

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St Mary's Catholic First School**

Wool, Wareham

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113824

Headteacher: Mrs M.Barker

Reporting inspector: Mrs A.J.Pangbourne  
23818

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225020

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Folly Lane Wool Wareham Dorset
Postcode:	BH20 6DS
Telephone number:	01929 462565
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E. Baker
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Alison Pangbourne 23818	Registered inspector	Under fives	The school's results and achievements
		English	How well are pupils taught?
		Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Music	
		Art and design	
Ken Parsons 9756	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 its parents?
Graham Jones 27523	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
		Science	
		Design and technology	
		History	
		Geography	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	
		Equal opportunities	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's Catholic First School is situated in the village of Wool near Wareham. It draws its pupils from a very wide area, including the Army base at Bovington. About one third of the pupils come from Army families and many arrive or leave at short notice. Sometimes there is a high turnover of pupils, depending on the movements of the regiments. Approximately 38 per cent of pupils come from Catholic families. Children's attainments on entry are broadly average. At the time of the inspection, there were 92 pupils on roll. There were 12 pupils with special educational needs and one of these pupils had a statement of special educational need, which is broadly average. There are slightly more boys than girls. There are few pupils from ethnic heritages. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are broadly average with 12 per cent entitled to a free school meal, which is also broadly average.

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

This is an effective school with many very good features. Standards are above the national expectation in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4. Pupils are achieving well. This is because the quality of teaching is good and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, enabling many to reach national standards. The headteacher provides good leadership, and is well supported by governors and staff. All are committed to raising standards still further. A judgement on value for money is based on what the school achieves in relation to its expenditure. The school's income is above average, as is usual for a small school. The school makes good provision for the non-academic needs of its pupils, standards are high and the quality of teaching is good. The school's expenditure is high and so it provides sound value for money.

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

- Standards are above national expectations in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school, because the quality of teaching is good and there is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils do better than expected for their ages in art and music because the school provides specialist teachers who have an enthusiasm for the subject.
- Provision for spiritual development is excellent and contributes to the outstanding way in which the aims of the school are reflected in all its work.
- Provision for social and moral development is very good and as a result, pupils behave well, show very good attitudes to their work and work very well together.
- The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and gives them a very positive start to their education.
- The school is well led and the headteacher and governors monitor its performance very well, resulting in good improvement since the previous inspection.

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

- The measures put into place by the school to improve the quality of teaching for the temporary teacher for the oldest pupils have not yet fully taken effect, and as a result, the quality of teaching for these pupils is not as high as it is in the other classes.
- The way in which the school promotes an understanding of the multicultural society that exists in Britain.

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

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

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in 1997. Standards have improved in mathematics and science, and high standards have been maintained in English. The quality of teaching and learning has improved. The provision for children aged under five has improved significantly. Very good lesson planning is now in place, provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good and well prepared classroom assistants make a positive contribution to the standards attained. The school is well placed to make further improvement.

## 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	B	A	B	B
Writing	B	B	A	B
Mathematics	B	B	B	B

**Key**

Well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 Average                C  
 Below average        D  
 Well below average   E

The information shows that the performance of pupils in 2000 was above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing when compared to all schools. In comparison with similar schools, results were above average in all three subjects. Given the small number of pupils in each year group, too much emphasis should not be placed on any one year's performance. However, pupils are achieving well, with almost all pupils in 2000 reaching the nationally expected level, and a significant number exceeding it in all three subjects.

Inspection evidence broadly confirms these results, with standards being above national expectations in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1. By the time they leave the school, at the end of Year 4, pupils continue to attain standards in English, mathematics and science that exceed the expectation for their age. Pupils do particularly well in their learning even though so many change schools frequently. For example, last year almost one third of the pupils joined or left the school during the year. This year, the turnover is slightly less. Pupils do better than expected for their ages in art and music because the specialist teachers have very good subject knowledge and use interesting resources that motivate the pupils. Standards meet expectations in all other subjects and pupils achieve as they should.

The size of the school means that the comparison of results in recent years as an indicator of improvement is unreliable. This is because there are differences in the number of pupils in each year group. However, results in recent years have been above average. The school sets challenging targets to increase the number of pupils achieving higher levels as well as targets for individual pupils which are reviewed regularly to ensure they provide sufficient challenge. This year the school is on course to meet its targets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They enjoy coming to school because they are offered interesting activities. They want to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well and are polite and courteous and show respect for property.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils take responsibility for a range of duties around the school. They are welcoming towards new pupils and relate very well to each other.



Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are rarely late for school and lessons start promptly.
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- The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, for example where older pupils take care of younger ones as part of the school's 'Redhat' system, is a strong feature and contributes to their personal development.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

Taking all aspects of teaching into account, the quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 94 per cent of lessons seen during the inspection and 35 per cent were very good. Six per cent were unsatisfactory. Eighty per cent of lessons were good or better. The quality of teaching is highest in the Foundation Stage and in Year 3 where it is very good overall. Consistently good teaching was seen for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. In Year 4, although the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, two lessons were unsatisfactory. Teaching in English and mathematics is good, enabling all pupils to make good gains in their learning and contributing to the good progress made. Literacy and numeracy skills are also taught well. Strengths in the quality of teaching include very high expectations, very well managed pupils, the very effective use of stimulating resources and very well planned activities that are well matched to the needs of all pupils and make learning fun. Small classes and the effective use of talented classroom assistants contribute positively to the progress made. In the class where children are aged under five, the quality of teaching is very high and activities are very well planned to match the interests and attention span of the children. The teacher successfully weaves the teaching of several skills together, resulting in exciting activities and well-motivated children. Where teaching is less successful in Year 4, and particularly in the unsatisfactory lessons, activities are not sufficiently exciting to motivate all pupils, pace slows and the behaviour of a small minority of pupils is allowed to go unchecked for too long, resulting in disruption for other pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. The contribution made by the community is good. All statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision. Good quality classroom support enables these pupils to make very good progress. Work is carefully matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent provision for spiritual development is very much part of the ethos of the school. There is very good provision for moral and social development. Provision for cultural development is good. The school is good at promoting local cultures but it is not so successful in promoting an understanding of the multicultural society that exists in Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Staff know the pupils very well and monitor their personal development effectively. Good assessment procedures ensure that all pupils are offered tasks that are well matched to their needs.

- The school enjoys a good partnership with its parents. They make a very good contribution to their children's learning by supporting the school's homework policy. Initiatives such as weekly 'review

days' where pupils show parents what they have been doing in school contribute to the very good impact of their involvement on the work of the school.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership, achieving much since her appointment three years ago. She has managed the school efficiently despite difficulties with long-term sickness of staff. She is well supported by the other teachers who share in the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are very supportive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. One of the reasons for the school's success is the attention it gives to identifying and addressing areas of weakness. The quality of teaching is very effectively monitored and this leads to high standards of teaching in most classes in the school. Successful monitoring has already identified areas of weakness in the class for the oldest pupils and measures are in place to address them.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The generous provision of support staff has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. The provision for specialist teachers to teach art and music has a positive impact on the standards attained.

- The school is well staffed and has small classes. There are a good number of support staff who contribute positively to standards. The accommodation is satisfactory, having been improved recently to provide cloakrooms, new offices and a staffroom. However, the hall is small and there is currently no designated play area for the youngest children, although this is to be addressed shortly. There is a good range of resources.
- The principles of best value are applied well.

### 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>• The teaching is good and their children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• They receive good information about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• There is a good range of extra curricular activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like their children to have more homework and others would like less.</li> <li>• The great majority of parents think that the school is managed well, but a small minority disagrees.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agreed with the strengths mentioned by the parents but found that arrangements for homework are good and that the part parents play in supporting pupils with their homework contributes strongly to the standards attained. The leadership and management of the school are judged to be good, with the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance being very good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The significance of comparative test results or teacher assessments, as measures of school performance, depends on the number of pupils in a year group. Given the small number of pupils in each year group, too much emphasis should not be placed upon any one year's National Curriculum test results.

2. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, the results achieved by the pupils were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing when compared with all schools. Teacher assessments in science show that the proportion of pupils who reached the nationally expected standards was broadly average. All but one pupil reached the expected level in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Five pupils exceeded the nationally expected level in reading, two pupils in writing and six pupils in mathematics. Seven pupils exceeded the expected level in science. The school has improved on the average standards in mathematics and science and maintained the above average standards in English that were identified in the previous inspection. Given the transient nature of the population, pupils are achieving well.

3. The relatively small size of the year groups means that a comparison of results in recent years as an indicator of improvement is also unreliable. However, results between 1997 and 2000 show levels of attainment that are generally above average in all subjects. In 1999, the year group was much larger than usual and provides more reliable data for comparison. Standards were above average for these pupils too. The school is not obliged to set statutory targets for improvement but sets its own challenging targets to improve the numbers of pupils achieving higher levels in English and mathematics. It also sets challenging individual targets based on a thorough on-going analysis of baseline assessments, standardised tests and statutory tests. These targets are shared with parents and regularly reviewed to ensure that they provide sufficient challenge for all pupils. This contributes positively to the high standards because both pupils and parents work well together with the school to achieve the targets.

4. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average in all the areas of learning for the current reception class. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and achieve well, firmly consolidating and broadening their understanding. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage at the end of the reception year, most children have attained the early learning goals in all the areas of learning. Baseline assessments show a similar picture for previous years. However, in some years a significant number of pupils arrive or leave the school at short notice. For example, last year the turnover of pupils amounted to almost one third. This year the figure is slightly less. Consequently, the results of the school's baseline assessments may not represent an accurate picture of the potential attainment of a proportion of the pupils. By Year 4, several pupils have attended many different schools. At least one pupil has attended seven schools. The mobility of the pupils has a significant effect on the standards attained and the school is doing well to sustain high standards.

