

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ALL SAINTS C OF E SCHOOL**

Dulverton

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123754

Headteacher: Mr Charles Pope

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Baxter  
25217

Dates of inspection: 9-12 October 2000

Inspection number: 225015

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 3-9  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Fishers Mead  
Dulverton  
Somerset

Postcode: TA22 9EE

Telephone number: 01398-323231

Fax number: 01398-323231

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr John Organ

Date of previous inspection: May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Baxter 25217	Registered inspector	Under-fives Special educational needs Mathematics Geography Music Physical education Religious education	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Frances Hurd 9487	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Christopher Shaw 18638	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and Communications Technology Science	
Stephanie Matthews 13122	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English Art History	How well are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Associates Ltd.  
Education Consultants  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester, Dorset  
DT2 9PU

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

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a small voluntary controlled Church of England co-educational first school for pupils aged between three and nine years. It has 99 full-time pupils of whom 47 are boys and 52 girls. The school has its own nursery department which accommodates 41 children attending on a part-time basis. Most pupils travel to school by cars or buses and several pupils travel significant distances to reach the school. Generally, pupils come from a mix of social backgrounds that is broadly average in socio-economic terms. Some come from remote rural locations where opportunities to develop social and language skills are restricted. There are 18 pupils with special educational needs attending the school representing a proportion below that found nationally. No pupils come from homes where English is an additional language or from ethnic minority backgrounds. Less than three per cent of the pupils are registered as eligible for free school meals, and this is low in relation to the national average. Taken together, the attainments of the children on entry to full-time education are slightly below those found nationally. The school moved into brand new purpose-built premises earlier this year.

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

All Saints is a good school. It has improved its commitment to improving pupils' achievement even though it has been faced with a falling roll and moving into brand new accommodation. Results in national tests have improved this year despite a proportion of the pupils having significant learning difficulties. There is an increasing and effective determination to raise standards. The excellent ethos of the school sustains a warm and enriching learning environment and the school now provides good value for money.

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

- The school has an excellent ethos for learning strongly promoted by the very good relationships enjoyed by pupils and staff and supported very positively by members of the local community.
- In response to the high proportion of good and very good teaching, most pupils achieve well, both academically and socially, in relation to their prior attainment as they move through the school.
- The headteacher leads by example and promotes a strong educational direction; aims and values are shared fully by all those involved with the school, as a result there is a very purposeful commitment to improvement and pupils' achievement.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and all pupils, including those with higher attainments, are taught and learn well.
- Provision for children under five in the nursery and in the reception class is very good.
- The new purpose-built accommodation is very good overall and is used with improving effectiveness to support the pupils' learning.

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

- Standards in religious education in Key Stage 2, particularly the pupils' knowledge and awareness of other religious belief are below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Although assessment has been improved in English, mathematics and science, there are still weaknesses in the use of assessment, particularly in foundation subjects, to inform future teaching and learning.
- The wider cultural development of the pupils is unsatisfactory and pupils are insufficiently prepared for life in a multi-cultural society.

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

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

Given the substantial changes experienced by the staff and pupils over the past year, the school has done remarkably well and has made good improvement since the last inspection. Governors have improved their strategies for monitoring the effectiveness of the school and the provision for potentially higher attaining pupils has been strengthened. Significant improvements have been made to the planned curriculum, particularly the ongoing implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies and improved lesson planning. Compared to the previous inspection, the percentage of good and very

good teaching has increased and in response, a greater proportion of pupils are now making good and increasingly better progress and are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment as they move through the school. Standards have improved significantly in mathematics and they have generally been maintained well in all other subjects, except religious education in Key Stage 2. Overall, the school is well placed to continue this improvement in the future.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	E	E	C	E
Writing	D	C	D	E
Mathematics	B	D	C	D

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

Comparisons with the performance of pupils in similar schools in England represent hard judgements, and should be treated with caution. Whilst they bear due regard to the proportion of pupils registered as eligible for free school meals, they do not fully reflect the degree of pupils' specific learning needs or the fluctuating and small numbers of pupils in each year group at this school. **Nevertheless, the results of this year's national tests and teachers' assessments show an improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels, especially in mathematics where standards are higher than those achieved in similar schools.** Taking the pupils' performance over the period 1996 to 2000 shows the improved standards this year and the variations from year to year. In response to the strong focus which has been placed on improving teaching and learning and on numeracy and literacy, inspection evidence now shows that the school is set to achieve the targets set for this year and that most pupils aged 7 are now on course to attain standards which are above those expected for pupils of this age in mathematics and match those expected nationally for pupils of this age in all other subjects.

The standards attained by the Year 4 pupils are above those expected of pupils of this age in mathematics and match those expected in most other subjects, except in religious education where attainment is below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Most pupils make good progress over time as they move through the school, and progress is strong in English and mathematics. Except in religious education, pupils learn and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Children under five also make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage most children are on course to attain the national expectations. Observations of lessons shows that in response to a high proportion of good and very good teaching, learning is very good across the school and an increasing proportion of pupils are now making very good progress, including pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and show very good attitudes to their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good overall.
Personal development and relationships	The very warm relationships between the pupils and between staff and pupils are a strength of the school. Pupils show very good personal development.
Attendance	Good, above the national average.

The pupils' attitudes and values are underpinned by the excellent ethos of the school, which promotes both care and achievement equally for all pupils.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	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.*

The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. It was very good overall, and ranged from satisfactory to very good in all the lessons observed. Almost all the lessons observed were good or better, none were unsatisfactory. The teaching was very good in 54 per cent, it was good in 43 per cent and it was satisfactory in the remaining 3 per cent of the lessons observed. Teaching is at least good in most subjects. It is very good in English, mathematics and history across the school. Teaching is good overall in science, art, design and technology, music and physical education; it is good in religious education and geography in Key Stage 1. Teaching is satisfactory in information and communications technology (ICT). Due to the school's cycle of planning, there were insufficient opportunities to judge the quality of teaching in religious education and geography in Key Stage 2. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. The teachers' improved planning, their awareness of the pupils' needs, their management of the pupils' behaviour and their use of questioning to challenge all pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers, are significant strengths. The large proportion of good and very good teaching is enabling most pupils to build increasingly well on their previous learning in many subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good overall. The curriculum for children under five is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good overall, provision is most effective in meeting the particular needs of individual pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, very strong and effective provision to support the pupils' moral and social development, but unsatisfactory provision for the pupils' wider cultural development.
How well the school cares	Generally good, with strong pastoral care, but weaknesses in the

for its pupils	documentation and procedures to support health and safety.
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The staff of the school provide a high quality of day-to-day personal support for the pupils and each pupil is treated equally and is valued. The school promotes a good partnership with parents and enjoys the very good support of members of the local community. These partnerships enrich the pupils' learning successfully.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall; strong personal leadership of the headteacher supported by all the staff ensures a very clear educational direction and has improved the teaching and learning across the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall, under the careful direction of an experienced chairman, the governing body use their experience and expertise well in helping staff to achieve the aims and values of the school. However, the statutory requirements concerning the documentation and procedures to ensure good financial control and health and safety are not fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors the achievement of pupils in optional and national tests very effectively. The higher standards in mathematics and the school's success in meeting the needs of pupils across the full range of prior attainments clearly show this.
The strategic use of resources	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are used well to enrich the pupils' learning.

The provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good overall. Decisions are clearly made on the principles of best value and expenditure is carefully matched to raising pupils' achievement. Governors and staff demonstrate a very good commitment to improvement and now have a very good capacity to succeed.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Children behave well and make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school's expectation that pupils will work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons, especially for sport.</li> <li>• The amount of work that the pupils are given to do at home.</li> <li>• The information given about how pupils are getting on.</li> </ul>

The inspectors fully support the parents' positive views. Homework is given regularly, in accordance with the school's policy and government guidelines, and is appropriate. The school provides satisfactory information about how pupils are progressing in annual reports and these are supported by regular meetings with parents. Inspectors consider that there is scope for the school to increase the range of extra-curricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Given the small size of each year group and the varying numbers of pupils with significant special educational needs in each cohort at this school, care must be taken when comparing one year's results with another, and particularly also when comparing results from similar schools. Nevertheless this year's National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments for 7 year olds showed that the pupils' attainments were in line with the national average in mathematics and reading, and below average in writing and science. In science, however, there was an above average proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 standard. When compared to the results found in similar schools, although improved over the 1999 results, the performance of pupils is less favourable. However this form of comparison does not reflect the true extent and impact of the local rural factors on the pupils' language and literacy skills.

2 Standards rose in reading and mathematics this year, remained broadly similar in writing, but fell in science. Overall standards fluctuated significantly and fell in reading, writing and mathematics over the period 1996 to 1999 largely reflecting the differences between the attainments of the pupils in each cohort. However, the significant improvement in the proportions of pupils attaining the higher level 3 standard in reading, writing, mathematics and science in this year's national tests and teachers' assessments indicates increased standards in response to improved provision, particularly for potentially higher attaining pupils, at the school. Apart from a few variations in performance linked with the differing numbers of boys and girls in each cohort, there was little significant difference in the performance of boys compared to girls, especially when compared to the picture found nationally. Teachers' assessments generally match the test results at the end of this key stage.

3 The inspection evidence, which includes an examination of the assessments of the children's attainments in the nursery and on entry to full-time schooling in the reception class, shows that their attainments on commencement of full-time education are slightly below those found nationally for children of this age. Whilst a few children demonstrate appropriate skills, several children enter school with significantly under-developed language and social skills. For example, despite a very good grounding in the nursery, several children are still not confident in conversing and collaborating with other children in their independent learning activities.

4 Most children under five make good progress overall and observations of lessons in the nursery and reception class show that, in response to very good teaching, in excellent surroundings, an increasing number of children are making very good progress. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals, set for them to achieve by the end of the Foundation stage, when they leave the reception class. In response to the very effective teaching, most children make significant gains in language and literacy, in mathematics, in music and in the development of personal and social skills. The much improved outdoor facilities for children under five are having a substantial impact on their physical skills also. By the end of their year in the reception class, most children enjoy looking at and sharing books, especially 'Big Books' with the whole class and their teacher. With help, many children can talk about favourite story-book and nursery rhyme characters. They sing joyfully about the 'Scarecrow' and how to 'Wind the bobbin up' and keep a beat well when clapping. Their writing skills are emerging well and represent an appropriate stage of development. The children learn to count effectively, a few up to ten. Mathematical vocabulary is encouraged well by the teacher and most children develop an appropriate vocabulary for children of this age.

5 Inspection shows that by the time they leave the school, the pupils' attainments in Key Stage 2 are broadly similar to those expected of pupils of this age. As a result of a strong emphasis on promoting effective teaching and learning and good collaboration between all who work at and support the school and as a result of improved curriculum planning and accommodation and resources, standards are rising across the school. This represents a significant achievement given the recent reduction in staffing and the tremendous amount of additional work required to move and to settle pupils in the new school.

6 Inspection shows that the pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national expectations in mathematics and meet the national expectations in English and all the other subjects which comprise the National Curriculum. Standards in religious education at the end of this key stage generally meet those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus.

7 The inspection evidence indicates that in Key Stage 2, the pupils' attainments are above the national expectation in mathematics, but are below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education, particularly in the pupils' knowledge of other world faiths. The pupils' attainment is in line with the national expectations overall in all other subjects, including English.

