

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **East Huntspill Community Primary School**

East Huntspill, near Highbridge

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123685

Headteacher: Mr S. Turner

Reporting inspector: Mr A Fullwood  
21184

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225306

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	New Road East Huntspill Highbridge Somerset
Postcode:	TA9 3PT
Telephone number:	01278 782453
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Black
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Alan Fullwood 21184	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Science; Information technology; History; Music; Physical education; Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
David Holroyd 17315	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Christina Morgan 12116	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Mathematics; Religious education; Art; Design and technology; Geography; Under fives; Special educational needs.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the village of East Huntspill and has 84 boys and girls on roll, organised into three mixed-age classes. During literacy and numeracy lessons in the morning, an extra class is created by the use of part-time staff. The majority of pupils live in the village, in a mixture of owner-occupied and local authority rented accommodation. Six per cent of pupils are currently entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Approximately one quarter of the pupils are listed on the school's register of special educational needs as needing some form of additional support. This is above the national average. There are no pupils with formal statements of special educational needs or who have English as an additional language. The attainment of the children on entry to the school is below average, particularly in their language and social skills.

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

East Huntspill Primary is an effective school that helps its pupils to make good progress in achieving standards in English, mathematics and science in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. It provides a sound education, where pupils are successfully encouraged to develop good attitudes to learning and to behave well. The school is led and managed well, and provides satisfactory value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, where the quality of teaching is good in over half the lessons.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes to their learning and behave well.
- There is good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is well led and managed, and monitors its work well.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- Standards of attainment in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The use made of the school's good assessment procedures in planning work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in mixed age classes.
- The provision made for pupils during the foundation stage.

*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 progress in overcoming the serious weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection in May 1998. Since that time, pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved at a faster rate than found nationally. The standards of pupils' attainment in Year 6 are now on track to be in line with national averages at the end of the academic year. Staff have worked hard to develop an effective whole-school curriculum plan, and to devise policies and schemes of work in all subjects of the National Curriculum where there were none two years ago. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology has improved as a result of better curriculum planning, improved resources and improvements in staff confidence and expertise. Good procedures have been established for tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics, and are now being developed in science. However, these are not consistently used to inform teachers' planning of pupils' work. The staff work well as a team, and have a common sense of purpose in raising pupils' achievement and improving the quality of education that the school provides. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

## **STANDARDS**

Due to the small numbers of pupils involved, the attainment of the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science varies from year to year. Since the time of the last inspection, standards have been rising above the nationally improving trend, but they were below average in the year 2000 national tests in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in English were above average when compared to all schools and schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils presently in Year 6 are on track to achieve at least average standards in English, mathematics and science, and that they have made good progress when their attainment is compared to their achievement at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make sound progress in achieving expected standards for their age in most other subjects, and good progress in art and religious education where standards are above expected levels.

In the year 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment was well below average in reading and writing, but average in mathematics. Over the last four years, pupils' attainment has varied from year to year because of the small number of pupils involved. However, standards of attainment have improved since the time of the last inspection, though they remain well below average in reading and writing. Pupils make satisfactory progress compared with their attainment at the end of the foundation stage. Pupils' attainment in other National Curriculum subjects meets the standards expected for their age. At both key stages, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement of pupils' attainment in music. However, provision for the subject is satisfactory. The majority of children make satisfactory progress in the reception class, but a significant number of children are not on track to achieve the early learning goals in most areas of learning by the end of the foundation stage. Most children will achieve at expected levels for their age in mathematics.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good overall. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Children under five and pupils at Key Stage 1 have satisfactory attitudes to learning. Pupils generally concentrate appropriately during lessons, but lack confidence in their own abilities and need constant encouragement to take a full part in lessons. Pupils' attitudes improve as they progress through the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are generally well behaved in lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and successfully foster their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' behaviour is generally good around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good; the quality of relationships in this happy school is good. As they get older, pupils begin to show initiative in carrying out tasks, and learn to take responsibility for their own actions. One child was excluded for a fixed period of time during the last reporting year.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average. Pupils are punctual for the start of school and arrive for lessons on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed, of which 40 per cent were good and 4 per cent very good. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teachers are hard working and committed and work together well. The quality of teaching of children in the foundation stage is satisfactory overall, and varies from good to satisfactory. The teacher's planning for children in the foundation stage is detailed and appropriate, though the quality of children's free play activities could be improved.