5. There are several reasons why pupils do so well by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. The very good provision for special educational needs enables most to reach national standards. The high quality of the teaching in most classes, the well prepared support staff and the attention paid to identifying areas of weakness, both for this school and for individuals, also contributes to the high standards. The strong ethos of the school, where new pupils are encouraged to settle quickly and good assessment procedures ensure that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils, are other factors. The school makes every effort to ensure that parents are well informed about how to help their children at home and this is another significant factor.

6. Compared to schools in a similar context, with between eight and 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, attainment was above average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2000. However, the small cohort again makes comparisons less significant, but suggests that the pupils are doing well.

7. Inspection evidence shows that standards overall are above national expectations for the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils achieve above expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards also exceed those expected in speaking and listening, reading and writing. By the time they leave the school, at the end of Year 4, pupils continue to attain standards that exceed expectations for their age. They are achieving well. The school has implemented several initiatives to ensure that pupils continue to do well. It identified standards in writing as a relative weakness and so a spelling book was developed which assists parents to help their child with spelling at home. This is well linked to the spelling programme taught in school and is a significant factor in the ten per cent improvement each year in the number of pupils reaching the expected level in writing. Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, particularly in Key Stage 2, ensures that these pupils attain their potential. Very good monitoring of teaching ensures that the quality of teaching is consistently high in Years 1, 2 and 3, where teachers provide challenge for pupils of all abilities. A thorough understanding of how to teach the literacy and numeracy strategies also make a significant contribution to the standards attained.

8. Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology, history, geography and physical education meet those expected for their ages by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, and pupils achieve as they should. Pupils exceed the national expectation for their ages in art and design and music because of the specialist teaching that they receive. Standards have been broadly maintained in most of these subjects since the previous inspection, although standards in music throughout the school and in art and design at Key Stage 1 have improved. Pupils do so well in these two subjects because the specialist teachers have an enthusiasm for the subject and use interesting resources, which motivate the pupils. The previous inspection suggested that standards in information and communication technology were higher than they are now, but the curriculum and the criteria for inspecting the subject have changed so standards have not, in fact, declined.

9. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. A factor that contributes to this, is the way in which pupils use their literacy skills to enhance learning in other areas. For example, they write postcards and accounts of 'David Bear', the travelling teddy, in geography, label cartoons about losing teeth in science, write poetry using information and communication technology and, in history, write about how their village has changed. Numeracy lessons start with brisk mental problems and pupils use their numeracy skills well to compile graphs of temperatures around the world in geography and when measuring materials to make playground equipment in design and technology.

10. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is due to the high quality of the teaching and the very good provision made for them. Higher attaining pupils also do well because their needs are well met. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls.

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

11. The pupils have a very good attitude to their education. They are happy to come to school in the morning. They go to their classes without wasting time and are ready to start work when the school day commences. They enjoy coming to school because they know that they will be offered interesting activities and that their contributions will be valued. They are keen to learn and are attentive and conscientious in lessons. This very positive attitude stems from the school's strong ethos, the good quality of teaching pupils experience in most lessons and the support parents provide for their children. The pupils' enthusiasm for school contributes significantly towards their good attainment and progress. During well-taught lessons they sustain interest in their studies and are keen to participate through

answering questions. Even the children under five years old participate well, for example, in the weekly review session when they can show their work to parents. Older pupils are proud of their work and are keen to show it to parents and other adults. In a Year 3 English lesson, they worked well in small groups, making up sentences expressing anger, participating fully in making suggestions and listening carefully to points put forward by others in their group. Pupils settle promptly to written work and are able to work in silence when required to do so. They respond positively to teachers, who have high expectations of them in both work and behaviour, but in the small number of instances where teaching is less satisfactory, they can lose interest and work less effectively. For example, in a Year 4 design and technology lesson to produce pencil case designs, the slow pace led to boredom and disinterest. The level of support received by pupils with special educational needs contributes to the positive attitudes they display.

12. Pupils behave well and are very aware of the school's expectations. This means that teachers do not spend much time in lessons maintaining order and can use the time productively to further pupils' learning. Pupils behave very well at break times, and the playground is an unthreatening environment. Bullying was not raised as an issue by pupils or parents and none was seen during the inspection; it is a rare occurrence in the school. There have been no exclusions of pupils in recent years. Pupils are polite to each other and to adults. They put into practice the school's ethos of valuing each individual and they understand the impact of their actions on others. Parents are very satisfied with the school's standards of behaviour and believe that it is successful in helping their children develop good attitudes and values.

13. Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. The school encourages them to take responsibility; examples being the school council and the 'Redhat' system whereby Year 4 pupils help younger children in the playground. Pupils are capable of carrying out tasks without needing adults to give them direction, for example, setting up the hall for an assembly without any need for teachers to intervene. They are able to savour their developing curiosity about the world; for example, two boys who were putting forward alternative theories about the relationship between earthquakes and volcanoes, reached a satisfying joint compromise after independent perusal of reference books. Their personal confidence is well developed, as displayed in an assembly led by pupils in Year 2, where they all were able to stand up in front of the whole school community and contribute their piece. Pupils' capacity to reflect upon their own feelings and discuss their experiences is very well developed for their age. Even pupils in Year 1 are able to assess their own work sensibly and to say what they need to do to improve.

14. The pupils bring a mature approach to relationships. New pupils are made to feel welcome immediately and are accepted quickly. Those who leave often remain in contact with the school, often by email. Relationships within the school are very good and most pupils respect their teacher. Pupils can work well collaboratively in pairs or small groups when called upon to do so. They listen and give due regard to the views of others, even when they are different from their own, and are supportive of one another. They show respect for the school's property, use equipment sensibly and are trusted by teachers to use resources and facilities with minimum levels of supervision. They are good at displaying common courtesies, such as holding a door for somebody following them through it. They play well together. Boys and girls work together unselfconsciously. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved since the last inspection of the school.

15. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, being in line with the national average for a school of this type. There are few unauthorised absences recorded in the attendance registers. Pupils are punctual arriving at school and do not delay the start of the school day.

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

16. Taking all aspects of teaching into account, the quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. Ninety four per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better, with thirty five per cent being very good. Eighty per cent of the teaching was good or better. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection, when nine per cent of lessons were very good and eleven per cent were unsatisfactory. Examples of good teaching were seen in all subjects. The quality of teaching is highest

for children in Year R and in Year 3 where it is very good overall. Consistently good teaching was seen for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. Here, ten out of twelve lessons were judged to be good, one was very good and the other was satisfactory. The picture is more variable for the older pupils. In Year 3, six out of eight lessons were very good and the others were good. In Year 4, although the specialist teacher taught a good music lesson, the quality of teaching by the temporary teacher was just satisfactory overall and two lessons for this class were unsatisfactory. The good and very good teaching enables pupils to make good and sometimes very good gains in their learning and reach above average standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 3. Although standards overall are above expectations for the end of Year 4, where teaching is satisfactory, pupils make slower progress than they do further down the school. On the occasions where teaching is unsatisfactory, pace slows, pupils become restless and make little progress.

17. The quality of teaching for the children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Four out of five lessons were judged to be very good and the other lesson was good. It is very good overall and leads to very good learning. The teacher has a very good understanding of the needs of young children and she is skilled in matching tasks to their interests and to their span of attention. She successfully weaves the teaching of several skills together and consequently learning is fun and all children strive to do their best. For example, children learn about the features of non-fiction texts such as instruction books in literacy before continuing to use their understanding when following instructions in cookery and when using a programmable toy. Experiences such as these ensure children have a very good knowledge of their own learning. Very good use of the well-prepared classroom assistant and parent helper ensures that all children have sufficient adult support and that every opportunity to extend learning is taken.

18. The quality of teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, science and music. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in any other subject. Features of the lessons where teaching is particularly strong include very high expectations, very well managed pupils, the very effective use of stimulating resources and very well planned lessons which develop what pupils already know. Teachers ensure that lessons are well matched to the interests and needs of all pupils and plan enjoyable activities which motivate them. As a result, pupils make very good gains in their learning. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 3, they learned to tell the time by using their arms to represent clock hands at five-minute intervals. This motivated them to take part and all were keen to read the time from the teacher's arms. The activity was conducted at a brisk pace with challenging questions such as 'Can you show me 20 minutes earlier?' Consequently, pupils learned to tell the time in an exciting way and were keen to demonstrate their skills to each other. Very good teaching in English, again in Year 3, is characterised by an enthusiastic style that encourages pupils to think for themselves. The choice of non-fiction texts about earthquakes and volcanoes encouraged pupils to find complex information because they were so interested in the subject matter. In a very good science lesson, samples of rocks, buckets of soil and well-chosen books enabled pupils to investigate the properties of rocks and so gain a good understanding.

19. Other features of good quality teaching include the use of challenging questions to extend learning. Teachers are particularly skilful in matching their questions to the needs of individuals, particularly in whole class sessions in literacy and numeracy. For example, in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher challenged pupils to identify the position of rhyming words in a poem by asking 'Are the rhyming words in the middle?' Consequently, the pupils learned that in the poem that they were reading, the rhyming words were at the end of the second and fourth lines. In a music lesson for pupils in Year 4, pupils learned to tap a syncopated rhythm when the teacher challenged them 'Can you cut the steady beat in half?' The use made of talented support staff is another factor that leads to good teaching and learning. All support staff are well prepared and work well with teachers to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. This is particularly evident when support staff work with pupils with special educational needs, often providing very discreet help, which raises their self-esteem. A good knowledge of the subjects that they teach and the effective use of homework are other features of successful teaching.