8 These findings represent a good improvement of standards in mathematics and in speaking and listening skills, which are above average, in information and communication technology (ICT), music and in physical education, in both key stages. The pupils' attainment in several aspects within subjects, such as their investigative skills and their ability to collaborate effectively, have also improved in other subjects since the last inspection. Standards in religious education in Key Stage 2 have not improved and pupils still have insufficient awareness of other religions, even though they have a good appreciation of the Christian faith. Literacy and numeracy strategies are being implemented most successfully and teachers are planning in detail to meet the needs of all pupils. These methods are having a significant impact on the pupils' attainment, particularly the achievement of potentially higher attaining pupils, which has improved well since the last inspection, when a lack of challenge for these pupils was identified as a Key Issue.

9 The school monitors and evaluates the performance of pupils in the national tests in Year 2 and in optional tests in Years 3 and 4, the findings are used well to challenge pupils appropriately in English, mathematics and science. In addition the teachers emphasise the correct use of technical vocabulary during lessons. These strategies are also helping to raise standards. The school also monitors the performance of boys compared to girls and ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, as a result no significant differences in attainment between the boys and the girls were evident during the inspection.

10 The school has set appropriate targets in English, mathematics and science for pupils to attain by the end of Years 2, 3 and 4. They bear due regard to the need to raise standards but also the considerable variations in the numbers of pupils in each year group and their differing needs. Inspection shows that pupils are on course to achieve these targets.

11 Most pupils make good progress over time as they move through the school. Children under five in the nursery and reception classes make good progress in all the recommended areas of learning, particularly in language and literacy and in their personal and social development. Nursery and reception staff co-operate very efficiently and children have a smooth transition into full-time schooling. This aids their learning considerably. Good co-operation between staff continues throughout the school and the pupils enter each key stage confidently. Most pupils make good progress overall and learn well through both key stages, building well on their previous learning and responding positively to the teachers' well focused questioning, detailed planning and clear expectations of effort and achievement.

12 The majority of pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment in English, mathematics, science and history. Progress is satisfactory in most other subjects across the school, except in religious education in Key Stage 2, where pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Pupils who have special educational needs and potentially higher attaining pupils also achieve well in relation to their differing abilities, in response to the teachers' careful consideration of their needs when planning and conducting lessons. Observations of a majority of very good lessons during the week of the inspection shows that, as a consequence, an increasing number of pupils are making very good progress, especially in English and mathematics.

13 Standards of literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory. Skills in reading and writing are now sound or better for the majority of pupils in all year groups. Pupils value books and can write in a variety of ways, matching the style of writing to the purpose and audience that it is for.

14 Numeracy skills are encouraged and developed well in other subjects. By singing counting rhymes, children in the nursery and reception classes develop their early number skills well. As they grow older pupils use their number skills more precisely, in history, for example, by completing inventories of houses at times in the past and comparing them with house contents nowadays. The pupils' literacy skills are also encouraged successfully across the school. In Year 1, for example, pupils describe their senses in detail in science, and in most classes across the school, teachers use technical language well to promote understanding. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, by using the correct names of shapes such as pyramids and cylinders. Work in history is also enriched further by providing pupils with opportunities to write in depth about famous people such as Boudicca. The pupils are increasingly encouraged to use ICT to support learning in other subjects. The work scrutiny, displays and observations of lessons showed a few positive examples such as using a floor robot to aid measuring, but overall, ICT was not used to its full benefit during the week of the inspection.

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

15 Pupils consistently display very good attitudes towards their school. Following the guidance they receive in their first years at the school, they quickly become active and confident learners who show enthusiastic involvement with their work and are eager to achieve. They enjoy school and find education challenging and interesting. Good examples of their attitudes were seen during the inspection on many occasions. These included the imaginative suggestions and intense involvement seen in a drama lesson for Years 1 and 2 pupils and the eagerness to improve which children displayed in after-school tennis coaching. Children under five in the nursery and reception class also show very good attitudes and enjoy coming to school to learn

16 The pupils' very good behaviour is a positive aid to learning. There were no exclusions during the last school year. The inspection team were impressed by the courtesy and friendliness the pupils show towards visitors. They move quietly around the school and automatically look behind them when going through doors to see if they need to hold the door open for them. At playtime pupils of all ages play well together, and show affection towards each other. Teachers need spend very little time on discipline: for instance, in a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils a single look from the teacher was sufficient to ensure that pupils returned immediately to the task in hand. Children under five are equally well behaved and even though several prefer to play alone at times, most children behave well towards each other.

17 The very good relationships between pupils and adults in the school community are a strength of the school. The school works hard to develop both pupil independence and the ability to co-operate from their early years in the school. Nursery and reception children are encouraged to help each other both when working at a given task, or when tidying toys away. The very good teamwork between class teachers and classroom assistants provides an excellent role model for pupils in this regard. Across the school, pupils are encouraged to listen to each other's ideas and offer constructive and tactful criticism: a good example of their ability to do this was seen in a science lesson for Years 3 and 4.

18 Pupils have a very good attendance rate (95.4%), which is above the national average (94.1%) while the unauthorised rate (0.2%) is below the national average (0.5%). This is despite the problems which sometimes occur in February and March when snow on Exmoor can prevent a sizeable minority of children from reaching school. Despite travelling significant distances by car or bus, most pupils arrive punctually and this contributes well to their positive attitudes towards school.

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

19 The quality of teaching is very good overall, for children under five in the new Foundation stage in the nursery and in the reception class, and in each key stage. The teaching varies from satisfactory to very good, reflecting the parents' appreciative views expressed to inspectors, and teaching is having a very beneficial effect on the pupils' progress. The quality of teaching is now a significant strength in the school. Observations of lessons showed that teaching was very good in 54 per cent of lessons; good in 43 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining three per cent of the lessons observed. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and almost all lessons were either good or very good. This represents an outstanding proportion of successful teaching and indicates a substantial improvement since the last inspection when not far off a fifth of lessons were found to be unsatisfactory. Over time most pupils learn

well, but in response to the very good teaching seen during the week of the inspection an increasing and significant proportion of pupils are now making very good progress.

20 Teaching is either good or very good overall in most subjects. The teaching is very good in English, mathematics and history across the school. Teaching is good overall in science, art, design and technology, music and physical education; it is good in religious education and geography in Key Stage 1. Teaching is satisfactory in information technology. Due to the school's cycle of planning, there were insufficient opportunities to judge the quality of teaching in religious education and geography in Key Stage 2. The school has been diligent in addressing the issues identified for improvement by the previous inspection. The planning of lessons and of the curriculum as a whole have been improved. Teachers build consistently on the pupils' prior knowledge and share learning objectives productively with the pupils at the beginnings of lessons. This has brought a consistent quality to the teaching and, as a consequence, pupils are learning progressively as they move through the school.

21 The quality of teaching in English and mathematics are significant strengths, being underpinned respectively by close adherence to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils are taught to use and respect books and to enrich their learning by developing a wide vocabulary of appropriate technical terms and this promotes their use and understanding of language even more. The pupils are also encouraged to acquire well-developed numeracy skills and each mathematics lesson begins with a rigorous and effective mental starter session enabling pupils to extend their facility with numbers and to improve their learning in mathematics.

22 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good overall. Class teachers, classroom assistants and nursery nurses support such pupils successfully in class, promoting very good relationships and thereby raising the pupils' self-esteem and confidence in learning. This finding supports that of the last inspection. Teachers work with classroom assistants and with nursery staff very well to develop learning opportunities which address the pupils' needs. Due regard is taken of the targets and activities set in the pupils' individual educational plans. The teachers give good guidance to other adults working in classrooms about how to support pupils fully in lessons and these are aided by very good relationships between all who work in the school. A positive feature is the way that adult helpers and assistants complete regular assessments of the pupils' work and this ensures good continuity in their learning.

23 All teachers and staff receive good advice and support from the co-ordinator for special educational needs, particularly about the home background of the pupils and this information is used well to support the pupils and to identify the next steps in their learning. As a result most pupils with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers.

24 The teachers are well aware of the need to meet the needs of all pupils and to include pupils from the range of prior attainments in daily classroom learning. Their teaching ensures that all pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum and to all aspects of school life, enabling all pupils to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Potentially higher attaining pupils are challenged well in most lessons, particularly by the use of correct terminology, by discussion, by valuing the pupils' responses and by enabling the pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry and to develop independence in their learning. These methods of teaching, promoted initially in the nursery class, are features which underpin the successful teaching throughout the school and represent areas of improvement since the last inspection.

25 The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage, in the nursery and in the reception class is another strength. It is typified by very warm relationships, very good planning, tasks which closely match the children's needs, and by a rich variety of experiences. For example, during outdoor activities children in the nursery experienced meaningful play on large wheeled toys, explored a log cabin, played with sand and water and made sailing boats. The teacher's and nursery nurse's encouragement and close questioning had a very positive effect on the children's learning. Other children under five in the reception class are taught very well and also enjoy equally warm relationships and experiences. The nursery and reception teachers of these young children are careful to get to know the children really well and they use this knowledge to challenge and question them effectively in order to build on the children's previous knowledge. As a consequence, the children behave really well, soon develop very positive attitudes to

school and increasingly make very good progress. For example, by discussing what might happen next during 'storytime' and by encouraging the pupils to offer their own ideas, activities and solutions across the full range of early learning experiences, most children extend their skills well.

26 The teaching in Key Stage 1 is very good overall. Many of the strengths identified for children under five continue into this key stage. The teachers generally show very good knowledge across the range of subjects and good understanding of the needs of the pupils and this enables them to give clear explanations and to respond sensitively and correctly to pupils' comments during discussions and this promotes the pupils' learning well. For example, during a geography lesson in Year 1, the teacher used her knowledge well to support the comparison between life in India with life in the British Isles, particularly in Dulverton, and this encouraged the pupils to share their ideas and to learn well together. Teachers' planning is clear and detailed and all lessons have a specific focus for learning. This is a particularly strong feature of English and mathematics lessons where literacy and numeracy strategies are supported well by the teachers' plans. Teaching in other subjects such as design and technology is often strengthened by the planning of additional 'extension work' to promote new learning and this was seen to good effect in a lesson in Year 1 where older and more able pupils were encouraged to achieve a higher quality in their puppet-making.

27 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is also very good. The teachers work closely together and plan very effectively to ensure a smooth progression in learning for the pupils. For example, in a series of lessons in mathematics focusing on shape and space, the two teachers involved in teaching the Year 3 and 4 class followed joint plans and ensured that pupils progressed systematically and successfully from recognising two and three-dimensional shapes to recording their properties, and as a result they built up a good vocabulary of correct terms and this aided their learning considerably. The teachers use questioning rigorously but warmly to challenge all pupils, including potentially higher attainers, and use resources and the new facilities successfully to enrich learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 3 and 4, good preparation helped the teacher to conduct a successful mental mathematics session using 'place value cards' and this led to the pupils improving their understanding of numbers.

