effective teaching helps pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, to make good and often very good progress.
86. Effective assessment procedures underpin the successful teaching. Teachers have spent a considerable amount of time devising regular termly assessments, covering separate mathematical areas. Once results of these tests are analysed, individual pupil targets are set. More general difficulties indicate areas requiring an increased teaching focus. Planning is continuously adapted in the light of on-going assessment and teachers are constantly reflecting on and refining their practice.
87. There is little indication in pupils' books of the context of the work or of exactly how pupils succeed or meet problems. Although there is good oral feedback to pupils, marking insufficiently indicates how successfully pupils are achieving their individual targets or how they may improve. The school is developing an effective system for the tracking of individual pupils in specific areas of mathematics.
88. The headteacher co-ordinates mathematics very effectively and has monitored the teaching of the subject through lesson observations and work sampling.

SCIENCE

89. Provision for science is satisfactory with many good features. Teachers' assessments for attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. These assessments show a significant drop in attainment since the previous inspection. However during the present inspection pupils' attainment was judged to be above average at Key Stage 1, and this improvement is born out by national assessments for 2000.

90. Standards in science in standardised tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 were well above the national average. Eighty-nine per cent of pupils reached Level 4 or above. Attainment at the expected Level 4 was broadly in line with the average for similar schools but slightly below average at the higher Level 5. In year 2000, attainment shows improvement at 91 per cent at Level 4 or above. This standard is above the average for all schools nationally, and just below the average for similar schools. The school has maintained its high level of attainment at eleven since the previous inspection.
91. Current pupils of low, high and average ability in Key Stage 1 make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good and often very good progress. Pupils as a whole make good investigations on the forces of pulling and pushing. One group is carefully comparing the effect of the wind pushing boats that they have made. Other groups of pupils are measuring accurately the distance travelled by toy cars when pulled by gravity down a ramp set at differing heights. They understand the need for fair testing by making one change in the experiment. Pupils also record their findings clearly on a simplified table showing height and distance travelled. They have been making good observations on animals and plants in the locality and show satisfactory understanding that materials can change in shape temporarily or permanently.
92. The earlier years in Key Stage 2 are pursuing a comprehensive study of materials and their properties, which includes some investigative work on the conduction of heat and electricity. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are currently investigating the properties of solids, liquids and gases and show a good understanding of the differences found in these phases. The pupils, in discovering how much air is contained in different solids, come to good conclusions and record their findings in many ways including graphs, bar charts and tables. Pupils have also participated in numerous experiments including some on forces and gravity, electrical circuits, sound and soundproofing and the changing of pitch. Because the teaching is well matched to the ability and age of each pupil, pupils of low, average, and high ability, and those with special educational needs, make at least good progress.
93. The learning of the pupils as a whole benefits significantly from their sound mathematical skills and especially from their good literacy skills in speaking, listening and writing. In the latter, the pupils produce written work of a very high standard.
94. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is very good and teachers are very secure in their own subject knowledge with regard to all aspects of teaching science. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection where teaching was considered only as satisfactory. The good quality learning reflects the very good teaching that inspires the pupils' high level of commitment and a great interest in the experiments. A significant teaching strength lies in the promotion of investigative work to which the pupils respond very purposefully. Pupils make very good progress in lessons and good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and receive appropriate support when it is needed, and the most able pupils are appropriately challenged.
95. Due to the timetabling at the school, it was not possible to see any science teaching at Key Stage 2 during the inspection. However an analysis of the pupils' work and discussions both with the teachers and the pupils, show that the quality of teaching is at least good overall. Teaching for the greater part promotes the

good learning through challenging investigation and scientific enquiry. Pupils of all levels of ability rise successfully to the challenge. Their natural curiosity enhances an already very good attitude and commitment to the subject. This is mirrored in the presentation of work, which is mainly detailed. Pupils write up conclusions drawn from their investigations very well, they record clearly their results using line and bar graphs. Pupils also show that they are able to interpret critically data from these graphs. Progress over time is good and progress for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