20. In the small number of satisfactory lessons, mostly for pupils in Year 4, activities were not as exciting and stimulating as elsewhere in the school. As a result, pupils sometimes became bored and restless. The time allowed to complete an activity was not as well matched to the attention span of the

pupils as in the good and very good lessons. For example, in a lesson to teach typing skills in information and communication technology, pupils spent too long practising their skills on the machines before they were allowed to switch them on and work on their individual programs. Two unsatisfactory lessons were seen, for pupils in Year 4, in design and technology and science. In both these lessons, the recently qualified, temporary teacher, allowed the behaviour of a small minority of pupils to go unchecked for too long, resulting in disruption for other pupils. Consequently, despite well-planned and resourced lessons, little learning took place. The lessons progressed at too slow a pace leading to some lack of challenge, particularly for more able pupils. The school has already identified these weaknesses but the measures put in place to address them have not yet fully taken effect.

21. Teachers show a good understanding of how to teach the literacy and numeracy strategies. Strengths include the effective use of support staff, who provide valuable help and encouragement during group activities. This ensures that pupils remain on task and that their particular needs are met. Teachers take every opportunity to extend learning and this contributes positively to the standards attained. They are competent in the teaching of reading and spelling, taking every opportunity to develop these skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 learned how to spell 'remnant' and 'ancient' through their reading of the poem 'At the museum'. They learned that words such as 'ago' and 'slow' rhyme, but do not share the same spelling pattern. In numeracy, the brisk pace and attractive resources keep pupils interested. For example, pupils in Year 1 used attractive number tiles to order numbers and learned that 21 is bigger than 13 by standing in a line holding the tiles.

22. Strengths in the quality of teaching in music contribute to better standards than are normally expected for seven-year-olds and for the older pupils. Well-chosen music inspires and motivates them and very good musical knowledge is successfully taught. As a result, pupils enjoy musical activities and strive to do their best. In the very good art and design lesson seen during the inspection, very high expectations, an enthusiasm for the subject and very clear explanations ensured that pupils achieved work that was better than expected for their age.

23. The good quality of the teaching has a significant impact on the very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. A good number of well-prepared classroom assistants work closely with class teachers. Work is well matched to the needs of the pupils.

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

24. The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs and children aged under five. It is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection the school has implemented good policies and schemes of work in all subjects.

25. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall and is based appropriately on the nationally defined areas of learning for children of this age. It is very carefully planned and provides good opportunities for both child and adult initiated activities, purposeful play, whole class and small group work. Plans are shared effectively with the classroom assistant and parent helper who make a significant contribution to the curriculum. A positive feature is the way in which the curriculum is organised to link many areas together to put learning into a real context for the children.

26. The school has good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Recent developments have concentrated appropriately on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and both are now fully and successfully established. These strategies have contributed to improvement in standards in English and mathematics. The use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is appropriate. For example pupils read and discuss books about other parts of the world in geography, they time and record their performance in physical activities in the hall and they measure and calculate accurately in design and technology. In all year groups, teachers emphasise the skills of speaking and listening in class discussion. Sensible organisation ensures that pupils in Year 1, who are accommodated in the class that also includes children in the Foundation Stage, are given very good opportunities to develop their

skills. The youngest children attend school for three full days when they are part time. Consequently, on the other two days, pupils in Year 1 are taught in a much smaller class and have more adult support, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the statutory requirements for pupils with a statement of special educational need are fully met. There is a very comprehensive school policy that thoroughly meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for these pupils, the register of special educational needs is accurate and the records of identified pupils are kept well. The school implements the Code of Practice well and all identified pupils have very good individual education plans. The targets on these plans are well thought out and are straightforward, which helps to measure success when they are reviewed. Not only do these pupils receive very strong support from their teachers, but the quality of the assistance that they receive from classroom assistants is also very high. There has been very good improvement in overall provision for these pupils since the last inspection.

28. The school makes very good provision for equality of opportunity and access for all and it works hard to promote an ethos that values all pupils. This is expressed, for example, in the way in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, take a full and active part in the regular class assemblies presented for parents and the rest of the school.

29. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities, including rugby, football, netball, cricket, athletics, fitness, dance and newspaper club, enriches the curriculum. The overall programme plays a valuable part in extending the resources of the school and is enthusiastically run by teachers, outside coaches, parents and friends. Pupils also go on excursions and outings to places of interest and participate in a variety of competitions

30. The local community contributes well towards the school's success. There are productive links with the local church and the local priest and sisters visit the school regularly. The Army provides a range of useful support, whilst other members of the community, such as farmers, come into school to talk to the pupils about their jobs and this supports particular aspects of the curriculum.

31. The school has good links with other educational establishments. There are constructive relationships with pre-school groups. The reception teacher visits them regularly and there is a good system of introducing these children to the school through visits. The local cluster of schools works well together to enhance the opportunities for pupils and staff. Liaison with the middle school is good and enables pupils in Year 4 to transfer to the next phase of education as smoothly as possible.

32. There is good provision for pupils' personal development. There is a very strong Christian ethos in the school, and this is clearly expressed in its mission statement. Adults who work in the school provide positive role models both in the way that they behave towards each other and towards pupils. There is a clear statement on health, sex and drugs education that is effectively and appropriately implemented throughout the school.

33. There is very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is pursued throughout the curriculum. Provision for spiritual development is excellent. There is an underlying and all-pervading atmosphere of calmness and spirituality that is reaffirmed each morning as the staff gather together for prayers. A visitor to the school is immediately aware of this through the striking display at the entrance, which celebrates the aims and values of the school. Very importantly, daily assemblies provide pupils with a wide range of spiritual experiences but there is also time for quiet reflection in many other areas of school life. For example, displays and religious artefacts provide very good opportunities for pupils to consider God's mercy and their own personal development. Opportunities to develop spirituality are taken across the curriculum. In an English lesson, for example, pupils reflected thoughtfully on the paintings of Van Gogh while listening to the lyrics of a song about his life, while younger pupils showed awe and wonder at the way in which magnets stick to metal keys.

34. Provision for moral development is very good. All teachers emphasise appropriate attitudes and pupils are taught to distinguish between right and wrong. The school's golden rules are prominently displayed and individual classes have also drawn up their own classroom rules. It is also noticeable that



adults take trouble to explain to pupils why some behaviour is inappropriate or unacceptable rather than just issuing a simple prohibition.

35. Provision for social development is also very good and there are suitable opportunities for this throughout the school day. Pupils sit in groups to eat lunch and sensitive supervision contributes to the development of good manners. They are given appropriate responsibility to help teachers in a wide variety of ways including the organisation of displays, putting out chairs for visitors to assemblies and taking charge of the music centre for lunchtime dance sessions. Pupils also perform and take part in assemblies, concerts, displays and visits. In addition there is a very good system whereby the pupils elect councillors from the oldest year group. These councillors are called 'Redhats'. They look after the other pupils around the school and make sure that everyone is treated fairly. They also attend council meetings once a term when concerns that have been raised can be discussed. Pupils in Year 3 have regular opportunities to read to pupils in Year R and Year 1. All pupils anticipate these sessions with delight. Pupils in Year 1 are encouraged to help their younger classmates, often pairing up to take the register to the office, for example. All these opportunities contribute very positively to their social development.

36. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through history and geography as well as in a range of other work. They listen to music and look at paintings and also discuss these amongst themselves sensibly and often very perceptively. A broad range of outings to museums and exhibitions, including the Millennium Dome, also plays an important part. There is, however, some lack of opportunity to learn about and appreciate the multi-cultural nature of our society as a whole.

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

37. The school's Christian ethos is reflected in the high standards of care it provides for its pupils. This enhances the quality of life in the school and has a positive impact on standards. The good quality of the school's provision for the care of its pupils has been maintained since the previous inspection. Procedures for child protection are good. The headteacher has received appropriate training and liaises effectively with the local social services department as necessary. Staff are made aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection. The school keeps detailed records on pupils where there are particular causes for concern. Pupils are given guidance on how to protect themselves through the personal, health and social education curriculum, including 'Stranger Danger' briefings from the local police.

38. Appropriate health and safety procedures are in place. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and have a good overview of the school's provision. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and routine safety procedures are all in place. As was highlighted at the time of the last inspection, the somewhat cluttered nature of the hall is not ideal for physical education lessons. However, no unsafe practice was seen in lessons during the inspection.

39. The school's procedures for measuring attainment and assessing the pupils' academic achievements are good and the use of assessment in planning for progression has improved since the last inspection. The school has effective systems for assessing performance in English, mathematics and science that provide information for reporting to parents and for planning the work that pupils undertake. For example, teachers meet regularly to assess pupils' work against National Curriculum levels and also co-operate with other local schools for the same purpose. One outcome of this is the production of individual portfolios of pupils' work, which show progression over the school year and are used to assist in planning.

40. Procedures for the identification, assessment and review of pupils with special educational needs are good and fully meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. Higher attaining pupils are also identified. Teachers talk to pupils about their work and make very helpful comments in their marking, particularly in Year 4. These comments reflect the helpful and supportive ethos of the school in the way in which they not only offer praise, but also provide useful and specific advice on how work can be improved and developed.

41. The school makes good use of assessment information gained from the standard tests, to help develop the programmes of study and schemes of work. National Curriculum test results are thoroughly analysed and used to influence curriculum planning. Samples of unaided writing, which pupils complete each month, provide a good record of progress and are closely monitored to identify areas of weakness. The school uses baseline assessment information well to group children according to their ability and also to set targets for the end of Year R, Year 1 and Year 2. These targets are regularly reviewed. This target setting process continues into Key Stage 2 and contributes positively to the standards attained because pupils are offered activities that challenge them to improve. Good use is also being made of information and communication technology to hold year group databases that contain extensive test, assessment and target-setting information. A tracking assessment sheet is being introduced which is designed to follow pupils' achievement as they pass through the school. This range of tests is used appropriately throughout pupils' time at the school to measure attainment and monitor their progress, and it is also used to form the basis of information passed on to the Middle School to which pupils transfer.