28 Where teaching is most effective, teachers are providing challenging work for the pupils and this promotes the pupils' enthusiasm and effort. Such was the case in an English lesson in Year 2 where the teacher successfully promoted the use of technical terms such as 'phonemes' and used a 'Big Book' entitled 'Dogger' to motivate and challenge the pupils to extend their vocabulary. Class teachers and assistants encourage the pupils to think for themselves and to generate new ideas. This ensures that all pupils are suitably involved and that learning is successful. Teaching was less effective on a very few occasions during parts of lessons when, for example, written work in English was a little too difficult for less able pupils or in physical education lessons when a higher quality of movement could have been expected of the pupils. Occasionally introductions were a little too long, but given the very positive relationships and attitudes of the pupils, learning was only briefly affected and distraction limited.

29 Teachers make good use of the classroom assistants and nursery nurses and involve parents and particularly governors and members of the local community most beneficially in widening and supporting the experiences of the pupils. Group work in English and mathematics, listening to readers, encouraging the use of the library and helping with music and singing in assembly are good examples of where warm relationships and additional help significantly enriches the pupils' learning. Most teachers use time and resources well and increasingly the new accommodation and facilities are used to good effect, in supporting practical work or independent research in the library. Computers are generally used satisfactorily in classrooms but during the inspection, ICT was not used to best effect in supporting the pupils' learning, for example by giving further expression to the pupils' ideas. Teachers build well on pupils' previous learning and assess the pupils' work effectively by questioning, marking and observing to check that pupils are attaining appropriate standards for their age. The teachers know their pupils well and use this to good effect in setting work which is appropriately matched to the pupils' prior attainment. However, with the exception of the nursery and reception classes and of work in English and mathematics where assessment is used well, teachers make insufficient use of the assessment opportunities identified in their lesson planning, and do not record their own or the pupils' evaluations of their work sufficiently to inform future teaching and learning.

30 Homework is given regularly in accordance with the school's policy and generally has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. The home-school reading logs are well supported by parents, provide a good record of books read by the pupils at home, and help to maintain a successful partnership between home and school in support of the pupils' learning.

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

31 The curriculum provided by the school is good overall. It has breadth and balance and contains the full range of subjects at Key Stages 1 and 2. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children who are under five is excellent. Provision for children who are under five and for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The quality and range of learning opportunities within the school as a whole is good.

32 Since the last inspection the curriculum has been improved in that there are new policies in place and the school now follows the nationally devised curriculum guidelines of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) for the foundation subjects. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively introduced. There is still only a limited range of extra-curricular activities. Although a choir has recently been introduced, drainage problems with outdoor play areas are currently limiting the introduction of additional sports.

33 The provision for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is very good. The use of ICT is not fully developed in all subjects at present and there are insufficient opportunities to use computers in Key Stage 2.

34 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well provided for within the curriculum as a whole. Social, moral and health issues are discussed in subjects such as science and religious education as well as in assemblies. The school does not have formal policies in all areas but programmes are in place to ensure an appropriate provision of health, sex and drugs education. There are also specific PSHE lessons within the timetable which have a positive effect in promoting the pupils' understanding.

35 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Particular strengths lie in moral and social education. Provision for spiritual development is good. The school promotes spirituality across the curriculum, but it is particularly evident in assemblies, where the week's theme links to work in class as well as the church calendar. A warm family feeling pervades the school and each pupil is valued for their contribution, whatever it might be. Achievements are celebrated at every opportunity and this culminates in a 'well done' assembly each week. Teachers ensure that the assembly message is relevant and communicated to all the pupils from the youngest reception children to the nine year-olds in Year 4. All sing heartily and become fully involved. Opportunities are taken for prayer and quiet reflection. This is a big improvement since the last inspection. Curriculum areas such as art and design and technology, history and science promote spiritual growth and evoke a sense of awe and wonder. An example seen was in science when Year 1 pupils were learning about the five senses. Unfortunately, religious education itself is not providing sufficient experience or insight into these areas, in order to help the pupils to complete 'the bigger picture' in this aspect.

36 The excellent ethos and values of the school promote very good moral development. There is a clear understanding of right and wrong and pupils consistently behave very well. This is reflected in their very good relationships with each other and with all the adults. The headteacher has a good rapport with the pupils, contributing significantly to the calm and orderly ethos. Relationships between teachers and pupils are relaxed and friendly. In all lessons teachers manage pupils very well, making order and discipline a natural outcome of mutual respect and care for each other. Pupils who find it difficult to deal with the rigours of school are helped sensitively and unobtrusively. This helps to show pupils how to respect and care for pupils less fortunate than themselves. In addition to clear school rules, pupils help devise their own class rules, sometimes in the form of a contract in which the teacher also pledges to keep her part.

37 The provision for social development is very good. In many cases on entry to the nursery at the age of three, the children's social skills are not very well developed. Many opportunities are provided for

social interaction to help pupils grow in maturity and in their ability to relate and communicate with each other as they pass through the school. All teachers provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for doing jobs in class or around the school, as door monitors, for example. Even the very youngest pupils are shown how the school administration works by taking registers and messages to and from the school office. During the inspection a nursery class was taken into town to visit the local supermarket to buy food to make a tea party. They had opportunities to interact with a wide range of adults as well as developing skills in observing and talking about the world around them. Pupils develop independence and a good ability to organise their own learning by the time they leave the school. For instance, in a science lesson, Year 4 pupils had to work together in groups to plan and carry out a simple experiment. Pupils' personal and social interests and experiences are extended beyond the formal curriculum. They are provided with a variety of visits, including residential experience. A school choir with pupils of different ages takes place after school. The school is regularly involved in charity work, which helps to promote the skills of good citizenship. All pupils whether they be higher attainers or have special educational needs are taught to care demonstrably for each other and this is of positive benefit to their learning.

38 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. The school does not have a policy at present and most of the opportunities provided for exploring cultural traditions come through areas of the curriculum such as geography and history. These are usually imaginative and effective, such as the comparison of Victorian and modern toys, or the every day life in an African village. The school has very close relationships with local churches and the community. In addition to church services, pupils enjoy the visits of local tradesmen and the help given to teachers by older adults in school. Visits to the nearby National Park, enable pupils to learn about traditional crafts and extend their geographical skills effectively. The study of the broader aspects of culture, such as life in a multicultural society is unsatisfactory. During the inspection there was little evidence of pupils being taught about the diversity of British cultures in subjects across the curriculum. In addition, although the school has made sure that the library has books about life in other cultures, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to study or reflect on different faiths or ways of life, in religious education or assembly, for example. Because of the lack of planned experiences, this aspect of the curriculum has remained much the same since the last inspection.

39 Curriculum planning is good overall and very good for English and mathematics. The timetable provides for secure coverage of core and foundation subjects. Pupils are taught in classes of mixed ages as well as mixed ability. A two-year rolling programme is in place to cover the required area of learning in subjects such as history and geography. The school does not formally set its pupils in classes based on their prior attainment but in most subjects pupils work with others of similar potential attainment. This policy is ensuring that pupils of all abilities make good progress in both key stages because lesson planning allows for the range of age and ability within the class. In the lessons observed during the inspection the higher attaining pupils were being offered challenging work and the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were very well supported. In literacy and history, for example, pupils are given writing frames and information sheets suited to their ability level.

40 All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and those with special educational needs are well supported, usually in the classroom. Their needs are addressed in detailed individual educational plans which are implemented carefully by teachers and assistants. The Code of Practice is carefully followed. The school does not have an equal opportunities policy but inclusion is part of the ethos of the school community. Considerable progress has been made in addressing issues related to ensuring equality of opportunity; for example the new building provides full access to pupils with mobility problems. The level of support enables pupils with physical disabilities to make really good progress while ensuring that they can fully participate in all activities within the school including the choir.

41 There are very good links with the middle school so that pupils can progress easily into later Key Stage 3 work. The school's nursery is also very important in helping pupils settle into formal education. A close association with the church is a fundamental part of the ethos of the school within the local community.

42 The programme of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is limited. There is a choir and country dancing takes place in the summer. No sport or other clubs were available for pupils at the

time of the inspection. The school provides a good variety of trips and visits and a residential for pupils in years three and four.

43 The local community makes an excellent contribution to learning. The school has a close relationship with the local church, with the Exmoor National Park and with museums in the area. People come into school to talk about health topics and caring for animals. During the inspection children from the nursery visited the local supermarket to buy provisions for a teddy bears' picnic. Many individuals from the village and further afield come into the school to work in the in the classrooms alongside the teachers. This is very valuable. It is helping to raise standards in the school because pupils frequently have the opportunity to work in small groups supported by adults.

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

44 The school has always sought to provide a caring and secure environment for its pupils, and does so to good effect overall. The new building is of considerable aid in this, being designed to conform to the latest safety standards. Child protection procedures are fully in place. The headteacher is the designated child protection officer: he ensures that all staff is fully briefed on the correct procedures as part of their induction when joining the school. There is good provision for first aid, with small first aid kits in each classroom and two large ones by the playground and in the school office. There are three qualified first aiders, who also ensure that the kits are fully stocked. Both the nursery and reception have separate secure outside play areas: parents collect and deliver nursery children from this outside gate. There is a good emphasis on safety considerations on a day-to-day basis during class and playtime, with an adequate number of trained supervisors on duty outside. However, the school has not yet fully implemented the county guidelines on health and safety. There is currently no formal system of risk assessment and this is a weakness.

45 Provision for monitoring attendance is good: unexplained absences are always quickly followed up. Both the administrative officer and the headteacher monitor registers weekly, and clear induction is given to any new staff uncertain of the correct procedure for completing their register. Parents are given good guidance on daily attendance and the importance of taking holidays during school vacations in the prospectus and this has a positive effect contributing to the pupils' good attendance.

46 Behaviour management is a strength of the school: staff use consistent strategies to encourage children to become co-operative happy individuals who enjoy learning. Parents are very satisfied with the very good attitudes and behaviour which the school encourages in children. It was notable in the nursery that even children who had only started attending three weeks previously were already happily settled, whilst those who had attended for two terms were confident and independent, happily finding the equipment they needed. The successful behaviour policy was drawn up by the whole staff, including non-teaching staff, and is regularly discussed and if necessary revised at staff meetings. The 'Code of Conduct' displayed in each classroom is equally effective and was originally drawn up in consultation with older pupils, and their successors are consulted each year on possible revisions.

47 The school has good procedures in place for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Parents are confident that any instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. The only time when they feel there was any unsatisfactory behaviour, mainly by a few older pupils, is occasionally on the school buses. Although responsibility for the children during their journeys does not lie directly with the school, the headteacher works closely with the bus companies involved and the local education authority to encourage children to behave sensibly and follow any instructions given them by the driver. No instances of oppressive or bullying behaviour were observed during the inspection and no pupils were excluded during the previous twelve months.

48 The school has good informal methods for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. In this, its greatest asset is its staff, who have excellent knowledge of their pupils as individuals, care about their progress, and have high expectations of their ability to achieve. There are well-established procedures for the induction of nursery and reception pupils, which are appreciated by parents. Parents also feel that transition to the middle school has always been well handled: this transition will now be even more straightforward and successful since the two schools are now close neighbours. Two children in each class are appointed as helpers for the day, with badges of their own

design, and this responsibility, which varies in degree according to age, is taken very seriously by the pupils. Learning support is given where pupils' individual needs require it, and every care is taken to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate. Pupils with special educational needs have their specific requirements assessed carefully and they are addressed very effectively through well chosen targets and action which is outlined in the detailed individual educational plans. The Code of Practice is fully implemented. The school has improved the level of challenge presented to potentially higher attaining pupils – a notable improvement since the last inspection and this is promoting higher standards of achievement. Excellent support is given in each class by the learning support assistants, who work closely with the teaching staff to ensure that all children move forward, by increasingly learning together.