96. Science contributes well to the pupils' personal development. It satisfies their curiosity, and pupils learn to value others' ideas and efforts. It enables them to work co-operatively in groups where they give mutual support. This was noted particularly during an investigation where pupils ensured that each one in the group played a full part and shared in the experiment.
97. The co-ordination of science is effective. There is a good new policy, updated in September 2000, and the curriculum and scheme of work are very rich in content giving pupils full access to the National Curriculum requirements. The co-ordinator has a scientific background and takes good advantage of in-service training when it is possible. She relays ideas and information to the staff. She attends the meetings of a pyramid liaison group regularly, and gathers useful information from appropriate professional bodies. Procedures for assessment are very good. These procedures reflect the school's policy, and what they tell teachers is just beginning to build into improvements in teaching. The co-ordinator does not yet monitor the teaching of science in the school and therefore misses opportunities to identify ways to generate further improvement. Accommodation is satisfactory but great care has to be taken in the most senior class during experiments, as there is very little room. There is a small but very orderly cupboard for science apparatus. Resources are satisfactory and teachers add to them by bringing in items which they might require for specific topic.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Provision for art and design is good, and standards have improved since the previous inspection. By the age of seven, pupils' attainments in art generally reach national expectations and by the age of eleven many pupils exceed national standards. The school allocates a generous amount of time to art within the constraints of the present curriculum. Although much of the art work is linked to other curriculum areas, particularly history, an appropriate emphasis on the development of essential skills is maintained. Equally, pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of artists and different artistic genres is given sufficient focus. This good provision leads to good progress, and pupils become skilled and self-evaluating young artists.
99. The work of the pupils shows that standards improve as pupils move through the school. Most pupils attain the expected standards for seven-year-olds and exceed those expected for eleven-year-olds. Pupils of low, average and high ability make equally good progress, as do pupils with special educational needs. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use the Gainsborough portrait of Mr and Mrs Andrews as a stimulus for reflective drawings of themselves, set imaginatively in the context of their toys, pets and interests. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit the village church and complete detailed drawings of window tracery and stonework. Paper silhouette work links closely to the history topic on the Victorian era. Older pupils have

looked critically at Monet's pictures of his Giverny garden and painted pictures of high quality in a similar style. They follow this up with research on the Internet into Monet's life. In connection with a geography topic on the Polar Regions, they are creating innovative batik pictures of arctic animals.

100. The provision for art and design makes a significant contribution to the pupils' cultural development. Outside expertise is occasionally used to extend the range of pupils' experiences. The Dorset art advisor has recently led an art day for the older pupils, which focused on three-dimensional work. A cluster of small Dorset schools is arranging for a visit with a Ghanaian arts focus, which includes textiles, fabrics, pottery and basketwork. This will culminate in a combined exhibition of pupils' work in Sherborne.
101. A lesson was observed in each key stage during the inspection and with analysis of teachers' planning and the pupils' current work, these show that teaching throughout the school is at least satisfactory and often good.
102. At present there is no policy or scheme of work. The successful development of pupils' skills is fortuitous rather than planned and says much for the degree of staff co-operation and teamwork. The co-ordinator is only in school for two days each week and has limited opportunities for supporting colleagues or for monitoring and refining existing practice. There are as yet no assessment procedures in place for art and no portfolio of moderated work to give guidance on expected standards. Therefore, planning is insufficiently developed to assure future success.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Provision is satisfactory with good features but there are significant areas for development. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in line with the national expectation. The quality of a lesson observed indicates that there is considerable improvement in attainment since the last inspection, which judged attainment to be below national expectations. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 2 but overall planning indicates good coverage of the subject with a clear understanding of its requirements. Attainment is judged to be at least satisfactory.
104. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress at both key stages. Pupils at Key Stage 1 were designing and making boats and offered good suggestions on how the wind might make them move by pushing them along. The pupils suggested sails and then sensibly worked out how the sail could be fixed securely to the boat. They drew some clear preliminary sketches and produced a wide variety of boats with sails of different size. The pupils rigorously tested their boats the following day and judged the quality of the boats in the wind. The pupils were scrupulous in their evaluations and carefully considered ways of improving the models to make them more mobile.
105. The quality of teaching and learning was very good. A significant improvement has been made since the previous inspection where teachers were found to be insecure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The planning of the lesson showed clear objectives and the pupils understood that they had to explain the choices they made in selecting materials. The planning of the teaching includes a strong element of cross-curricular planning, for example with science

concerning the force of the wind. Pupils made very good progress in learning about the stages required in design and technology.