42. The school makes good provision for the educational and personal support and guidance of pupils. Teachers know their pupils well. They are effective in supporting pupils' learning through the setting of individual targets and the close monitoring of progress. Although monitoring of their personal development is more informal, nevertheless in this small school it is effective, as all pupils are known well by all members of staff. Comments in annual reports on personal development are often perceptive and show how teachers treat each pupil as an individual.

43. The school has effective procedures to monitor attendance. In particular, the system whereby the school secretary routinely telephones the parents of any absent pupil for whom no explanation has been received is effective in keeping track of absences. The school's procedures to monitor and promote behaviour are good, and in fact are better than the provision outlined in the school's behaviour policy. The whole school community is aware of the rewards and sanctions and how they will be applied, although the standard owes as much to the school's overall ethos as it does to more formal approaches. The pupils are involved in developing the school's 'golden rules' and individual class rules. The 'Kindness Cup' is awarded to individuals who have helped others and is valued by its recipients. The school has an appropriate section within the behaviour policy on its approach to bullying.

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

44. Overall parents' views of the school are good. The good quality of the partnership with parents has been maintained since the last inspection. A relatively small proportion of parents took the opportunity to express their views about the school either at the parents' meeting or through the parents' questionnaire. Based on the views of those who did so, it would appear that most parents are pleased with the quality and effectiveness of the education the school provides for their children. They believe that their children like school, make good progress, are helped to become mature and behave well. They think the teaching is good, with staff having high expectations of the pupils. Parents generally think that the school keeps them well informed and that it works well with parents. The majority of parents believe the school is well led, although a small minority disagrees. Some parents would like their children to have more homework while others would like less. The inspection team judges that the leadership and management of the school is good and that the school is setting a suitable amount of homework which makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

45. The school provides a good range of information for parents. It starts before the children join the school, with good induction procedures for pupils and their parents. These include weekly 'Preppies' sessions where new children join the reception class for an afternoon each week. This is followed up after pupils have joined the school with the opportunity for termly meetings between parents and teachers and some useful leaflets outlining the curriculum that will be followed to help parents support their children. Termly 'Evaluation days' provide useful opportunities for parents to discuss work with their children and the teacher. Individual targets are shared and reviewed at these meetings. There are good opportunities for parents to come into school and see teachers informally. Weekly review days give good

opportunities for pupils to explain their work to their parents. Parents spoken to during the review sessions that took place during the inspection expressed their satisfaction with them. For example, one parent commented that she had been able to help her child to 'round up' numbers at home because she had learned at a review session that he was learning this at school.

46. The written reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory. There are examples of good practice but this is inconsistent through the school. More information could be provided on how pupils are actually progressing rather than listing curriculum coverage, and as a result pupils of widely differing attainment can receive reports that read very similarly, particularly in the foundation subjects. In information and communication technology, for example, a whole class can receive exactly the same report based entirely on coverage. This does not give parents a clear picture of how their child is performing. Parents are informed of school events through regular newsletters. The prospectus and governors' annual reports are both well written.

47. Most parents have signed the home school agreement but it has had little impact on the school. Parents support their children very well by helping with homework, particularly by hearing them read on a regular basis, and ensuring that they complete the targets that accompany their reading books. They also make a good contribution to the improvement in standards in spelling through their involvement with the 'St Mary's Spelling book' drawn up by the school to assist parents to help with spelling at home. Overall, the impact of parents' involvement with the school and their children's learning is very good. Parents feel that they can contact the school with any problems or suggestions and that they will be listened to. A large number of parents help in school and contribute well to the standards attained, particularly in Year R. There is an active school association, which organises social and fundraising events. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the reviews of their progress.

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

48. The overall leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership and she has a clear vision for the development of the school. She has been appointed since the previous inspection and she has efficiently managed the school, despite difficulties with long term sickness of staff and her own heavy teaching commitment as a result of these difficulties. She has achieved much, maintaining high standards despite significant numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school at various points throughout the year. She has successfully improved the curriculum for the early years, improved curricular planning and developed the role of classroom support staff. She is well supported by the other three full time teachers, one of whom is a temporary appointment. All share in the management of the school, including responsibility for most areas of the curriculum and for pupils with special educational needs. Their understanding of their roles has improved since the previous inspection. They have a good understanding of the areas for development in their subjects and work well together as a committed team, for the benefit of pupils and parents.

49. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for special educational needs and provides good leadership, ensuring that the requirements of the Code of Practice are met and by supporting her colleagues. All staff shares a commitment to raising standards still further and they successfully identify areas for improvement.

50. There are several reasons why the school is successful. A significant factor that contributes to the good leadership and management, and the resulting high standards in many areas of its work, is the ethos of the school. The headteacher and staff share prayers and a time for reflection each morning before the start of the school day. Consequently, the day begins calmly for teachers and this spiritual ethos helps ensure that all are valued, individuality is celebrated and laughter is encouraged. This permeates throughout the curriculum. The way in which the school's aims are reflected in its work is excellent.

51. The staffing of the school has been complicated by uncertainty about the return of the teacher who has been absent for some time and by the recent retirement of the teacher who shared the headteacher's class. In the interim, a newly qualified, temporary teacher has been employed to teach the oldest pupils and another temporary teacher has been employed in the short term to share the headteacher's class. The headteacher is committed to the provision of the best quality teaching and consequently has monitored these teachers very well. She has already identified weaknesses in the quality of teaching by the temporary teacher for the oldest pupils through her weekly monitoring and identified targets for improvement. This has led to improvements in the teaching of literacy and numeracy and her records show improvement in pace and class management in these subjects. However, there is room for further improvement. To address other weaknesses that she has identified, she has been working alongside the teacher with whom she shares her class to provide a model of good practice. During the inspection, she set a very good example in her own teaching. The teacher with whom she shares her teaching commitment was also absent due to ill health and so the headteacher has taken over teaching the class full time until the end of term in order to provide continuity for the pupils. The school was recently notified of the resignation of the teacher who has been absent long term and has already started the recruitment process for permanent replacements for both positions. As a result of the very good monitoring and feedback given to the permanent teachers, the quality of teaching is good overall and contributes to above average standards. The way in which the headteacher uses her small amount of non-teaching time to monitor in other classes is highly effective in improving standards.

52. The school evaluates its own performance very effectively and this is another reason for its success. It closely analyses results of statutory and other tests to identify areas of weakness, which it successfully addresses. For example, the school identified that standards in writing could be higher and implemented several initiatives to improve them. As a result, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level has increased recently. It has now set targets to improve the percentage of pupils exceeding the expected level. Targets are also set to raise standards still further in mathematics. Results of its analysis are used to set long-term targets that are translated into individual aims and are shared with parents. Teachers carefully address these in their planning. Samples of work are rigorously examined each half term and points for improvement are identified and addressed. For example, the school was concerned that pupils with special educational needs in Key Stage 2 could be underachieving because of the staffing difficulties. To address this, the headteacher regularly teaches these pupils and inspection evidence shows that these pupils make very good progress.

53. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. They are supportive and have a good understanding of their roles. They have ensured that the issues for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. As was identified in the previous inspection, many give time and expertise, advising on building projects and helping in school. Each governor has responsibility for a class, which they follow through the school. They visit the school regularly to monitor its work; for example, they have monitored the delivery of the literacy and numeracy hours. This contributes to the good implementation of these strategies. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

54. The school makes good use of the funds and resources made available to it. The school development plan has improved since the previous inspection and has been well constructed to help raise standards still further. Spending decisions focus on improving standards further in reading and writing, refining its procedures for target setting, implementing its performance management policy and improving the buildings. The secretary and headteacher provide good information about the budget to keep governors informed. The relatively large amount carried forward has appropriately been identified to provide a fenced play area for the youngest children, a computer suite and improvements to the buildings. These improvements have been delayed by circumstances outside the control of the school and are due to take place shortly. The school makes a major commitment from its budget to the provision of support staff. This has a favourable impact on the attainment and progress of all pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs who receive very good support. Funds made available for these pupils are used well to enhance provision to meet their needs.

55. The school makes effective use of the money it receives through the training it gives to student teachers. It uses the funding to employ a specialist music teacher and this contributes to the high standards in music throughout the school. One of the teachers suitably acts as mentor to the students

while her class is having their music lesson. The school's commitment to the art and design curriculum is reflected in the way in which it employs a specialist teacher to teach the subject and this too has a beneficial effect on standards. The school has successfully addressed the minor weaknesses pointed out in its audit report. The secretary manages day-to-day office procedures well. She makes good use of new technology by emailing information from the local education authority to individual teachers. Not only does this ensure that teachers receive the information they need but it removes the necessity to waste paper and time printing it. She also uses her time efficiently by teaching information and communication technology skills both in classes and by using the office machines to teach pupils when she is required to be in the office. All these factors contribute positively to the good management of the school and to the standards attained.

56. The principles of best value are applied well in the school's use of its resources. A particular strength is the way in which parents are consulted and their views taken into account. For example, smaller classes have been provided, more homework set and more information has been given about progress in response to parents' concerns. The governors invite tenders and explore various options before making decisions about computers or building works.

57. There is a good match of staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. This is particularly true of support staff, where their numbers and quality make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. All support staff are well prepared and share the whole school ethos of valuing all pupils. At the time of the inspection, the school was functioning well, despite the staffing difficulties, so that the short-term impact on the standards of education was limited. The school has plans in place to put itself on a better footing in the long-term. The school has good provision in place for the induction of new members of staff, including newly qualified teachers. Two student teachers are currently undertaking part of their training in the school.