49 The assessment procedures are now good overall and those for promoting the educational and personal support and guidance of pupils are very good. Pastoral care is a strength of the school but there are weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' work in foundation subjects.

50 The systems for assessing attainment and progress are good, especially in English and mathematics, and have been much improved since the last inspection. The school now has clear procedures for assessment in English and mathematics and these are being effectively implemented and closely linked with target setting. Good use is now being made of attainment data in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. It is used well in the process of tracking the progress of individual cohorts of pupils as they move through the school. This is particularly valuable as the cohorts are relatively small and pupils are taught in mixed age classes.

51 A system of baseline assessment is in place when children start school in the nursery and when they move to full-time schooling in the reception classes. There is effective use of National Curriculum assessments, reading tests and other data to monitor progress. The school has an ethos for improvement and is developing strategies to ensure that all pupils, including the higher attainers and those with learning difficulties, fulfil their potential.

52 Assessment is used particularly effectively in placing children in groups within the classrooms for work in English and mathematics. In most lessons pupils are given a variety of resources, tasks and levels of support to meet their individual needs and because of this teaching in mixed age group classes is very effective. In lessons teachers use questioning very well to ascertain pupil understanding and progress. Support staff and volunteer helpers also play a valuable part in assessment for example in on going assessment of pupils understanding in lessons and by monitoring records for progress in reading.

53 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good. Teachers keep detailed records and the overall use of assessment information to help in lesson planning is good. The focus on monitoring and review in this area makes a considerable contribution to the raising of attainment of pupils in the core subjects.

54 The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is satisfactory overall. However, procedures for monitoring progress and assessing attainment levels in the foundation subjects and in religious education and ICT are not fully in place and are unsatisfactory. During the inspection there was little evidence to show that teachers were retaining and evaluating samples of pupils' work on a regular basis in foundation subjects to inform future teaching and planning. In addition, whilst teachers were correctly identifying assessment opportunities in their lesson plans, there was little evidence to show how these are recorded to inform future teaching. There are weaknesses which have not been sufficiently improved since the last inspection.

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

55 The partnership between the school and parents was good at the time of the last inspection, and this is still very much the case. It was clear from the responses to the parents' questionnaire, and from the comments they made at the parents' meeting and in some cases on the backs of the questionnaires, that parents strongly support the ideals and values of the school. They believe that their children enjoy school, and that the school encourages good behaviour and the development of responsible and co-operative attitudes. The school values its good partnership with parents. From the

moment their children commence school, parents are encouraged to work in partnership with teachers in educating their children. All staff enjoy good relationships with the parents and these help to promote the pupils' positive attitudes towards school.

56 The vast majority of parents give their children good support with their school work at home, through help with reading or other tasks as required by the school. Parents feel confident that they can approach the staff with any problems, and find the school welcoming and supportive. The school is diligent in ensuring that parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully consulted regarding their children. This partnership has a positive impact on the progress these pupils achieve. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed their strong approval of the work of the school. A significant number of parents, however, felt that there should be more extra-curricular activity. The school is aware of these views and, as soon as drainage problems concerning the field and playground have been addressed, staff are seeking to improve provision.

57 Some parents are able to come into school to help in class, for example, by helping with group activities or listening to readers in the nursery and reception classes. Other parents give helpful and valued support as members of the School Association, which organises a number of popular fund-raising and social events each year. However, many other parents live some distance from the school (some in remote areas of Exmoor), work long hours, or simply do not have the resources to give the school personal support. Few parents attend the annual general meetings held by the governors or the School Association, but several more were able to attend the curriculum workshops on literacy and numeracy held at the school. Help from parents is enriched by the outstanding support given by the wider community in Dulverton, through attendance at social events and regular assistance in school. On moving into the new school the whole community gave generously in the form of money and resources.

58 The school supplies parents with a satisfactory range of information. There are informative newsletters every half-term, which always include information about the curriculum as well as accounts of past and forthcoming school events. Annual reports include targets and provide good information on children's progress in literacy and numeracy, but are less satisfactory when discussing other curriculum areas. However, parents welcome the opportunity to discuss their children's progress at the regular meetings with the teachers. Most parents express their appreciation of the teachers' efforts and feel that the teachers know the children well. The prospectus and governors' annual reports to parents are well-presented and welcoming documents. They provide good quality information about the activities of the school but could provide more detail about the successes of the school, for example, about the positive effect of the provision for special educational needs on pupils' progress.

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

59 The headteacher, governing body and staff with responsibilities provide good overall leadership for the school. The previous inspection's key issues of improving the overall aims associated with teaching and learning, increasing the challenge offered to very able pupils, involving governors more purposefully in monitoring the effectiveness of the school's provision and in striving for improvements to the accommodation and facilities of the school have been achieved well.

60 Overall, the leadership and management of the school have shown good improvement since the last inspection in 1996. In the light of the significant disruption and additional work associated with the closure of the old school site and the move into the facilities of the new school, this is a noteworthy achievement. The very good co-operation between all who are associated with the school represents a positive feature underpinning the successful move into the new accommodation. Inspection shows that improved teaching, uplifted by a wonderful learning environment and the positive attitudes of the pupils is now impacting powerfully on the pupils' learning, and standards are rising significantly.

61 The headteacher plays a very effective and key role in the leadership of the school. His contribution is enriched by a significant contribution as a class teacher. With good support from colleagues, the quality of teaching and learning has been systematically improved since the last inspection. Teaching is now a strength, unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and the pupils' learning, enhanced further by the teachers' good use of the school's new facilities and implementation of National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, shows continual improvement.

62 Inevitably, the move into the new school earlier this year, and the subsequent management and establishment of effective day-to-day routines to support the pupils' learning have taken precedence over other areas of school development. As a result gaps have appeared in the overall provision. These include an incomplete school development plan. Whilst governors and headteacher have a clear vision for the future development of the school, planning to meet these aspirations lacks the evaluation over the longer term, particularly of issues such as the impact on future resources of the number of pupils seeking admission to the school or of the impact of national initiatives. However, clear priorities for development, such as the implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies, have been identified appropriately.

63 The new accommodation represents a considerable improvement in the quality and safety of the environment presented to the pupils. Staff are diligent in their daily care of the pupils, but as yet this good quality of provision is not supported by a fully operative health and safety policy and it is not informed by the required regular risk assessments. In a similar vein, the planning of the use of the finances made available to the school has been improved since the last inspection. The school's budget is now used more effectively to enhance pupils' learning and achievement. Specific grants to support school improvement and special educational needs are used well. However, the recent external audit of the school's financial controls highlighted several weaknesses, not least the absence of a Financial Policy. Overall financial control is satisfactory, but such procedural issues have lacked development primarily as a result of the huge task of relocating the school. The school now has specific plans to rectify these aspects before the end of term.

64 The headteacher leads by example and provides very good educational direction. He has empowered colleagues well, in teaching and learning and particularly in numeracy and literacy, to become more closely involved in the management of the school. This has had a positive effect on the pupils' attainment in these areas. Nevertheless, whilst he has achieved much this year, managing the move to the new school; in the absence of a deputy, he has taken on too much responsibility himself, and has been less successful in devolving additional responsibilities to colleagues in other subjects or in other areas of management. As a result, weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics and in the wider cultural development of the pupils have been insufficiently addressed.

65 The members of the governing body have developed very effective ways of monitoring and evaluating the ongoing work of the school, for example through focused visits to observe specific curriculum areas and to discuss provision with subject co-ordinators. As a consequence, governors are more informed of the quality of teaching and learning than at the time of the last inspection and are increasingly able to help teachers in targeting the effective use of the facilities provided in the new school in order to raise standards of pupils' achievement. Governors are less effective in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met, for example the weaknesses mentioned earlier in the documentation to support health and safety and efficient financial control and in promoting the wider cultural development of the pupils. Governors and staff are most successful, however, in ensuring that the school's aims and values are met and the school's excellent ethos, which blends the care and respect of the individual with a due consideration of the standards to be achieved, is a key feature of the school. Governors are also successful in ensuring very good provision for pupils with special educational needs which complies fully with the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice and in promoting the close relationship with the church through the required daily acts of collective worship and regular visits.

66 The school has a very good day-to-day awareness of the provision of equal opportunity and teachers are diligent in planning to meet the needs of all pupils. An appropriate policy statement does not support this provision and this is a weakness.

67 The school is appropriately staffed. Teaching, support and administrative staff co-operate well to meet the pupils' needs. All teachers make very good use of the impressive number of adults who help in school on a regular basis. Their contribution is valued and aids pupils' learning. Staff readily share their expertise and this positive collaboration contributes strongly to the improving provision evident across the new school.

68 The accommodation is very good. All classrooms open onto a well-planned library and shared area which is light and spacious and conducive to co-operative learning and to additional support in groups from adult helpers. The hall is equally welcoming and useful and is enriching work in physical education. The outdoor facilities are very spacious although, due to drainage problems, full benefit is yet to be derived from the spacious hard play area and grassed sports field. The indoor and outdoor facilities for children under five are excellent and are very well equipped and provide an exciting and most beneficial start to school life for the children.

69 Learning resources are good and meet the needs of all the teaching of the National Curriculum. The teachers make good use of the resources provided locally and further afield for work in science, history and geography, for example, visits to the Exmoor National Park and Dulverton and Minehead town centres. The school has plans to develop the outdoor facilities of the new school more fully as they come into use, for example, a pond and wildlife area. The resources for teaching literacy and numeracy are good, although on a few occasions their use could be planned more efficiently. During the inspection; for example, resources for shape and space were shared between three teachers, limiting their availability for several pupils. Resources for ICT are satisfactory but the school has few artefacts to support work in religious education.

70 In evaluating the effectiveness and the value for money offered by the school, inspectors are very aware of the considerable achievement of the staff and governors, with the support of the whole school community and of the local education authority, in relocating the school so successfully this year. In addition, inspectors have taken due note that the school is emerging from a time when, through no fault of its own, pupil numbers have declined and finance and consequently staff have been reduced. The school is now using its resources and new facilities productively and this is benefiting all pupils. As a result of the improved progress now being made by the pupils, in response to the good quality of education provided, especially the very good teaching, and in relation to the funds available, the school is providing good value for money. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and indicates that the school is well placed to continue this success into the future.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (p) Linked with Key Issues from the previous inspection report.  
\* Issues already identified for development by the school

71 In order to continue the successful development of the school and to continue the raising of standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Raise the pupils' attainments in religious education, particularly in Key Stage 2 and improve its contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development by: (paras. 7,8,38,142-147)

- (p) ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to study and consider faiths other than Christianity.

2. \*Continue the development of effective procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress, mainly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science and ensure that they are used purposefully to inform future teaching and learning by: (paras. 50-54,115,121,126,130,136,141,147)

- ensuring that assessment information identified in teachers' planning is recorded appropriately in pupils' records;
- retaining and evaluating samples of pupils' work on a regular basis so that teachers, pupils and parents have a clearer view of the pupils' developing skills.

3. Promote more specifically the wider cultural development of the pupils so that they are better prepared for life in a multi-cultural society by: (paras. 38,147)

- (p) providing more opportunities within the planned curriculum, in art, music and religious education, for example, for pupils to study cultures different to their own.