106. Design and technology in this school contributes strongly to the personal development of the pupils by raising their self-esteem in designing and making something that works. It is also a good means of developing independent learning. It offers considerable scope for social development, as pupils are encouraged to work together on a particular project and share ideas, material and equipment. Teachers use the subject effectively as a good vehicle for teaching pupils to respect and appraise each other's artefacts.
107. The co-ordination of the subject is just satisfactory because of good knowledge and understanding of the subject found in the school that leads to effective teaching and learning. However, there is no policy indicating the subject's objectives and there is no detailed scheme of work for the subject in the two-year rolling programme for all subjects. This programme does show adequate coverage and planning for the steady acquisition of skills, and planning includes using design and technology for cross-curricular purposes. There is a very good extra-curricular cookery club that promotes effective and applied technological learning. The very good displays around the school, such as the toy museum and the Victorian display, are used to promote an understanding of design and technology in the school. Assessment is satisfactory and follows the school's guidelines. Accommodation is satisfactory but resources are unsatisfactory with, in particular, a lack of sufficient tools.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Provision for geography is good. By seven pupils at least match attainment expected for their age. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment exceeds national expectations. The school maintains a strong focus on geography and the subject is given a generous time allocation within the constraints of the present curriculum. The subject is taught well. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
109. Pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make good and sometimes very good progress. As well as a specific topic focus, an on-going strand of mapping skills is effectively developed. Pupils' independent research skills are well developed through topic work. Older pupils use the school library and the Internet regularly and with confidence. A rolling programme of topics ensures that pupils in mixed-age classes do not cover the same work in successive years. Good use is made of the immediate locality and a representative of the Ernest Cook Trust takes parties of pupils to local farms and develops their appreciation and understanding of environmental issues in the area. A trust has also helped to fund a visit to the coast at Studland Bay, and pupils speak of this opportunity with enthusiasm. A good feature of the teaching and learning is the way learning in one area enriches other areas, for example numeracy supports work in mapping, and knowledge of volcanoes enriches creative writing in Years 5 and 6. Writing and discussion in this subject use and also effectively develop language skills.
110. The school is aware of the need to develop assessment procedures in geography. At present, there is no monitoring of teaching through lesson observations and work sampling, although the progressive development of knowledge and skills is ensured through teachers' planning. Teachers generally

display a good knowledge of and enthusiasm for geography and these have helped to maintain the subject's high profile in the school. The teachers' enthusiasm has frequently resulted in the provision of extra resources beyond the school budget.

111. Pupils work with concentration and interest and the teachers' enthusiasm is mirrored in the pupils' own attitudes.

HISTORY

112. Provision for history is good. By the end of each key stage, pupils' attainments at least match national expectations, and a significant proportion of pupils aged eleven exceed them. Pupils of all levels of ability make good progress, including those with special educational needs. Teaching is good and the curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
113. Staff plan each history topic in ways that not only cover the specific historical aspects in considerable richness and detail, but also relate the learning to other areas such as art, design and technology and creative writing. This approach enables good progress by pupils and rich and varied learning. At the time of the inspection, pupils at Key Stage 1 were studying the events of the Armada and the Gunpowder Plot. The teaching focused effectively on developing the pupils' understanding of changing events over time and in various places. The pupils effectively investigated these events in visual terms and through writing. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have already gained a good understanding of how people in Victorian times changed the way they lived, how new industrial practices influenced towns and how innovations in transport had revolutionised the way people travelled. In a lesson observed, the teacher perceptively helped pupils use census returns to investigate in depth the village of Trent in Victorian times. Pupils were highly successful when analysing this data, creating hypotheses, and answering very challenging questions. This learning showed not only very high attainment but also previously rapid and secure progress. In Years 5 and 6, pupils used their very good historical knowledge and understanding to write creatively about the last days of Pompeii. Their discussions and writing showed deep understanding of the historical events, a good sense of historical period, and a high ability to imagine what it was like to be there in the past.
114. The teaching at both key stages is at least good, and usually very good. This effective teaching is based upon secure subject knowledge and understanding and individual enthusiasm for the subject. This enthusiasm and reflective curiosity transfers to the pupils and drives them to gain the skills of sifting evidence to give meaning to what they learn. The power of the teaching has several strengths. Teachers use language in ways that support critical thinking by posing challenging historical questions. Teachers start each lesson by ensuring these questions are understood and finish the lesson by discussing with the class how well they have been answered. The teaching is carefully planned and delivered in ways that effectively meet the learning needs of each age and each level of ability, including pupils with special education needs. The pupils' strong literacy skills support good learning in history, and are also extended by the effective teaching.
115. The subject is well led and managed, and documentation provides good support for colleagues. At present the co-ordinator has insufficient opportunity to work