58. The school's accommodation is well cared for and it has been significantly improved since the last inspection. However, the hall is small and it is also used for storage. This creates difficulties for the safe delivery of the physical education curriculum, although no unsafe practices were observed during the inspection. This was also identified at the time of the previous inspection. There is currently no designated area for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage, but plans are in place to develop this as a priority. The school has the advantage of a large grass playing field for outdoor games when the weather permits. The library is small and cramped, but classrooms are sufficiently large for the number of pupils they contain. There are useful areas available for information and communication technology.

59. The school has good resources in most subjects. In mathematics, English and science there is a good range of resources. The school has a good range of up-to-date hardware and software to deliver the information and communication technology curriculum and a good supply of instruments for music lessons. In art and design there is a satisfactory range of different media available to pupils. In geography and history the school augments its own resources with artefacts from the schools library service. The school has a sufficient range of resources to deliver the physical education curriculum.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue the good work of the school and to raise standards even higher, the headteacher and the governing body should now address the following in their action plan:

(These are indicated in the paragraphs numbered below.)

- (1) Improve the quality of teaching for pupils in Year 4 to match the good and very good teaching in the other classes by: \*
  - improving the pace of lessons;
  - ensuring that class management strategies are used consistently and
  - ensuring that tasks are sufficiently stimulating and exciting to fully motivate pupils.(paragraphs 11, 16, 20, 51, 76, 83, 89, 102 )
  
- (2) Improve the provision for cultural development to help pupils to become well prepared for life in Britain's multicultural society.  
(paragraph 36 )

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve the quality of reports by ensuring that the information included is more closely matched to individual pupils, particularly in the foundation subjects. (paragraph 46 )

\* The school has already identified this area as in need of improvement.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	35	45	13	6	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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	92
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	11
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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
	00	[ ]	[ ]	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	Girls	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	94 (90)	94 (90)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	Girls	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	87 (90)	93 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

**The numbers of boys and girls are omitted from the table because there were fewer than ten boys and girls in the year group.**



**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	92
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.03
Average class size	21.3

**Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

**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.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	99/00
	£
Total income	197378
Total expenditure	196805
Expenditure per pupil	2117
Balance brought forward from previous year	55372
Balance carried forward to next year	55945

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	85
Number of questionnaires returned	46

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	37	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	47	7	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	49	9	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	46	11	2	0
The teaching is good.	78	22	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	30	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	13	7	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	20	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	70	28	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	22	7	11	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	37	7	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	37	2	0	2

**\*One return represents two per cent on the above table.**

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents praised the caring atmosphere of the school, with special praise for the 'Red hats' scheme. They felt that the way in which older pupils take care of younger ones is a particular strength.

## **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**

60. Children are admitted to the reception class on a part time basis at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. They attend school full time for three days each week. They attend full time each day after their first term. They are accommodated in a class that also includes pupils in Year 1. The majority of children have experienced some form of pre-school provision. Evidence from baseline assessments and inspection evidence shows that attainments on entry are broadly average in all the areas of learning. Children make good progress and firmly develop and consolidate their skills. Evidence from the children who have just left the Foundation Stage, at the end of the reception year, shows that most of them have attained the early learning goals in all the areas of learning. This is a similar picture to the findings of the previous inspection. The previous inspection identified weaknesses in the curriculum for children aged under five and the school has made very good improvement by addressing them successfully. For example, activities are now both exciting and challenging and very well matched to the needs of children of all abilities. The way in which the children work together, which was identified as a weakness, is now a real strength.

61. Children have good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. All adults place high priority on developing these skills, encouraging children to take turns, share and work together. As a result of the very good teaching in this area of learning, all children make very good progress and can already work independently while their teacher works with another group. They are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The children are keen to come to school because they know that they are valued and that they will be offered interesting activities. Children are secure in class routines and willingly take turns to be helpers for the day and to take the register to the office. They have good opportunities to develop their initiative by deciding which activity they would like to experience from those on display on the task board.

62. All adults encourage children to develop social skills in a variety of ways. For example, they are expected to undress independently and take responsibility for their clothes when changing for physical education. Weekly review sessions, where children explain their work to parents, give very good opportunities for the children to gain confidence in speaking to an audience. Children know that it is their turn to speak when they find themselves holding the teddy, which is passed round the circle as they sing 'who is going to have teddy today?' During the inspection, children showed pride in their work and sensibly took it in turns to speak. Opportunities such as these contribute positively to the development of social and oral skills as well as providing good information for parents. Paired reading with older pupils in Year 3 also enhances provision for social development. The youngest children, who could hardly wait to meet their regular partner for a story, anticipate these weekly sessions with delight. Children are very well behaved because they know what is expected of them and that sharing and consideration for others is very much part of the ethos of the school. The way in which children co-operate when working in groups has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The well-established routines and the caring attitudes of all adults make a significant contribution to the sense of security felt by the children.

63. The majority of children are on course to attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of Year R. All adults, including the talented classroom assistant and parent helper, take every opportunity to develop these skills. As a result, children make good progress. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking and listening skills through role-play in the home corner. A particularly good example of the development of listening skills was seen during the inspection where children were following instructions to make 'chocolate crispies'. The classroom assistant purposely misread the instructions, amusing the children who listened very carefully to make sure that she did not make another mistake. In a music lesson, the teacher skilfully included the children's names in an action song, encouraging them to listen carefully in order to join in at the right time. Children have good opportunities to practice their writing skills. For example, they practice writing patterns on attractive wipe off boards and use the writing area to experiment with a range of mark making tools. Most children write letter shapes and higher attaining children can write a sequence such as 'a dirty dog, a clean dog, a dry dog' using recognisable spelling.

64. Good emphasis is placed on reading and most children are well supported by parents, who share the books that they take home regularly. Children enjoy stories and try to join in when reading with adults. During the inspection, for example, they used their knowledge of the story of 'The Three Bears' to help them join in with the story. Adults take every opportunity to extend literacy skills and as a result, most children already know that a book has a title, an author and an illustrator. Most children use the pictures to help them read simple stories and higher attaining children can read simple words, using their knowledge of initial sounds to help them. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good and as a result children make very good gains in their learning. The organisation of the curriculum, where the teacher successfully matches elements of the literacy hour to the needs of the children, contributes positively to the standards attained. For example, the children were introduced to instructional text and learned why this is important and then went on to follow instructions to make 'chocolate crispies'. Experiences like these enable children to gain a very good understanding of their own learning and to use their developing knowledge in real situations.

65. Attainment in mathematics is also on course to meet the early learning goals at the end of the reception year. Children know the correct mathematical language to describe, shape, size, position and quantity. They develop their mathematical understanding through a variety of practical activities. For example, they learn about size by matching a range of hats to teddies and learn the difference between 'long' and 'short' when measuring materials to make a playground swing. The development of mathematical skills has high priority and numbers are displayed prominently to stimulate understanding. Most children are confident in using numbers to ten and higher attaining children can add and subtract with support. The quality of teaching is very good and all adults are skilled in developing mathematical skills in all areas of learning and this contributes positively to the standards attained. For example, in a literacy lesson, children developed their concept of size because the parent helper discussed whether the pictures being placed in sequence were big or small. In a cookery session, the classroom assistant took every opportunity to count and measure. Well-chosen number rhymes, such as 'ten fat sausages' in a music lesson also contribute to mathematical understanding. Opportunities are also taken in creative activities, where pupils make simple graphs of the favourite playground toys that they have made. In physical education, children learn to be long and short snakes.

66. In their physical development children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of Year R. They gain confidence in using space through regular opportunities for physical education in the hall. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen during the inspection was very good and children made very good gains in their learning. They responded very positively to instructions, showing an ability to vary the pace of their movements. All children are keen to take part because the teacher makes learning fun. For example, in order to encourage children to stretch, the teacher encouraged them to reach for an escaping balloon and joined in herself. As a result, children showed good stretching movements and followed the teacher's good example. Very good teaching enables children to produce a simple sequence of movements including travelling, balancing and jumping. Children also develop their physical skills well through opportunities to use wheeled toys in the playground. At the time of the inspection, an area close to the classroom was due to be developed into a designated play area for the youngest children. Children handle small toys and scissors regularly to develop their manipulative skills. For example, they build playground equipment for 'play people' and cut fabric to make collages. A very good example was seen during the inspection in a cookery session. Here, the classroom assistant asked the children to help her to open the package of paper cases while she put their 'cakes' in bags for them. The package was so interesting and difficult to open that not only did it develop their manipulative skills well, but ensured that it kept their attention.

67. The children's creative development is on course to meet what is expected for children at the end of the reception year. They learn to use paint appropriately to paint pictures of road signs, showing developing hand control. They learn how to use different materials to make a frieze of 'Miss Material' and develop their understanding of the effect of different media when they use pastels to make self portraits, showing their use of observation. Music has a high priority and consequently, most children know a good range of songs by heart. In the lesson seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was very good and enabled children to make very good gains in their learning. Children were keen to participate because they knew they would all have a turn to play the instruments. Very good planning ensured that no time was wasted and that children learned to feel a 'pulse' through a range of activities. The use of

children's names in the songs motivated them and ensured that they listened carefully. For example, 'We're patting a pattern like.....'s pattern' gave all children the opportunity to initiate and copy a rhythmical pattern.

68. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is on course to meet that expected by the end of the reception year. Through their topic work about materials, they learn to identify 'rough' and 'smooth' and they develop an understanding of 'near' and 'far' through discussion of 'David Bear' the travelling teddy, who had recently visited Crete with one of the children. This helps them develop an understanding of the world around them. Most children talk about themselves and their families, several relating experiences of where they have lived before; for example, many children from Army families have lived in Germany. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was very good. Children made very good gains in learning how to follow instructions to use the computer keyboard to send a programmable toy through the legs of a line of children. They learned to estimate distance with reasonable accuracy because they were taught in a small group, enabling all to have a turn.