72 In the context of the school's many developing strengths, the following points for improvement should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- \*continue to raise pupils' skills in ICT and provide more opportunities for pupils to enrich their learning across the curriculum; (paras. 127-131)
- \*ensure that the financial controls and guidelines for health and safety are supported by the required policies and procedures; (paras. 44,65)
- utilise the strong community and parental support to widen the extra-curricular opportunities offered to the pupils. (paras. 32,55-58,137)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	54	43	3	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	98
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	18

#### 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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
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	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78	84	95
	National	83	84	90

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72	95	72
	National	84	88	88

**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	72
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 – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	24.5

**Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	3.3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102.5

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5

Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	278303
Total expenditure	277613
Expenditure per pupil	2221
Balance brought forward from previous year	7602
Balance carried forward to next year	8292

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	143
Number of questionnaires returned	64

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	26	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	35	6	2	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	56	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	41	10	5	12
The teaching is good.	51	41	2	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	46	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	20	12	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	38	9	0	8
The school works closely with parents.	44	45	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	36	47	11	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	48	2	0	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	31	33	14	11

### Other issues raised by parents

Most parents expressed strong support for the school and those who were able to help in school felt valued and were able to make a useful contribution. The work of the Friends' Association, in support of the school, is much appreciated by the majority of the parents.

## **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**

73 Children are admitted into the nursery, on a part-time basis, at the beginning of the term after their third birthday. One group of children attends in the morning and a second group attends in the afternoon. Children transfer or are admitted into the reception class at the age of four years, at the beginning of the school year in which they reach the age of five. At the time of the inspection almost all the children in the reception class were under five years of age and were just beginning full-time schooling. Good induction programmes help the children settle quickly on entry into both classes. Children are warmly introduced to the welcoming atmospheres in the two areas and settle quickly into well-established routines to support their learning. The nursery and reception teachers and their staff are very experienced and are most successful in supporting the children with an excellent curriculum and well-planned activities, which support progress in all the recommended areas of learning for children in the new Foundation Stage. The strong links between nursery and reception support a very effective transition from one class to the other and this helps the children to continue their beneficial enjoyment of school at this crucial stage.

74 The children are assessed regularly throughout their time in the nursery and these observations are used to support the more formal baseline assessment of the children's attainment on commencement of full-time education in the reception class. This baseline assessment is completed during their first seven weeks in the reception class, when they are still four years old and it indicates that children start with broadly average knowledge and skills overall. Observations of the pupils at work and play, however, across the full spectrum of learning, shows that their skills as a group are slightly below average especially in language and literacy and in their personal and social development.

75 The inspection took place when the children were just being introduced to full time schooling, consequently little recorded work was available for scrutiny. As a result judgements are based on observations of lessons, displayed work and on talking to teachers and children. Overall these show that strengths in the teaching of very young children identified at the time of the last inspection continue and have been strengthened by increased co-operation between the teachers and staff and by the utilisation of the wonderful and much improved facilities at the new school. As a consequence, standards have been maintained well and an increasing proportion of children are making even better progress in relation to their prior attainment. The quality of learning has improved in most areas and the children achieve well when they are prompted and supported by adults. Attainment and progress is slower when they are working independently due to the difficulties several children have in communicating and collaborating with each other.

76 Communication, language and literacy skills are taught very well in both the nursery and in the reception class. The teachers and assistants know their children well and work hard to address the pupils' reticence to communicate with each other. The children make appropriate responses to their teachers; but several respond in a very limited way to other children whilst a few enjoy talking to visitors. Children enjoy books and are supported well by adult helpers, assistants and teachers, they make good progress in acquiring early reading skills. They develop a satisfactory vocabulary and remember key characters in stories. They are encouraged with success to enjoy learning through rhyme, for example when singing the ' Scarecrow song'. The children often request favourite nursery rhymes and sing them by heart. These activities help the children to develop a satisfactory recognition of words which they use when looking at books, for example when sharing ideas and predictions of what might happen next when reading a 'Big Book' about 'Kipper's Bear'. Generally most pupils achieve well in reading and are on course to reach the standards expected nationally by the end of the Foundation Year. The children have many opportunities to practice writing, initially experimentally, then by copying their own names, which is then followed by working with an adult to express their own ideas. In the reception class, the children are introduced to practices outlined in the National Literacy Strategy and this extends their reading and writing skills and continues to promote listening and talking.

77 Mathematics and numeracy are also taught very successfully in the nursery and reception classes. The teachers and other adult assistants again use number songs and rhymes effectively and use registrations productively to teach numbers and develop the children's counting skills. The teachers in both classes co-operate well and ensure a good progression in learning and are particularly successful in promoting the children's understanding by using appropriate technical language such as the number of faces on a dice. This contributes to the good progress made so that by the end of their reception year most children can count to ten, several beyond this number, recite and sing number rhymes such as 'How many elephants now?' and are beginning to understand counting in twos. Lower and higher attaining children are helped appropriately and build well in previous learning. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this stage of their learning.

78 The teachers are utilising the very good facilities of the new school most effectively to develop the children's skills and understanding in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Teaching is good and both the nursery and reception classrooms are well-organised, colourful, interesting learning environments where the children are encouraged to learn by following their own lines of enquiry or by undertaking activities planned by their teachers. The children develop appropriate technical skills by making wooden sailing boats in the nursery or by using construction toys in the reception class. The children are introduced to computers from an early age and use these effectively to enrich their letter and word recognition skills. They study the effects of water on sand, work with a range of materials including play-dough and plant seeds and study pictures of different places. The children bring a useful background knowledge of the countryside from their early experiences at home and most develop this well to achieve the goals set in this area of learning by the end of their reception year.

79 The children make good progress and achieve the expected standards in their creative development by the end of the Foundation Stage. They learn to make models and pictures with other materials, to cut and to paste and to mix colours when painting. They use a good variety of materials and are encouraged to express their own ideas by modelling in play-dough or sand, for example. Teaching is good and the teachers plan productive activities but are quick to react positively when children show interest or wish to explore ideas a different way; for example two little girls in the reception class played happily and usefully by following their version of cards. Most children enjoy musical activities and learn well when singing nursery rhymes, clapping to a beat or using untuned percussion instruments as seen in a music lesson in the reception class. Several children acquire an above average awareness of beat.

80 Children generally make good progress in their physical development and respond well to the good teaching and to the increased opportunities now provided by the very good facilities at the new school. During the inspection, children in the nursery were making particularly good progress in developing their gross motor skills by energetically playing with large wheeled toys. Individually they work well, but there were very few instances of children co-operating together or sharing these toys and the adults in charge of these children work hard to encourage sharing to develop co-operative skills whenever possible. The children in the reception class also have their own outdoor secure play area and also have access to the hall for physical education, they too progress well. Most children in both classes develop appropriate fine motor skills through cutting and pasting, drawing and early writing and colouring activities. In both the nursery and the reception class, clapping and moving to rhyme and music help the children to develop well in this area of learning and most children in the reception class are on course to achieve the goals set in this aspect overall.

81 The children settle quickly in to their new environment, on starting school and make good gains in their personal, social and emotional development. Within the spacious and well-planned accommodation, the children learn and play amicably. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. The teachers, assistants and nursery nurse and adult helpers in both the nursery and reception classes support the children well and encourage the development of their social skills effectively. The children are naturally curious and keen to explore the facilities when they arrive in the nursery, it is noticeable how many children operate almost without involvement with other children at first. Caring adults systematically encourage the children to communicate and to co-operate with other children but it is some time before the majority actively involve other children in their learning activities. Most children in the reception class mix and collaborate with others but a few still prefer their own company during practical activities. All children are taught to behave well and to care about the needs of others and the

children respond well and there is good harmony on both classes. The teachers and adults use group activities such as story times and singing sessions to promote social skills even more. Most children are on course to attain the early learning goals set in this area of learning by the time they leave the reception class.

82 Children with special educational needs have their needs considered well and make good progress. They are assessed on entry to both classes and, as necessary, individual special needs are targeted in specific plans. All children are supported well in their learning.

83 Overall the teaching is very good in the nursery and in the reception class. The teachers' skills are underpinned by their well-developed knowledge of the needs of children of this age and by their rigour in getting to know each child in their care. The teachers use questions very precisely to check the prior knowledge of the children and to present the right amount of challenge to extend learning. The children respond well to this approach and learn well. All adults working with young children are careful to present a very good range of well planned activities through which the children can learn either by following teacher led work or by following their own ideas. This motivates the children well and enriches their learning. Such was the case when an adult helper wisely let a child choose a book from the library rather than the class collection and this nurtured the interest of the child significantly. The teachers plan with great care and forethought and have an established an excellent curriculum which meets the recommendations of the new Foundation Stage in all areas and this has a most beneficial impact on the children's learning. The work with children under five is an undoubted strength of the school.

## **ENGLISH**

84 Attainment in English at age seven is broadly in line with national expectations. At the end of Year 4, standards are in line with those expected nationally of pupils of this age. Standards in reading are good, reflecting the good progress made in Year 3.

85 Standards in English overall at age seven in the National Curriculum tests in 1999 were below those expected nationally but in 2000 they had improved and were in line with the national average in reading and below but closer to the national average in writing. The inspection findings reflect the improving standards found in this year's national tests.

86 In 1999 the attainment of pupils at age seven in reading was below national expectations in that 88 per cent of pupils reached the average Level 2 or above but only 12 per cent of the pupils reached the higher than average standard Level 3. In writing standards were also below those expected of pupils of this age because, although 88 per cent again reached the average Level 2, no pupils reached the higher standard Level 3. In both, standards were below those found in similar schools and well below in writing, indicating a lack of challenge for potentially higher attaining pupils.

87 The higher standards observed during the inspection were always at least satisfactory for the majority of pupils. This reflects the standards found in the 2000 tests where the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Levels 2b and 3 had increased to a similar level to that found nationally, indicating improved challenge for these pupils. Standards observed during the inspection indicate that at age nine, pupils' attainments in reading and writing are as expected nationally for pupils of a similar age. The inspection also identified particularly good standards for average and below average attaining pupils in reading.

88 There has been a clear improvement in the performance of boys in reading. In the period 1996 to 1999 the performance of boys and girls was well below the national average, however, the trend is now upwards, as can be seen in the 2000 results.

89 In the teaching of English the school has improved on the standards noted in the last inspection and the overall improvement in the teaching of literacy is good. The literacy strategy has been effectively introduced and there are now systems for monitoring what is taught and for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for setting targets for improvement. The teaching of English has improved and was found to be very good during the inspection. The improvement in accommodation and resources have also made a major contribution to the recent improvement in standards.

90 Attainment in speaking and listening is sound overall. When pupils come into the school they have poorly developed speaking and listening skills. They make good progress because in the nursery and reception classes pupils are provided with a secure basis for work in the National Curriculum and in all year groups speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion activities. Most pupils, even those in reception, are able to speak confidently to adults and in whole school assembly. Older pupils can generate ideas in brain storming sessions - for example when pupils in years three and four were considering the characters in 'The Lion ,the Witch and the Wardrobe' they were able to consider both aspects of the faun's appearance and his character. The highest attaining pupil was able to explain the main character was a careful person because of his appearance while pupils of lower potential attainment were able to identify the key factors in his appearance when answering questions about him. During the inspection there was little evidence of drama and role play other than for the children in nursery and reception but the school does put on large scale dramatic productions , for example for the millennium, in which all pupils participate.