alongside colleagues, identifying what works and what needs to be improved. Assessment is at an early stage of development and, therefore, teaching and learning are too dependent on the intrinsic skills of the teacher. Orally, teachers help pupils understand why they succeed or meet problems but marking rarely provides these helpful comments. Resources are adequate and enhanced by the teachers themselves, including through their use of local resource centres. Good use is made of the local community and the visits further afield, and the subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Provision for information technology is good and improving. Improvement in provision and standards at both key stages since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and in some aspects good. Attainment in information technology by the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national expectations. There is still limited access to computers at this stage but there is a much greater understanding of the benefits of this area of learning since the previous inspection. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national expectation. There has been a good improvement in provision since the last inspection; for example, new CD-ROM computers with the necessary connections are available in all the classrooms. These improvements in provision are well placed to enhance attainment in both key stages.
117. At the Foundation Stage, children's awareness of the computer is raised effectively and they are learning the skills of word processing by writing their names. Children use painting programs well and show good control of the mouse. They make good use of the CD for their reading scheme. The teachers give them a good introduction to the floor turtle and the children use the tape recorder well.
118. Pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory or, usually, good progress at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop the skills already learned in the foundation class, and begin to store and retrieve information on the computer. They confidently write sentences and short stories. The pupils sensibly use a simple database to put in their own information. During the inspection they had good learning experiences in programming and controlling the 'Roamer'.
119. At Key Stage 2, the pupils use the computers in many ways to enhance their learning. They do so with growing confidence and skill. During the inspection, some pupils were accessing the Internet researching for information on their topic and others were using the electronic encyclopaedia for the same purpose. Pupils were also producing highly attractive illustrated poems. A very supportive computer consultant is working with the pupils to produce a school website.
120. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory with many good features. There is some very good teaching where pupils clearly understand that information technology is a tool to be used to pose questions, communicate through word processing or e-mail, and control and model the environment to help solve problems and find solutions to design questions. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs for whom the computer is a boon in the development of their learning.

121. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Information technology enhances pupils' confidence and prepares them for the ever-increasing technological world; this learning relates strongly to the aims of the school. Pupils learn to work co-operatively together and share both expertise and information. The way in which teachers use information technology to help pupils to develop as thinking and aware people is a particularly good aspect of provision.
122. The co-ordination of information technology is very good. An excellent policy backed up by a comprehensive scheme of work gives the pupils full access to the curriculum and is an explicit guide to the staff. The co-ordinator has been on a number of courses and shares her expertise with other members of staff. The assessment of pupils' work is very good. Pupils throughout the school have tracking documents, which indicate skills covered and learned. They keep these in their work profiles. In Year 6, the pupils have self-evaluation sheets that highlight success and show both the teachers and pupils where difficulties lie. Hence the teacher can plan accordingly either for individuals or groups. The co-ordinator monitors the provision of information technology in the school and keeps abreast with progress. Though accommodation is unsatisfactory due to lack of space, the staff make very good use of the space that is available. Resources are good and growing.