69. The quality of teaching is very good overall and leads to very good learning. Four out of five lessons seen during the inspection were very good and the other was good. Strengths in the quality of teaching include very good planning which provides for very good progress towards the early learning goals. The recently introduced curriculum for the Foundation Stage is fully in place and the teacher skilfully links many of the areas of learning together to ensure that learning is fun and that no time is wasted. The very good use of the talented classroom assistant and parent helper, who share the teacher's very high expectations and are very much part of the team, ensure that there is a consistency in the experiences offered and that children receive very high quality support in all group activities. The very good provision for children with special educational needs and the consistency in which these children are supported contribute positively to the standards attained.

## **ENGLISH**

70. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 and that pupils continue to maintain standards that exceed those expected for nine-year-olds by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4. Pupils are achieving well. This is a similar picture to the results of statutory tests in 2000 where standards were above average in reading and well above average in writing in comparison with all schools. Given the small and differing numbers of pupils in each year group, too much emphasis should not be placed on any one year's National Curriculum test results. In 2000, almost all pupils reached the expected level in both reading and writing, with almost one third exceeding the expected levels. The school is doing well to attain these high standards because a significant number of pupils arrive and leave the school at short notice and some pupils have changed schools several times. The school has maintained high standards in recent years. The previous inspection report indicated that standards were broadly average in national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, in the year before the inspection. The attainment of the pupils in Year 2 then was expected to be above average.

71. Standards in speaking and listening are above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop these skills and as a result they make good progress. A particularly good feature is the provision for weekly review sessions where pupils explain their work to parents. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Years R, 1 and 2 spoke confidently in front of their classes and parents to explain their work. Acts of collective worship provide other opportunities to develop these skills. Pupils in Year 1, quietly voice their own prayers, which are listened to with respect. During an assembly for parents, pupils in Year 2 clearly related aspects of the Christmas story from memory, using a wide vocabulary. Opportunities are taken in lessons to develop vocabulary and an understanding of how dialogue can convey a mood. For example, pupils in Year 3 discussed the lyrics to Elton John's 'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road' and learned how dialogue can be used to create different effects after listening to the teacher's reading. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils experimented with the sound of rhyming words before composing their class poem. 'I splashed along the shore, I squelched in muddy swamp. I like to eat up all the ferns. My teeth

went chomp! chomp! chomp!' Opportunities such as these make a significant contribution to the high standards attained in speaking and listening.

72. The attainment of pupils in reading is also above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils are achieving well. One of the reasons why pupils do well in reading is because of the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction. Another reason is that most parents support their children well at home and there is good liaison between teachers and parents. Pupils take a target card home with their reading book that identifies a task such as 'find all the words beginning with 'ch' and write them in a joined style.' Consequently, parents know how to help their children at home and this contributes to the high standards attained. Very good emphasis is placed on the teaching of phonic skills, and as a result, by the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read fluently and accurately, correcting themselves when they make an error. Most pupils have a good knowledge of letter sounds and can read a good range of words out of context. They are familiar with dictionaries and know how to use the library and the Internet for research. Pupils continue to develop their skills as they move through the school and by Year 4, many read fluently and expressively. They confidently discuss the range of fiction and non-fiction that they enjoy reading. Pupils in Year 3, for example, use their research skills well to find out about earthquakes and volcanoes, extracting meaning from complex texts and developing their ideas as a result. Paired reading between older and younger pupils has a significant impact on reading standards. The school takes care to ensure that pupils are paired according to their ability to raise the esteem of lower attaining older pupils. During the inspection, some of these pupils proudly read to younger ones, providing an enjoyable and worthwhile experience for all. The school has maintained the high standards in reading identified in the previous inspection and this is commendable when many pupils have experienced disruption to their education. Pupils use their good reading skills to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, to research information in history and geography and when reading the words to songs in music.

73. Standards in writing are also above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. The school's careful analysis of its assessment data revealed that standards in writing were not as high as they could be. The school took several successful initiatives to address this and as a result the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level has increased by ten per cent each year. The school now aims to improve the numbers of pupils reaching the higher level. There are several ways in which the school has raised standards in writing. It has devised its own spelling book that is used by parents and pupils. This book gives clear guidance on expectations for each year group and also identifies key words to be learned to support other areas of the curriculum. Guided spelling takes place in school to complement the spellings learned at home and teachers monitor spelling progress weekly. The high standard of spelling makes a positive contribution to standards in writing. By Year 2, pupils use correct spelling for monosyllabic words and use capital letters and full stops correctly. Higher attaining pupils use interesting vocabulary such as, 'he met the teacher, but not for long because he ate her up' when writing about monsters. By Year 4, pupils spell words such as 'exceptional' and 'echoing' correctly and produce emotive pieces of writing such as 'Gold is a Jazzman's saxophone, gold is the colour of love.' Punctuation is used securely and pupils produce a wide range of writing including playscripts, stories, poems and magazine articles. Good emphasis is placed on writing across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 write about the journey of a river in geography, pupils in Year 3 write about how the village of Wool has changed over the years in history and pupils in Year 1 use their writing skills in science to label cartoons about losing teeth. Pupils use information and communication technology effectively to support written tasks during the literacy hour and this is a positive feature of their learning.

74. Another reason for improvement in writing is the good quality of marking, particularly in Year 4. Teachers leave pupils in no doubt as to what they should do to improve and this helps them make progress. Constructive comments such as 'Next time, try to think of a really interesting opening sentence' encourage pupils to improve. Teachers track progress in writing very effectively through regular assessments and set targets for pupils which are shared with parents on evaluation and review days. Pupils complete a piece of unaided writing each month to show progress. A useful collection of samples of writing, which are matched to National Curriculum levels, provides a good resource for teachers and contributes to consistency of assessments. All these initiatives have a positive impact on the high standards.

75. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave well. They are willing to persevere and respond well to the teachers' high expectations. They ask and answer questions willingly because they know that their contributions are valued. They respond so positively because they know that they will be offered activities that interest and challenge them. For example, pupils in Year 2 were inspired to use adjectives such as 'gloomy' when writing about dinosaurs because they were allowed to handle good quality large plastic dinosaurs. This enabled them to consider adjectives such as 'scaly' after feeling the skin. Lower attaining pupils in Year 4 responded well when listening to the song 'Starry, starry night' while looking at Van Gogh's painting as an introduction to descriptive language. The manner in which teachers plan imaginative and interesting ways to develop pupils' literacy skills is an important factor leading to above average standards. Pupils work well together in groups to write 'angry' sentences in Year 3, to write poems about dinosaurs in Year 2 and to type instructions for making cheese scones in Year 4. Relationships between themselves and with their teachers are very good and this contributes positively to the ethos of the school.

76. The quality of teaching is good overall and as a result pupils learn well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 were never less than good and one lesson for pupils in Year 3 was very good. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Year 4. Very good teaching is characterised by very good planning, which ensures that the aims of the lessons are met successfully, an enthusiastic and motivational teaching style that encourages pupils to think for themselves and very good encouragement. Very good pace ensures that pupils remain on task and exciting activities encourage all to do their best. Features of good lessons are well-managed pupils, the effective use of classroom assistants, particularly to support those with special educational needs, and high expectations. In these lessons, learning is fun and pupils are keen to succeed and resources are used well. Where teaching is less successful, class management is less secure; tasks lack excitement and pace is slower. As a result, pupils make slower progress than they do where teaching is good or better.

77. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides good leadership. Very good monitoring of both teaching and learning, in addition to the careful examination and use of assessment information, make a strong contribution to the good standards attained in the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics are above national expectations both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4 and pupils are achieving well. Results in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 were above the national average. Given the small and fluctuating number of pupils in each year group it is difficult to give an accurate picture of trends year on year, but high standards have been maintained in recent years. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys or girls. Standards in mathematics are now better than those seen in the last inspection, particularly in using and applying mathematics. The school is doing well as in some years a significant number of pupils arrive and leave the school at short notice.

79. There are several reasons why pupils do well. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they receive very good quality support from classroom assistants who are closely involved by teachers in their lesson planning. This enables most pupils to reach the expected standard. The quality of teaching is good and analysis of test results is well established, enabling areas of weakness to be identified and quickly addressed.

80. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully and successfully implemented and it has had a great impact on the work of the school and on the pupils' rate of learning. Staff have received training as part of the national arrangements and have also benefited from visits from local authority advisory staff and meetings of local schools. Lessons start with mental arithmetic work and teachers match their questions well to the needs of individuals. For example, in a Year 3 lesson challenging questions enabled some pupils to offer two more multiples before 50, while others confidently worked out three times five. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, pupils responded well to placing numbers in order, using attractive number tiles to help them. Pupils in Year 4 work on the underlying principles of place value

and how these can explain the processes that are used in subtraction up to 1000. There is a strong emphasis in all classes on mental arithmetic and exploration of the different ways in which correct answers can be achieved.

81. There is no difference in standards between the different strands of the subject. Pupils throughout the school use and apply their mathematical skills well. For example, pupils in Year 2 organise and check their own work, discussing it clearly and accurately, using correct mathematical language. By Year 4, problem-solving strategies are well developed and pupils use a range of symbols to record their work. Pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically explore ways of measuring a range of objects and shapes using non-standard and standard units. In Year 2, they investigate three-dimensional shapes, counting the edges and faces, identifying the shapes of the faces and then cutting up models to discover how they fit together. In Year 3, there is challenging work on the use of analogue clocks and the ways in which time is measured mathematically and can be calculated by using multiplication tables. In Year 4, pupils show an understanding of reflective symmetry and know how to work out the perimeter of shapes. Regular attention is given to data handling. For example, pupils in Year 4 produce graphs and tables to plan positions for a class photograph.