91 Standards in reading are sound for the majority of pupils and there are some really able readers who have reading levels well beyond their chronological age. One special educational need pupil showed particular skills and enjoyment in reading because his confidence and love of books and stories had been so carefully fostered. Pupils enjoy books and take pleasure in reading. The majority of younger pupils can use a variety of strategies to support their reading including the use of phonics and picture cues. The school uses a number of reading schemes and pupils are also encouraged to use a variety of books appropriate to their ability level. This is very carefully monitored. Pupils make good progress as they read to adults frequently because of the well-organised book bag system. They have targeted reading activities outside of the literacy hour and because of this they are often making very good individual progress. Some pupils belong to the public library in the village and their library skills are being effectively developed because of the very good quality of books in the new school library. At present they only have limited opportunities to develop independent research skills through the use of computers. Some pupils have very good reading standards and they are encouraged to make extra progress because of the activities provided in lessons and the range of books available in class libraries. Pupils with below average attainment or special needs make good progress because of the high quality of support staff and volunteers from the community. Pupils are being introduced to a wide range of literature. Younger pupils enjoy stories such as 'Dogger' and poems and rhyming stories such as 'This is the Bear' and 'Ten in a Bed'. Older pupils enjoy poetry and extracts from classical stories by authors such as CS Lewis. Their progress is good because of this rich experience in literature although occasionally more care needs to be taken in choosing texts for individual and group work.

92 Standards in writing are sound overall with creative and factual work in the pupils' 'Special Books' often being good. Written work is usually well presented, with most pupils being able to use joined up writing well. This is now introduced early in their school career and practised frequently. The majority, including those with special educational needs, can write sentences and simple stories by the end of the first key stage because they have frequent opportunities to write and because these skills are well taught. Older pupils can write for different purposes and audiences for example in writing letters. There is evidence in the classroom displays and in the lessons observed that pupils are encouraged to concentrate on grammar, spelling and punctuation - for example the use of verbs and adverbs. Average attaining pupils in year three are able to explain the use of the past and present tense and how the verb endings change. However there are too many errors in basic punctuation, especially in the use of capital letters. The range of written work is good. The books used in the literacy hour offer considerable potential for practical and creative work and pupils take full advantage of this, for example in filling in missing words and writing their own 'silly sentences'. Extended writing is being developed well and average and above average pupils can write detailed accounts, for example about the fate of Boudicca in history, as well as stories with complicated plots and varied characters. Word processing is used to help pupils improve their understanding, for example in writing list of words, but during the week of the inspection computers were under-used to extend pupils' written work.

93 Learning is well monitored by teachers and assessment used in the planning for groups within the class. There is a good match between the teaching strategies in use and the needs of the pupils and this helps pupils to progress well. Pupils with special educational needs are given the kind of support that enables them to make real progress. Pupils are grouped by ability for tasks within the literacy hour

and for activities such as spelling. This attention to meeting the needs of individual pupils is very effective and ensures that all pupils make good progress. Pupils are taught in mixed age and ability classes, tasks and resources are carefully matched to individual pupils including those pupils of potentially high or very high levels of attainment. Pupils enjoy their work in English and because of this behaviour in lessons is very good and they approach tasks in English with confidence and enthusiasm. The majority of younger pupils understand the terms author and illustrator because teachers focus on this during the literacy hour. Most older pupils can distinguish between fiction and non-fiction and know that an index is a valuable part of an information book because they have been given the opportunity to use information books for their own research.

94 The quality of teaching is very good. The majority of individual lessons were judged to be very good. Where a lesson was found to be satisfactory rather than good or better it was because time was not used effectively or resources chosen with sufficient care although other aspects of the lesson were good. Pupils learn the basic skills effectively because class teachers have a good understanding of all aspects of the teaching of the English and because they make lessons enjoyable. The teaching of reading is particularly good and the approach to planning for the literacy hour is very effective. In some lessons pupils made particularly good progress because of the very effective use of resources and the way in which the teacher modelled the area of new learning, for example word endings. Pupils were able to understand something of the appearance of a key character because the teacher used a red woollen muffler, a brown paper parcel and an umbrella as props. The pupils were then able to add the snow from their own imagination! In the most successful lessons pupils made very good or excellent progress because of the quality of questioning and the effective use of time and resources. All teachers have high expectations of the work of their pupils and provide work that challenges and interests them. Learning is very good because of the rigorous approach, the good pace of work in literacy and the quality of support staff and volunteer helpers. The pupils themselves also make a very important contribution by working very hard, concentrating well and being ready to try out new activities.

95 The literacy programme has been implemented effectively and the subject is well managed. Resources for the teaching of English are now very good and they are well used. However during the inspection there were no examples of the use of stories or poetry from other cultures to help pupils value the contribution of, for example Africa and India, to our language and to life in this multi-cultural society. The new approach to monitoring and planning have contributed to the recent improvement in test results and to the very effective teaching and learning observed during the inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96 Standards in mathematics seen during the inspection are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above expected levels in Year 4. This is broadly confirmed by an overall increase in attainment in the national tests for 7-year-olds, over the last four years, from well below average to above average, particularly the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. However, these results have varied widely from year to year. This is due to the small numbers of pupils in Year 2 and the fluctuating mix of pupils from different social backgrounds. In lessons the majority of pupils in all groups attained standards which were higher than expected due to the high quality of the teaching and the enthusiasm and commitment of the pupils.

97 It was not possible to see a great deal of pupils' work during the inspection. However, it was clear from the detailed records, reports and test results and from talking to pupils and teachers, that the level of achievement from the time that pupils enter the school, to when they leave, is good. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls.

98 The teaching of mathematics is very good throughout the school; a very significant improvement since the last inspection. The school has benefited from the early introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the monitoring by the headteacher of the teaching of mathematics. In-service training from the co-ordinator and help from the local advisory service have also contributed to teachers' mathematical confidence and their very secure knowledge and understanding of what they are teaching. All teachers plan with consistent detail and thoroughness to ensure that pupils at all levels of ability are challenged to do their best. Pupils in a mixed Year 2 and 3 class used 3-D shapes, printed cards and a computer program to explore the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. When it was evident that the

higher attaining pupils had understood the concept they were given an extra challenge to move them on further.

99 Teachers have very high expectations and question the pupils creatively, using their answers and comments to develop concepts and build on what they know and understand. This results in very good learning. For instance, in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class, the teacher deliberately made mistakes in her notation for the pupils to spot. One pupil noticed that a figure 8 was the same upside down and back to front. This went on to a discussion of which numbers looked the same or different when reversed. A high proportion of this class could explain why 27 and 72 are different. In the same lesson, a middle ability group could measure the length of a cupboard using a floor robot, coming up with "three and a half Roamer units"! Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are challenged equally successfully and most pupils in Year 4 add two digit numbers accurately during mental mathematics. In response to this very good teaching, most pupils, including potentially high attainers and those with special educational needs, respond equally positively to the very good teaching and make good gains in their learning.

100 Teachers also use a good range of resources and source material to provide tasks at different levels. Teachers work together to devise a mix of national and commercial schemes of work and supplement these with their own ideas. The co-ordinator is monitoring the implementation of this. Some work is still needed in planning the use of resources, as occasionally during the inspection different classes were studying the same area, resulting in everyone wanting the same resources. Although ICT is used well, there are still opportunities being missed, for instance in using computer graphs, to enhance pupils understanding. Good use is made of classroom assistants and volunteer helpers to manage lessons and to teach small groups and this also contributes to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

101 Pupils enjoy mathematics and respond enthusiastically to the warm but firm approach. They concentrate hard, whether in a small group or when the whole class is being taught together. Classes are very well managed by the teachers and pupils grow in confidence as they progress through the school. They take pride in their work and are keen to demonstrate what they know. The assessment process is very good. Teachers mark work regularly, give helpful comments and set regular individual targets for improvement. The results of the assessments are used well to develop the teaching programme. The reports provided by the school for parents, detail what the pupils know and understand and what they could do to improve further.

102 The strong leadership shown by the co-ordinator ensures a very clear educational direction and sense of purpose. The development of mathematics has been very good, ensuring that targets have been exceeded. Both the issues of action from the last inspection have been very effectively dealt with. The whole school commitment to the continuing improvement in standards is also very good.

## SCIENCE

103 Standards in science seen during the inspection are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and matched those expected of pupils in Year 4. This is across the range of different areas of science that are tested and is an improvement since the previous inspection. Results of the National Curriculum tests set by teachers for 7 year olds in 1999 and 2000 are not helpful in determining an overall level of performance, compared with similar schools nationally. In 1999 all the pupils reached the nationally expected level (level 2) but none reached the higher level (level 3). At the time of the inspection, national statistics are not available for the 2000 tests but it appears that the position has reversed with a well below average number of pupils reaching the level 2 but an above average number reaching level 3. It was not possible to see very much work by pupils during the inspection. However, by looking at the teachers' records, reports and test results and from talking to pupils and teachers, it must be concluded that these results are, at least partly, due to the very variable mix of pupils in the small year groups. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

104 Teaching throughout the school is good. There are promising signs that, due to the good teaching and the enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge of the pupils, achievement is good and attainment is set to improve. The teachers' planning is consistently detailed and thorough with teachers taking opportunities to reinforce the correct vocabulary and technical terms. In one mixed Year 2 and 3 class, almost all pupils could think of a wide range of animal names and say what a particular animal was when described by one of their classmates. Teachers normally devise carefully graded tasks for pupils at different levels to ensure that they are all challenged appropriately and generally all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. However, this does not happen in all cases, as in one that involved research using pictures, books and a CD-ROM. This was fine for all but the low attaining pupils who were not able to cope with an approach that depended on such a high level of independent learning. Nevertheless the teachers' expectations are undoubtedly high and at Key Stage 2 very high: they provide opportunities to make predictions, test ideas and draw conclusions and make sure that pupils learn what constitutes a 'fair test'. An open ended approach to learning about magnetism with a year 3 and 4 class showed that pupils were able to work together to set up the experiment and record the results with little intervention or prompting from the teacher. They automatically employed knowledge and understanding they had gained earlier, resulting in good learning.

105 Pupils enjoy science, work hard and are keen to show what they know and understand. Their behaviour is very good and they get on well with each other and the adults. The teachers' management of the pupils and organisation of the classroom are good. This also helps to contribute to the warm family atmosphere and calm approach. The teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm and interesting resources often create a level of excitement and involvement which makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

106 Despite the recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the school's move to new premises, science has continued to be developed. The co-ordinator has used a study of pupils' attainment to point to areas for improvement and the school has adopted a national scheme of work. This has been adapted to ensure continuity and progression in learning for the mixed age classes and is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the teaching programme was incomplete. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in science, and this is a weakness, although informal and regular discussions between teachers take place. The pupils' work is assessed regularly, though informally, and this is used satisfactorily to provide reports to parents and help plan developments in teaching. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has plans to develop a portfolio of graded work and to put the assessment of science on a more formal basis. The school makes effective use of a good range of science resources. Also included in the development plan is a new pond and environmental area in the school grounds to supplement the very good visits and field trips that take place, particularly to the local National Park.