MUSIC

123. Provision for music is satisfactory with good features. Good use of specialist teaching has enabled music to maintain a strong profile in the school. The need for a policy and scheme of work has been addressed since the last inspection.
124. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection but pupils' attainment would appear to be at least in line with national expectations, with some pupils exceeding them. Pupils of all levels of ability make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well; for example, a pupil with significant hearing difficulties was helped by pupils and teacher to enjoy and gain from a lesson involving music and movement. By the age of seven, pupils are familiar with conventional notation and can interpret simple rhythms using their voices, movement and simple percussion instruments. They perform confidently to a small audience and use instruments with care and skill. This good attainment in Key Stage 1 is built upon successfully and, by the age of eleven, pupils have a good grounding in composition and performance. The school actively develops appreciation of a wide variety of different musical styles, including music from a range of different cultures.
125. Standards of singing in assembly are high. Singing practices include exercises in correct breathing and diction and pupils sing enthusiastically and tunefully. A number of pupils benefit from peripatetic instrumental tuition and regularly perform in assemblies. Pupils also have the opportunity to join a regular recorder group.
126. Assessment strategies are being developed. Notes are made following each lesson of the achievements of individual pupils. This informs the grouping of pupils and extension tasks are provided for the more able musicians.
127. The music co-ordinator provides a good level of expertise and enthusiasm, which extends well beyond the one day a week that she is in school. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural and social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Provision for physical education is very good. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations, which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is very good overall with particularly good achievements in games. This shows a good improvement since the last inspection where the standard was judged as satisfactory.
129. Pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make at least good and usually very good progress at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils work well when rolling a ball in pairs and show satisfactory skills in aiming the ball. When rolling quoits, success is more problematical as these require more skill to control them, but the pupils show good application and study their movements carefully. They play well in team games showing a sporting attitude and they give good support to each other. The pupils are aware of safety procedures and show very good physical self-control when running around in the very small hall and they avoid any collisions.
130. At Key Stage 2 in gymnastics pupils make good suggestions for a combination of jumps leading to a finished sequence. The wide variety of jumps includes hops, step-jumps and different ways of landing. They move very carefully around the hall quite swiftly but without bumping into anyone else showing good self-control. Pupils move effectively from one exercise to the next and they show good imaginative movements. The pupils work very well in pairs, suggesting how their partners might improve their performance.
131. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show a good understanding of the terms such as 'axis' and 'levels' and produce some high quality sequences of jumps and balance. The balances are very varied and these are moved into with graceful motion both from boys and girls. There are a number of gifted pupils who are able to work at their own high level of attainment. Pupils are exceptionally good at perfecting and learning outdoor games. At netball they show very good positional play and also mark each other well. Passing is generally accurate and pupils are growing in the skill of stopping still immediately on catching the ball. When playing tag-rugby, the pupils show skills of jinking and understand very well the need to support the player with the ball. What is most impressive is their hearty commitment to their sporting activities, playing on happily through driving rain and wind.
132. The quality of teaching in physical education is a real strength in the school. A third was good, one sixth very good and half was excellent. The excellent teaching was exemplified by a deep knowledge of the subject and a very enthusiastic approach, which fired pupils to the highest learning commitment. The other lessons mirrored this approach in varying degrees. The pupils showed that they did not just 'do' physical education they wanted to 'learn' it. There is very good planning of lessons throughout the school, and the long-term planning shows that pupils have very wide and interesting opportunities. Where there is specific need, as in the case of one pupil, teachers ensure that all directions are clearly understood. Pupils of all abilities and ages show the most positive attitude in the many areas offered to them, thus their progress is very good overall.
133. Physical education makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development. Pupils realise the need for sportsmanship to enjoy fully competitive sport and that rules are a necessity for games to be balanced and well run. There is very good provision for pupils to act responsibly and independently. In team

games, pupils come to value others' efforts, which enhances individuals' self-esteem and builds up trust in the group. Pupils express their cultural learning in the body movement and rhythm of dance, both of their own heritage and that of other countries.

134. Co-ordination is very effective and the co-ordinator leads a team of very keen teachers. A very skilled specialist teacher is available on a supply basis. There is a newly updated policy due to the adoption of the 'Top Sport' scheme. The scheme of work has very clear aims and emphasises the need for pupils to know about the changes to the body as they exercise. Unfortunately the swimming pool is now out of commission as it has become too costly to maintain and is in a very poor state of repair. Even if renovated it would not be a satisfactory resource for teaching pupils to swim. The school does not meet its statutory responsibility to teach pupils to swim.
135. The subject enhances the pupils' listening skills, which they clearly relate to their subsequent performances. Pupils are assessed through teachers' observations, which are then recorded. Pupils also evaluate their own and others' performances. The co-ordinator does not monitor the teaching of other teachers. The school is very conscious of the need to balance the curriculum so that boys' games are offered throughout the year. The school experiences great difficulty in raising sufficient numbers to make up teams for external competitions so that the pupils can compete with some hope of success. However, touch-rugby has been introduced within the school day and there are good extra-curricular opportunities, which include football, run by a parent, and summer coaching in cricket given by a member of the county club. The school also has strength in its athletic provision and it runs the 5 Star Award scheme. Within the school, all games are open to both girls and boys. Further after-school activities include netball and rounders. There is also a walking club. Accommodation in the hall is cramped and there is no storage space for the large apparatus. There are good hard and green playing areas. The pitches on the hard areas need to be remarked. The school is well stocked for apparatus, much of which is fairly new.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. Religious education is inspected under Section 23. Present provision meets statutory requirements.