82. Pupils' attitudes are generally good and they demonstrate high levels of concentration. This has a positive impact on their learning. They are attentive and keen to make progress, responding well to their teachers and co-operating eagerly but sensibly with each other. They frequently appreciate and understand when teachers have high expectations of them and strive to complete a good quantity of work and behave very well. Teachers are skilled in making learning fun and this motivates the pupils. For example, pupils in Year 1 spontaneously cheered when they learned that they were going to do some measuring. Pupils in Year 3 behaved very well when they were trusted to find out how many times they could walk round the hall in three minutes.

83. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. Two very good lessons were also seen. Features of these very good lessons for pupils in Year 1 and Year 3 include a very good understanding of the subject and an exciting style that motivates the pupils. For example, pupils in Year 1 count back from ten in whispers and pupils in Year 3 use their arms to represent the hands of the clock. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and activities are well matched to the needs of all pupils. Good lessons are characterised by good use of resources and equipment and careful planning with clear learning objectives. As a result, little time is wasted and, because teachers know their pupils well and keep careful track of their progress, work is provided which challenges them appropriately. A particularly good feature of this is clear, careful questioning which is probing and to the point. It helps teachers assess pupils' understanding and knowledge before moving on to the next step. Where teaching is satisfactory, activities consolidate skills that pupils already know and pace is slower. As a result a minority of pupils loses motivation and progress is slower than in classes where teaching is good.

84. Pupils use their numeracy skills well to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they use computers to compile block graphs, pie charts, pictograms and tables to show different ways of getting to school. They draw graphs in geography to show temperatures around the world and use their measuring skills in design and technology to make playground equipment and to make pencil cases.

85. The management of the subject is good. An audit of teaching resources is in progress and the provision of further mathematical material in classrooms is part of the school development plan. At present the headteacher co-ordinates the teaching of mathematics and there are formal arrangements for her to monitor the work of teachers. In addition, however, the close and co-operative working relationship enjoyed by the staff is a strong factor in promoting good teaching and learning.



## **SCIENCE**

86. Results of the National Curriculum teacher assessments for 2000 show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average. However, the percentage exceeding the national standards is very high. There has, in fact, been a steady rise in these standards since 1998 although the small numbers involved may sometimes make the picture less representative. Nevertheless, inspection evidence shows that overall both boys and girls achieve standards which are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and that they maintain these high standards by the end of Year 4. They are achieving well. This is an improvement since the last inspection where standards were average.

87. The school places a good emphasis on the subject from an early age and this contributes positively to the standards achieved. Pupils learn well in a stimulating and encouraging environment. There is good emphasis on investigative activities and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 1 investigate whether materials are magnetic or not and make good use of appropriate vocabulary such as 'predict' and 'test'. In Year 2, they build on this approach in considering how materials can change state, observing and recording the different effect of heat on solids such as chocolate and apple. In Year 3, they investigate the characteristics of rocks and soils, making their own concrete using different mixes and methods and then taking great trouble to devise 'fair tests' when comparing them experimentally. More sophisticated classification of materials takes place in Year 4, where pupils sort materials into groups according to their properties and the changes that produce them and also experiment with the separation of insoluble solids from liquids by filtering. From an early age, therefore, pupils learn to conduct scientific experiments and think about whether the tests that they use are fair. Lower attaining pupils and those pupils with special educational needs also make good progress as their needs are well catered for.

88. The pupils have good attitudes to science. They enjoy learning and are excited about making discoveries and observations because they are offered interesting activities. They are able to employ the knowledge and understanding that they gained earlier and respond well to the teacher and each other. Pupils are usually well behaved and lessons are mostly orderly and good-natured.

89. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the achievements and needs of all the pupils and provide work that stimulates and interests them. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. They plan and prepare for lessons well and make very good use of classroom assistants to ensure that all pupils take part effectively. They have high expectations of their pupils, although this is not always matched by tasks that are sufficiently challenging for pupils in Year 4, where unsatisfactory classroom management can result in loss of attention to the work in hand.

90. The broad and balanced curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and the National Curriculum is covered thoroughly. Resources for teaching are good, although there is need for some more timing equipment and resources for investigating light. Good emphasis is given to scientific vocabulary and to recording using words and pictures. Numeracy is well used to support work in science with pupils counting and measuring appropriately. Assessment procedures are good and provide an accurate picture of the pupils' achievements.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

91. Pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding well as they move through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils do better than expected for their age and they maintain these standards by the time they leave the school. They are achieving well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, where the attainment of the younger pupils met the expectation for their age.

92. One of the reasons why pupils do so well is because a specialist teacher generally teaches them. The teacher has a very good technical knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject, which she successfully transfers to the pupils. She ensures that they experience a wide range of art activities and that they develop their skills steadily as they move through the school. She encourages pupils to behave like artists; for example, planning a self-portrait and experimenting with line and tone before beginning.

93. High quality displays throughout the school both celebrate pupils' achievements and show that pupils learn the skills to produce work of such a good standard. For example, an attractive frieze illustrating 'The Waters of Baptism' enhances the hall. This frieze shows that pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 use a wide range of painting techniques, including colour mixing and printing. Emphasis is placed on practising techniques before using them in a meaningful way. For example, pupils in Year 2 experiment with mark making to represent texture of hair and smoothness of skin before using them to produce charcoal and pastel drawings of high quality. From early experiments in colour mixing in Year 1 when painting pictures of the features in Wool, by Year 4, pupils progress to using colour effectively when they produce paintings and collages of flowers to advertise a local flower show.

94. The school uses the work of well known artists effectively to develop pupils' skills and to encourage different styles in their work. Good examples include pencil sketches based on the work of Augustus John and Joan Eardley, showing the use of shape and line to express movement. The works of Picasso, Chardin, Stanley Spencer and Van Gogh are used effectively to encourage attention to detail in portraits. Pupils in Year 4 explore textures in African textiles before using them to make attractively decorated weavings. Three-dimensional skills are well developed through the use of clay; for example, to make nativity figures.

95. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching as only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However, in this lesson, for pupils in Year 3, the quality of teaching was very good and contributed to very good learning. In this lesson based on the expression of emotion in figures, the teacher encouraged pupils to produce rough sketches before producing work in a range of media such as clay, pastels and paper mache. All pupils were encouraged to think about their work and to value it and as a result, they confidently discussed what they were trying to achieve. Very effective use of classroom assistants and parent helpers ensured that all pupils made very good progress because they received good support. Very high expectations and clear explanation ensured that pupils learned how people display their emotions in their body language. Completed sketches show the essence of this and that pupils combine the abstract with the formal. As a result of the very good teaching and the exciting media, pupils showed excellent attitudes and behaviour, pleading to be allowed to complete their work before starting the next lesson.

96. The skills that pupils develop in the subject are used well in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils use their drawing skills to enhance topic work in history and geography and to illustrate their designs for playground equipment. Much of the work on display is related to aspects of religious education and the high quality of the work used to enhance the quiet areas for prayer and reflection in the classrooms and other focal points contributes very positively to the excellent spirituality evident in the school.

97. The co-ordinator, who is the specialist teacher, provides good leadership and ensures that the curriculum is planned, using national guidance, to develop skills and understanding systematically as pupils move through the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

98. A small number of design and technology lessons was observed during the inspection. Additional evidence of attainment and progress was gathered through examination of completed and progressing work, teachers' planning documents, and discussion with pupils and staff. Overall attainment is broadly in line with national expectations and pupils achieve as they should. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection.

99. In Year 2, pupils discuss and experiment with ways of joining fabrics to make Joseph's coat of many colours, having previously used the computer to draw up their designs. They pay good attention to safety when using staplers and other simple tools, and show a growing ability to select appropriate techniques and explain the reasons for their choices. Pupils in Year 4 design and make pencil cases, working from sugar-paper mock-ups to produce finished articles in various fabrics. They use a range of sewing techniques and work on self-evaluation forms that give them the opportunity to reflect upon their own performance.

100. The subject makes a useful contribution to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils use a range of descriptive and evaluative writing during their investigations and projects. In group discussions, they listen well and use subject specific vocabulary. They measure carefully when they draw plans and patterns and then cut and join accurately and safely.

101. Pupils enjoy the subject and usually co-operate well in lessons. They are keen to show their work and discuss how it evolved. Concentration is often high and there is appreciation of the needs of others. They support each other's efforts, particularly in paired or group activities.

102. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection and so it is not possible to make a judgement on the teaching overall. In one lesson, for pupils in Year 2, the quality of teaching was good. This lesson was characterised by careful planning and good subject knowledge allowing skills to be suitably taught. Organisation was good, with appropriate emphasis on safety and hygiene routines. Challenging questions such as 'Will it make a difference when the glue is dry?' encouraged pupils to really think about appropriate methods of joining materials. In the other lesson, for pupils in Year 4, the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory. Here, weaknesses in method and classroom control hampered pupils' learning. Pupils were unsure about what they were expected to do and consequently lacked motivation.

103. The scheme of work ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and there is a satisfactory stock of resources for teaching the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

104. It was only possible to observe two lessons in geography and none in history during the inspection. However conversations with pupils, examination of their work and teachers' planning shows that progress by the majority of pupils is satisfactory and that pupils achieve appropriately in both subjects. They meet the standards expected for their ages in both subjects by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. The school has maintained these standards since the previous inspection.

105. In history, younger pupils demonstrate a growing feeling for chronology and the lives of people who lived before the present. They are developing an understanding of the different ways in which we can find out about the past. This is continued in Key Stage 2 where through their work about how Wool has developed as a settlement, for example, they are encouraged to recognise similarities between the past and the present. They show a good understanding about life in Roman times and their influence in the local area.