## ART

107 Standards of attainment in art are in line with those of pupils of a similar age. All work seen was of at least a sound level of attainment with individual pupils producing vivid, colourful and skilful pieces for example in portraiture and work in clay. Planning is very clearly focused and shows a comprehensive coverage of the appropriate areas of work. The provision for art in the school is good. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection in the resources and facilities available for art and in the teaching observed during the inspection.

108 The pupils' work, which is effectively displayed in classrooms, shows a good level of achievement in all aspects of art including clay-work, collage, drawing, painting and the use of colour. In response to good teaching the progress of pupils in portrait painting is particularly good. Nursery pupils were observed working confidently with paint to produce pictures of teddy bears and in reception pupils have produced very effective watery pictures, copying the effect of raindrops on paint, which was a useful early experience in water colour painting technique. Following careful demonstration and questioning by the teachers, pupils can now mix their own colours rather than always using ready mixed paints.

109 The teachers provide well-planned opportunities so that all pupils are encouraged to develop techniques in painting, drawing, printing and work in clay. During the inspection, leaf print pictures were on display as were some very effective pictures of trees against a black background. This work was part of a cross-curricular activity on Autumn which also involved poetry written by the pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the acquisition of skills in practical tasks. For example, the teachers planned work on the making of masks and portraits so that pupils were able to use different techniques and resources. This captured the pupils' interest and promoted their learning. Younger pupils used mirrors and photographs of themselves while older pupils used a self-portrait by Francis Bacon as a source of inspiration. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Sketch books are well used by pupils in year 4, for example, in planning and designing their masks, but other than the written comments of pupils' work in their annual report, there is little use of recorded assessments to inform future teaching and learning and this is a weakness.

110 The teaching of art in the school is one that fosters the development of skills and aesthetic awareness effectively but art is also well used to support work in other subjects. Pupils have completed observational drawing and pictures related to their work in other subjects. There are vivid pieces of related work on portraits of the Tudor monarchs. Three dimensional creative work is often closely related to other subjects; during the inspection clay animals were made as part of a science lesson. Because the teachers in the nursery and reception classes provide an effectively enjoyable and exciting introduction to work in the subject, pupils are happy to attempt challenging activities as they progress through the school. They learn well because teachers explain techniques to them and because they are eager to experiment for themselves.

111 Planning documents and the work around the school show that teaching is good and that there is an appropriate focus on the work of famous artists and on the teaching of skills in drawing and painting. Art is well-resourced and basic materials and equipment are readily accessible. Art related computer software was being used appropriately during the inspection. The subject is managed well and the co-ordinator has a real enthusiasm and flair for art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112 The pupils' attainment in the subject is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and matches that expected of pupils in Year 4. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

113 Although there was little work available for scrutiny, the work which had been done this term plus work in class and some photographic evidence indicate that pupils are achieving an appropriate standard for their age in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 2 are able to examine puppets to see how they are made and to use templates to cut out and sew a glove puppet. Pupils in Year 4 can make wheeled vehicles such as a land yacht. The standard of finish is satisfactory and, in class, the older pupils are able to say what they could do to improve their design. This is an improvement since the last inspection when little evaluation took place. There is little evidence to show that pupils are able

to develop step by step designs on their own but the work is usually colourful and imaginative and well made. A range of work in textiles, such as collages and puppets, feature prominently as displays in the new school.

114 Teaching is good. Well-planned lessons with clear objectives and a good range of resources enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve good progress. Teachers have high expectations and pupils work hard. In one lesson with a Year 2 and Year 3 class, a hush of intense concentration descended as the work developed to the more difficult bit. The teacher and classroom assistants helped pupils who were having difficulty and the higher attainers rose to the challenge. Pupils enjoy the lessons, because teachers ensure that the work is challenging and interesting. It is often related to work in other subjects such as history and geography which helps make it more relevant.

115 Despite the restrictions imposed by the emphasis on the core curriculum, the enthusiastic co-ordinator has maintained the level of interest in the subject. Last term there was a successful 'technology week' in conjunction with the local middle school on the theme of the beach. Older pupils worked with younger ones to design and make boats, sun glasses and a range of foods. The program of study is based appropriately on a national scheme. This covers the National Curriculum effectively and provides progression in learning but assessment is informal and not yet used to help develop teaching and learning. Teachers make good use of the very good accommodation. The large bright spaces for working, storage and display provide a stimulating environment in which to learn.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116 Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 generally achieve standards similar to those expected of pupils of this age. This is particularly the case in their acquisition of mapping skills and this represents a positive improvement since the last inspection. Due to the school's cycle of planning, few lessons were observed during the week of the inspection but observations of a limited sample of pupils' work, of displayed and photographed evidence, and discussions with pupils, show that most pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Potentially higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have their particular requirements met through careful planning and they too achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment.

117 Discussions with teachers and an examination of their planning showed that they have improved their planning of the curriculum since the last inspection. The teachers plan together and base the cycle of topics to be studied closely on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) scheme of work. This is ensuring that pupils are taught all strands and develop appropriate skills in all areas of the subject. Individual teachers also plan each lesson in detail, identify clear learning objectives and target the needs of pupils of differing prior attainment effectively and this is enabling most pupils to acquire satisfactory knowledge and understanding. In the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1, the pupils learned to compare and contrast life in Great Britain with life in India and noted the differences and similarities. For example, they correctly identified that cricket is a popular sport in both countries and established that house styles are different.

118 Studies of the local environment play a significant role in helping pupils to acquire the necessary skills in geographical study. From an early age children compare and contrast similar and different locations, for example, they compare their homes with the school. Pupils in Year 1 consider and draw simple plans of their journeys to school, study maps of Dulverton and the local area and use outlines of the British Isles to record perceptive comparisons with countries further afield. Most pupils develop a satisfactory level of attainment in this key stage. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue their local studies, particularly of Exmoor and occasionally with support from the National Park Authority, and develop their knowledge to an appropriate depth. When questioned, for example, pupils in Year 4 can describe the main features of the local area, noting the weather and how it is influenced by the hills and moorland of Exmoor and correctly identify farming and tourism as important enterprises of the local community. Their knowledge of cultural issues, such as the cultural differences between communities in Great Britain and Africa and particularly between and within communities in England is less well developed, however.

119 The teachers make good use of visits, including residential visits to extend and deepen the pupils' understanding. All classes make beneficial visits to the village to study the shops and local amenities. As they grow older the pupils visit places further afield, such as Minehead and Pinkery Pond on Exmoor, to study the impact of water on the environment, for example. During the inspection, except for the work with the Exmoor National Park Authority, few examples were seen of pupils using information technology to aid their learning or of the pupils' numeracy skills being promoted by work in the subject and these remain weaknesses requiring further improvement.

120 The teaching and learning observed in Key Stage 1 was good. The teacher's planning was comprehensive and the clear focus on a specific learning objective underpinned this successful teaching. For example, the teacher's consistent and careful questioning based on differences and similarities between India and Great Britain ensured that pupils were required to think and to consider and to work collaboratively and this aided their learning. The teacher promoted very good relationships and showed warmth and valued the pupils' responses and this encouraged the pupils' strongly positive attitudes and ensured their good behaviour. The pupils enjoyed their work and this enriched their learning. There were insufficient opportunities to judge the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2, but the teachers' planning showed that the subject is included appropriately in the taught curriculum. When questioned, pupils demonstrated enthusiasm for the subject.

121 The curriculum contains sufficient breadth and balance and follows an appropriately planned two-year topic cycle. Discussions with the teachers and observations of other subjects across the curriculum show that the teachers know their pupils well, they use questions well in lessons to assess pupils' knowledge on a day-to-day basis and these are recorded sufficiently in annual reports. However, there is little recorded evidence of teachers using written assessments of pupils' work in the subject to inform future teaching and learning and this is a weakness. The subject is co-ordinated satisfactorily by the headteacher who has promoted improvements to the curriculum. There is insufficient monitoring of standards in the subject, however. The resources are good and are enriched by a good supply of books in the library. The local area is used well to support learning and the new accommodation and attractive displays, such as the artefacts from Banda School, Kampala, Uganda, are increasingly used to encourage learning.

## **HISTORY**

122 Standards are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age. Some pupils do find writing about the subject difficult but the majority have a good understanding of how we find out about the past. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand that life has changed over time and that certain people and events have been of great significance. By the age of nine they also understand about research methods and that there are varied sources of evidence that they can use to find out about life in the past. Pupils achieve well because they are being given work that really interests them and tasks that involve them in well structured, research based, activities.

123 Learning is very effective. Pupils can write about and talk about their studies and show an understanding of change over time. Their 'special books' have detailed accounts of events during the Roman occupation of Britain. Higher attaining pupils were able to write in detail about the life of Boudicca and to understand why she took poison rather than be captured by her enemies. Pupils with lower attainment levels retold the main events in her story well and also illustrated it. During the inspection, pupils in Key Stage 2 showed real enthusiasm for the study of Tudor history because they studied a real place, Bayleaf Farmhouse, to find out about life the sixteenth century. The use of inventories of the possessions of a yeoman farmer and a poor man who earned a meagre living by fishing helped them to a clearer understanding of the differences between rich and poor.

124 Progress through the school is secure with the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, making good progress in developing an ability to sequence events and an awareness of chronology and change over time. They begin to understand their own place in history because they bring in photographs of themselves as babies. In Key Stage 1 pupils show that they are developing an understanding of the ways that life in the past was different from today, for example by identifying the differences in clothing and everyday activities in old photographs. Because they were given magnifying glasses to use they learned to examine the photographs really carefully. In Key Stage 2 pupils of

average attainment are able to examine evidence to find information and higher attainers show the ability to undertake detailed research tasks.

125 The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual moral, social and cultural education of pupils for example when pupils discuss the behaviour of Henry V111 or examined the portraits of Elizabeth 1. Discussion with pupils and looking at their work shows clearly that they enjoy their work and they work really hard in lessons. Creative work, for example portraits and drama, related to topics in history is often very good and written work is usually well presented. Pupils benefit from being given the opportunity for imaginative and extended writing which makes a valuable contribution to their progress in English. Participation in the 'millennium concert' helped them to a greater level of knowledge of key events in the past and was obviously very much enjoyed by everyone who took part. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the quality of support available to them. The research based approach provides really challenging learning opportunities for higher attaining pupils.

126 Teaching was very good in all of the lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic; they respond well to pupils' questions and promote learning even more with penetrative questions of their own. The teachers give the pupils interesting tasks and planning is effective in ensuring links with other subjects such as art and English. These strategies also have a positive effect on the pupils' learning. Resources are good and the school supplements them with a variety of visits to museums in Tiverton and Exeter and to the Roman baths in Bath. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the development of all aspects of work in history. There has been good level of improvement since the last inspection particularly in the use of new schemes of work with a focus on research skills. Procedures for assessment of pupils' work, however, are unsatisfactory.

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

127 The pupils' attainment in ICT is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and matches the standard expected of pupils in Year 4. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below national expectations.

128 This improvement is due to the development of a policy and scheme of work, greatly improved resources and the training of all staff. By the time they are seven, pupils can write simple text, programme a floor robot and extract information from a CD-ROM. They are skilled at using the mouse to draw pictures or arrange elements in a pictorial database. By the time they leave school, pupils have developed their word processing skills, producing formatted text in a variety of styles, to suit poetry, stories or labels. Some areas of the curriculum are under-developed. For instance, few pupils understood fully how to save and retrieve work or to make a graph using a simple database. However, even the youngest pupils can obtain a printout when making a computer 'painting'.

129 Little actual teaching of ICT was observed during the inspection although, in several subjects, particularly the core, teachers regularly planned and employed ICT to enhance pupils learning. In all cases the work was relevant and useful and contributed to the good or very good teaching and learning. In a science lesson, pupils enjoyed using a program to reveal the skeletons of different species of animals. In mathematics, a powerful CD-ROM program with sound, animation and video helped pupils understand 3-dimensional shapes. In design technology, pupils were able to use a paint program to design templates for a sewing exercise. In art, great excitement was generated as pupils used a computer to draw and print out portraits of each other. Pupils work well at the computer, listen carefully to instructions from the teacher and, when working as a group, help and prompt each other without fuss. Generally, in response to satisfactory teaching overall in ICT, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over time as they move through the school. However, progress could be greater for many pupils, especially potentially higher attainers if pupils were provided with more opportunities to work with computers.

130 The new co-ordinator has not had time to monitor teaching and learning to see what effect the recent introduction of the national scheme of work has had on the pupils' progress. She knows that, with the recent installation of an up-to-date computer network and the Internet, other important areas of the subject need to be tackled to enrich the school curriculum. In addition, the present informal system

of assessment is insufficient and does not fully support the school's undoubted commitment to raise attainment.

## **MUSIC**

131 The attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 meets that expected of pupils of this age and most pupils, including those with special educational needs and potentially higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress over time as they move through the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils were judged to have limited skills, particularly in performing and composing. This has been achieved by the appointment of new staff, by additional staff training and by updating the scheme of work. As a result teachers are now more confident and encourage the pupils to learn through practical experience, with percussion instruments in particular, and this has led to the improvement in the pupils' skills.

132 The quality of teaching ranges from good to very good, and it is good overall, indicating improving provision across the school. In the majority of lessons and activities such as choir and hymn practice, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making good progress in response to the teachers' and voluntary helper's good questioning and fine example. From an early age children learn how to keep time with a beat when clapping. They sing their favourite action songs such as "wind the bobbin up" with confidence and show very positive attitudes towards the subject. The pupils respond well to the teachers' encouragement and know that their efforts are appreciated and valued and this encourages them to contribute heartily. As a consequence, many pupils have developed a good sense of rhythm by the time they leave Key Stage 1.

133 In the lesson observed in Key Stage 1, the teacher continually revisited the stated learning objective of the lesson, to control pulse and to be able to clap or play instruments together, and this enabled most pupils to progress well from clapping together to playing untuned percussion instruments together successfully. The teacher used questions effectively to promote the pupils' learning and she was careful to challenge all pupils appropriately in relation to their prior knowledge and understanding and this well planned inclusion promoted the pupils' positive attitudes and developed their understanding of pulse and beat.

134 This careful emphasis on involving all pupils and in planning carefully so that activities have a clear purpose was also seen to good effect in lessons in Key Stage 2. Teachers develop and utilise very good relationships with and between the pupils and learning is enriched by the way the pupils respond positively to their teachers and learn well through interacting with each other. For example they share instruments readily and are beginning to evaluate their own and each other's efforts and this is supporting learning. This is especially the case when pupils are performing or composing using percussion instruments, it is less well developed when pupils are listening to music and this element of the curriculum is yet to be developed to the full.

135 The teacher of the extra-curricular choir and the governor who leads the hymn singing in assemblies also promote a love of music and of singing together successfully. As a consequence pupils across the school sing well in harmony and this has a significant impact in supporting the excellent ethos of the school. There is scope to develop the pupils' love of music more specifically in all classes to enrich the pupils' cultural development for there was little evidence during the week of the inspection of pupils listening or appraising music from cultures different to their own.

136 The curriculum has been significantly improved since the last inspection. It is broad and balanced and is underpinned appropriately by the QCA's scheme of work. The curriculum is enriched by the hymn singing in assembly, by the newly introduced choir and by regular annual performances such as the concerts in the local church at Christmas time. The recently appointed co-ordinator is providing effective leadership and has plans to develop the subject more fully across the school. She has introduced the choir and has plans to monitor standards and to develop more effective procedures for assessing pupils' skills. Additional resources have been obtained with the move into the new school facilities. The environment for learning in the subject is much improved; limited use is made of ICT at this stage to enrich learning even more. Music now has an appropriate place within the whole school curriculum.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137 Across the school, pupils attain satisfactory standards for their age. In response to improved teaching and increasingly effective use of the considerably improved facilities and resources, more pupils are developing their skills to an appropriate level and are making satisfactory progress overtime as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged warmly and also make satisfactory progress. A few pupils show the potential to attain higher levels of skill, but generally these are not fully achieved due to the inconsistent challenge offered to such pupils across the breadth of the subject. However, observations of lessons indicate an increasing level of challenge and expectation now being offered to pupils, for example, during coaching sessions in tennis. A few pupils benefit from additional coaching outside school, but the school has yet to make the most of its significantly improved facilities to raise standards due to building contractors' problems in bringing the tarmac playground surface and the grassed playing field to the required standard. This has delayed the development of lunchtime sports clubs, which the school is considering for the future.

138 Games, gymnastics and movement activities were observed during the inspection and evidence is also based on observations of pupils at play, photographs, curriculum plans and discussions with teachers and pupils. These show that pupils are developing very positive attitudes towards the subject and are keen to improve their performance, to learn from each other and to play together. The new school is located much closer to the middle school and this is enabling pupils to enjoy more regular swimming and to achieve higher than average skills in this aspect than most pupils of their age.

139 Observations of lessons show that the quality of teaching is improving across the school as the teachers learn to use the much-improved indoor space provided by the new hall. Teaching is good overall. The teachers encourage full use of the fixed and portable climbing apparatus and such lessons are a regular feature of the curriculum. This is helping to develop the pupils' climbing, balancing and jumping skills; aspects criticised at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils respond well to these well-planned experiences and encouraged by the teachers make increasingly more effective use of the space available. The degree to which a significant proportion of pupils still need reminding of the need to make full use of the hall space reflects the previous restriction placed on pupils' acquiring such awareness in the inadequate facilities of the old school.

140 The teachers are careful to teach the importance of physical exercise to health. They insist that pupils dress properly for activity and complete appropriate 'warm-up' routines at the beginning of lessons, but the full benefit of such tuition is not achieved as only a few teachers reinforce this message by wearing appropriate clothing themselves. Teaching is strengthened, however, by the teachers' detailed planning, by their good use of questioning to extend the pupils' learning and by regularly involving the pupils in evaluating their own and each other's performance. This was seen to good effect in gymnastics. Standards could be higher, however if teachers were to set higher expectations in terms of the quality of balances and landings, for example, when jumping from pieces of apparatus on to the mats provided.

141 The curriculum is effectively planned and is supported by reference to published scheme of work and the QCA's guidance. Outdoor pursuits are offered appropriately to pupils in Year 4 during the biennial residential visits to the Exmoor National Park. The teachers assess the pupils' work satisfactorily in lessons and report briefly to parents in the pupils' annual reports. However, insufficient use is made of the pupils' own evaluations of their progress and skills and of recorded assessments of their work by their teachers to inform future teaching and learning. Leadership has been satisfactory in terms of improving the planned curriculum and in helping to establish a good supply of resources, but its impact in evaluating the quality of learning and the standards reached across the school is limited and the co-ordinator has insufficient time to complete these tasks effectively. The accommodation, facilities and resources have been substantially improved since the last inspection. For the variety of reasons mentioned earlier, extra-curricular sporting activities have yet to be introduced, and opportunities for potentially higher attaining pupils to achieve appropriate standards are restricted. The school is considering utilising the strong community and parental support to address these weaknesses in the near future.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

142 The pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 1 generally meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus but their attainments in Key Stage 2 are below expectation, particularly in the pupils' knowledge and awareness of other religious belief and practice. Across the school pupils receive a good grounding in Christian belief and traditions and the teachers are successful in enriching these studies with the pupils' own experiences from home. The school continues good links with local churches. Annual school and community events such as the Christmas concert focus on the parish church and underpin the spiritual dimension of school life. In this aspect, provision has improved since the last inspection.

143 The school has also improved the planned curriculum since the last inspection, by considering the guidance from QCA, and by close adherence to the updated locally Agreed Syllabus. This has had a positive impact on the teachers' confidence and planning and has strengthened the provision. At the time of the inspection, however, in the absence of samples of pupils' work, additional discussions with staff and particularly with pupils in Year 4, show that there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge and awareness of other religious viewpoints. The teachers' plans show that pupils will be introduced to Judaism as a contrasting world faith to compare with Christianity. However, given other weaknesses in the pupils' wider cultural development, the emphasis on other religious belief and customs is inadequate and there has not been sufficient improvement since the last inspection.

144 Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn what it means to belong to Christian community. They are introduced sensitively to practices such as baptism, develop an appropriate awareness of God and what it means to people when they feel members of God's family. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the pupils built on their previous knowledge of new brothers and sisters arriving into a family and understood the Christian beliefs associated with welcoming people into God's family through baptism. Pupils in this key stage develop a sufficient awareness of other viewpoints through stories and in other subjects such as geography, for example, in their studies of other countries such as India, especially in their discussions where they compare and contrast their own lives with those of people elsewhere. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over time in Key Stage 1, but observations of lessons indicate that an increasing proportion of pupils are making good progress in response to good teaching.

145 Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn well about Christianity and they can name and describe the key features within the church, for example, but their progress overall, by the time they leave the school, is unsatisfactory and the breadth of their knowledge, concerning the impact of religious viewpoints on people's lives, for example, is below expectation. Work in the subject is not supported sufficiently by the use of religious artefacts and there were few displays depicting religious themes or beliefs. Music and art are not developed to their full potential in supporting the pupils' work and there was little evidence to show that religious education is developing or contributing to the pupils' literacy skills. In this key stage, pupils with special educational needs and particularly potentially higher attaining pupils also make unsatisfactory progress.

146 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good, pupils are motivated well and are encouraged to think carefully about their work. The teachers establish productive links with the pupils' previous experience and use these successfully to promote greater understanding. For example, in the lesson in Year 2, the teacher strengthened a discussion about Christian baptism by providing an opportunity for the pupils to support the development of new life themselves by planting acorns. This reinforced the pupils' understanding of a new beginning and was most successful in helping them to learn. The teachers' value the pupils' ideas, incorporate them well into purposeful questioning and this generates positive attitudes. Due to the school's cycle of planning there were insufficient opportunities to judge the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. Discussions with pupils, however, show that positive attitudes toward the subject continue into this key stage.

147 The subject is led satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. She has been instrumental in raising the confidence of teachers, in updating the planned curriculum, and in supporting teachers with their planning. As yet, however, improved provision has not impacted sufficiently to bridge the gaps in pupils' understanding at the end of Key Stage 2. She has insufficient time, however, to monitor standards

across the school. The curriculum conforms with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus but assessments of pupils' work are not used sufficiently to inform future teaching and learning and this is a weakness. Resources are generally satisfactory and although the school takes advantage of loans of religious artefacts from time to time, the school has too few artefacts at its disposal to support learning to the full. Work in the subject is not contributing as much as it could to life and learning in the school.