106. In geography, the quality of teaching was good in the two lessons seen and enabled pupils to make good gains in their learning. Particularly commendable is the way in which teachers catch and maintain pupils' enthusiasm through the posing of interesting and challenging questions, the encouragement that is given to fruitful discussion, and the skill with which all pupils are given a chance to participate and contribute. This ensures that they show interest and co-operate well with each other and their teachers. They are keen to track down information and demonstrate good research skills in the older years. Pupils with special educational needs are always fully included through the provision of suitable work and consistent support and assistance. In the lesson seen for pupils in Year 1, they learned to compare the climate in hot and cold places, for example, Wool and Crete, through discussion of the range of clothes that the classroom assistant modelled for them. This amused and motivated the pupils and led to a good understanding of how countries and climates that they experience on holiday are different from home.

Pupils in Year 2, compare life-styles in Wool with those on an island off the West Coast of Scotland and older pupils begin to understand the variety of factors that can influence the way in which people react to their environment. This developed further in Year 4 when pupils examine in some detail the lives of people who live in Africa.

107. History and geography are both well co-ordinated. The school follows the national schemes of work successfully, there is good use of resources and the curriculum is enriched by educational visits to places such as Maiden Castle and Lulworth Cove.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

108. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils are achieving as well as they should. The previous inspection reported that standards were above average, but since then both the curriculum and the criteria for inspecting the subject have changed and so in reality, standards have not declined. Inspection evidence suggests that standards are rising as pupils move through the school, building on the skills they have learned on the new computers further down the school. A limited amount of direct teaching was seen during the inspection and so judgements are based on discussions with pupils and teachers, teachers' plans and pupils' past work. Pupils were also observed while working at computers.

109. One of the reasons why the school has been able to keep pace with recent developments in the subject is the good provision for computers. Each class has access to several new machines in the designated areas in each classroom. Class sizes are relatively small so this gives good opportunities for pupils to use the computers. The good quality of the resources and the good ratio contributes positively to rising standards. Another reason for the rising standards is the effective use of the school secretary who teaches skills throughout the school and also acts as co-ordinator and 'trouble-shooter'. Very effective use is made of all computers in the school because the secretary also ensures that pupils use the machines in the school office, thereby maximising their use.

110. The school uses imaginative methods to encourage the use of information and communication technology. For example, the use of email is already well established because pupils keep in touch with those who leave, often to move abroad. An unusual feature, which contributes to the standards attained, is the provision for pupils to email their homework to the headteacher. This acts as a stimulus to those who are reluctant to complete it. The headteacher responds by email and often enters into a dialogue with pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.

111. Pupils use information and communication technology effectively to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in literacy, pupils in Year 2 show appropriate word processing skills when they insert lines into poems and punctuate their stories. They are confident in using a range of fonts and styles. Attractive books about 'The Rainbow Fish' and 'The Three Bears' show that they can combine text and pictures competently. Older pupils make 'Happy Birthday' posters, combining a digital photograph of themselves with text and pictures. They competently type instructions for making cheese scones. In mathematics, pupils in Year 2 produce block graphs, pie charts, pictograms and tables to show eye colour and how pupils get to school. By Year 4, pupils use programs to produce four-way symmetry for a carpet design and produce graphs and plan positions for a class photograph. In art, younger pupils use their skills to produce attractive pictures depicting the Olympic rings and well-executed self-portraits showing good 'mouse' control and attention to detail. Older pupils design wrapping paper using repeat patterns. Pupils throughout the school use programs to support literacy and numeracy skills. Examples were seen of the use of the subject to support other areas of the curriculum such as religious education and geography; for example, word-processed prayers with suitable embellishments and the use of the Internet to research different types of rocks.

112. Older pupils use their research skills effectively to search the Internet and CD Roms for information. Discussions with pupils show that they understand the wide range of information available on the Internet and that not all of it is suitable for children. They have a good understanding of how computers are used

in the workplace; for example, they know that they can only use the computers in the school office if the secretary enters the correct password for them.

113. Pupils enjoy the subject and are proud of their achievements. They are keen to demonstrate their skills. For example, younger pupils showed how they could send a programmable toy along a route and older pupils confidently discussed how they could make a shape on screen. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching because only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, in the lesson seen in Year 4, pupils made appropriate gains in their learning. They worked independently to practise typing on individual machines designed to develop these skills. These programs enable pupils to work at their own level and are an exciting way of developing typing skills and teaching good practice.

114. The leadership and management of the subject are good. A teacher and the secretary effectively share responsibility and the curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically as they move through the school. Assessment is well established and the school maintains individual samples of work, which show clear progression. Records to show pupils' achievements are completed at the end of each topic.

## **MUSIC**

115. The school has a strong musical tradition, particularly in singing, and provides well for its pupils. As identified in the previous inspection, a specialist musician provides strong musical expertise and enthusiasm to support good music teaching and participation in musical activities with the local cluster of schools. This has a significant effect on the standards attained.

116. Since the previous inspection, standards in music have improved and pupils are achieving well. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that exceed expectations for seven-year-olds. By the end of Year 4, pupils also exceed standards that are expected for nine-year-olds. Judgements are based on the four lessons seen during the inspection, one for each class, from the guitar lesson at lunch time, from listening to pupils sing and play in acts of collective worship and from discussion with the specialist teacher.

117. The quality of teaching is good overall and enables pupils to make good gains in their learning. In the lesson for pupils in Year R and Year 1, the quality of teaching was very good. A very good range of activities, which were well matched to their needs, motivated and excited the pupils. As a result, they were keen to take part and behaved well, particularly when playing instruments. The teacher skilfully kept the pupils' attention by singing songs that required them to listen for their name before joining in with a tapping pattern. Very good planning ensured that no time was wasted and that pupils learned how to keep the beat using claves and tulip blocks in songs such as 'Hickory, Dickory Dock' and 'Ten Fat Sausages.'

118. By Year 2, pupils show a good understanding of dynamics and speed when they sing songs such as 'Rocking and Rolling the night away' in preparation for Christmas. Songs are well chosen to motivate pupils and to develop their musical skills effectively. For example, the teacher plays increasingly lengthy passages on the piano before stopping and challenging pupils to identify the word on which she had stopped. This encouraged the pupils to listen carefully and the tune was so rhythmical that all were motivated to join in. Very good relationships ensure that all have confidence to sing without embarrassment and this is one of the reasons why standards are high. Pupils show very positive attitudes to music because songs are well chosen to meet their needs. The 'catchy' tunes in the choice of carols practised during the inspection ensured that pupils could join in with enthusiasm. Some pupils happily continued to practise at playtime! Pupils have a good appreciation of music. This was illustrated well during the inspection when a pupil approvingly said 'That's better. Now you're playing it right!' as his teacher played the full accompaniment to a carol.

119. Older pupils show an understanding of structure and texture and sing confidently in small groups. The teacher sets a very good example in her singing and pupils strive to meet her high expectations. By

Year 4, pupils know how duration can be used to alter the mood and keep a syncopated rhythm on untuned percussion. These pupils sing carols well showing good attention to diction and phrasing. Musical composition was not being developed during the term in which the inspection took place and therefore it is not possible to make a judgement on standards in this area of the curriculum. However, examination of planning documents and discussion with pupils shows that this element is not neglected and that pupils have a good understanding of notation.

120. Extra-curricular activities make a positive contribution to standards in music. For example, pupils learn to play the guitar and recorder at lunch times and there are opportunities for pupils to learn the clarinet, flute and trumpet. A recent workshop introduced pupils to a wide range of drumming techniques. Good opportunities to perform with other schools further enhance the curriculum. For example, the school regularly joins with others in its cluster to take part in concerts and other musical activities.

121. Music contributes very positively to pupils' spiritual development. Acts of collective worship begin and end calmly as pupils enter and leave the hall listening to music such as 'Shepherd's Moon' by Enya. The quality of singing is particularly high and pupils sing sweetly and reverently. For example, the teacher reminded pupils that 'Sing Alleluia' the hymn that they were enjoying was a prayer and pupils sang appropriately. During an assembly for parents, a pupil in Year 2 sang confidently to convey her part in the Christmas Story.

122. The specialist teacher provides good support for teachers, who assist her by ensuring that pupils have learned the words to the songs that she uses in her lessons. The curriculum is well planned to ensure pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically and useful records are maintained to show progress.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

123. Very little teaching of physical education was seen during the inspection. However, evidence from teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils show that all pupils have opportunities to take part in all aspects of the physical education curriculum. In the small number of lessons observed most pupils were judged to be achieving appropriately, including pupils with special educational needs. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, particularly for the younger pupils, and now meet the expectation for their ages.

124. Pupils in Year 1 practise travelling in different ways, adopting different positions with their bodies and using a range of equipment to move, balance and jump. Older pupils benefit from lessons on short tennis given by a visiting coach from the local sports centre. They practise a variety of ball and racquet skills, working well alone and with partners to develop increasing control and concentration. Pupils enjoy physical education. They respond well to instructions and cooperate in teams and small groups. Behaviour is generally good and through an emphasis on working together, the subject strengthens the school's provision for pupils' social development.

125. The quality of teaching observed was very good at both key stages. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and plan the activities well. They ensure that pupils dress appropriately and keep the lessons going at a brisk pace that provides challenge and promotes concentration. They also encourage pupils to evaluate what they are doing and to think about ways in which they can improve their performance. There is a good scheme of work that has been drawn up with reference to national guidance. It has, however, also been very usefully supplemented with additional material provided by the subject co-ordinator who works hard and successfully to support her colleagues in their teaching of the subject.

126. The school has its own small hall with fixed and portable apparatus and a large playing field with an adjacent hard-surfaced area that is marked out for various games. The hall is cramped and is also used for storage. However, the school takes care to ensure the safety of the pupils and no unsafe practices were seen during the inspection. From Year 2 pupils are also offered swimming lessons. These facilities

are all used well to enhance attainment and progress. There is also a good range of extra-curricular activities, including rugby, football, netball, fitness and, in the summer months, athletics and cricket.