The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, with one in four lessons being good and the remainder satisfactory. In some lessons, teacher introductions are too long, and pupils become restless and lose concentration. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall, with approximately one in ten lessons very good, five out of ten good, and the remainder satisfactory. The quality of teaching of pupils' literacy skills is satisfactory and of pupils' numeracy skills is good. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and occasionally good when they are given additional adult support. Across the school, teachers generally make sound use of ongoing assessments to plan future work, but this is not always the case, and the needs of more able pupils are not consistently met. Homework is satisfactorily used to consolidate, and sometimes extend, what pupils have learned at school.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, particularly at Key Stage 2. All subjects have schemes of work in place. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented appropriately. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including visits to places of interest and visitors to the school enriches the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Provision meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Pupils have appropriate individual education plans. All pupils have full access to the curriculum, but whether their individual needs are adequately met depends on the amount of additional classroom support available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school works hard to provide for pupils' personal development by increasing their confidence and building their self-esteem. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Procedures for assessing pupils attainment and progress are good in English and mathematics, and developing in science. They are not as yet used consistently to inform teachers planning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's future development and is ably assisted by staff. There is a shared sense of purpose in raising pupils' achievements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body are very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory responsibilities effectively. They monitor the work of the school closely and are aware of its strengths and weaknesses. They know that the school has moved forward considerably over the last two years, but that there is a need to build on these successes.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and governors monitor the school's performance closely and involve all staff in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities for development.
The strategic use of resources	The governors make effective use of the resources available to them. The principles of best value are applied well when linking spending to the school's educational priorities and in evaluating the cost effectiveness of major spending decisions.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li><li>• The standard of teaching is good.</li><li>• Staff are approachable.</li><li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No significant concerns.</li></ul>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school has established a very positive partnership with parents. Parents are very supportive of the school and its staff. Many parents make a good contribution to their children's learning through helping in school and assisting their children with homework. Parents are generally proud of the school and feel that it is doing a good job.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The attainment of the children on entry to the school is generally below average, especially in their language and social skills. Evidence from the inspection indicates that, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. The number of pupils with special educational needs is higher than average, usually about a quarter of each year group. These pupils generally make satisfactory progress in relation to the targets set for them in their individual education plans, and sometimes their progress is good. The good development of pupils' social skills, the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy and the generally good teaching they receive, enable pupils to make good progress during their time at the school.

2. The majority of children make satisfactory progress in the reception class, but a significant number of children are not on track to achieve the early learning goals in most areas of learning by the end of the foundation stage. Most pupils will achieve levels expected for their age in mathematics. Many can already count to ten, and some beyond this. The majority of children are able to manipulate numbers appropriately, but their below average literacy skills make them less confident when problems are expressed in words. Children make satisfactory progress in the development of their personal and social skills, but their concentrate spans are short and they find difficulty in persevering in their learning. Children enjoy stories and are beginning to use picture clues to read simple texts. They make a satisfactory start in their early reading and writing skills, but a significant number are not on track to write simple regular words or read a range of familiar words and simple sentences by the end of the foundation stage. Children enter the school with limited experience of the wider world and the vocabulary necessary for describing it. The school works hard at building up children's knowledge and understanding of the world through interesting topics and varied activities, but this is not enough to make up for their below average attainment on entry to the school. Children have regular opportunities for developing manipulation skills, although several still have poor pencil control by the end of the foundation stage. There are limited opportunities at present for the youngest children to play with large construction toys or wheeled vehicles, though the school is taking steps to develop this area. Children make satisfactory progress in the development of their physical skills. Progress in pupils' creative development is unsatisfactory. Opportunities are provided for pupils to paint, play instruments and role-play, but many of these activities are insufficiently structured to promote children's skills effectively in this area.

3. In the year 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading was well below average in comparison with all schools, and in the lowest five per cent nationally in comparison with schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. Pupils' attainment in writing was well below average in comparison with all schools and similar schools. However, care needs to be taken in interpreting these findings, as the number of pupils involved each year is very small. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards of attainment of pupils presently in Year 2 are below average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1, but their attainment is consistently below the national average.

4. The number of pupils reaching the expected level or higher in mathematics in the national tests in 2000 was close to the national average. Although the numbers of pupils taking the tests is small, the percentage reaching the national standard has risen considerably since 1998. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can calculate using numbers to 100 and have a sound understanding of place value. They are now beginning to apply this knowledge in a range of contexts, such as handling money, but have difficulty with solving number problems. They make satisfactory progress during the key stage.

5. Teachers' assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 2) to be close to the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) was below the national average. Inspection evidence from the work of the current group of Year 2 pupils confirms that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of science is average overall. However, when supposedly carrying out their own investigations, pupils' are very dependent on their teachers.

6. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards in line with national expectations in information technology. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Most pupils can use the computer to compose short pieces of writing, and change the size and type of text they use. They learn to use a variety of programs to organise data and create their own pictures.

7. In religious education, pupils make satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 1, and achieve standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn about the main Christian festivals and some similarities and differences between the festivals of other cultures. They learn about famous Bible stories, such as Noah and the flood.

8. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards in line with expected levels for their age in art, design technology, geography, history and physical education. It is not possible to make an overall judgement of pupils' attainment in music at this key stage. The National Curriculum programmes of study for these subjects are fully covered.

9. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in English, because of the small numbers of pupils involved, standards of attainment vary from year to year. In this year's tests, pupils' attainment was above average in comparison with all schools, and in line with the average of schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. Pupils' attainment has shown considerable improvement since the time of the last inspection, and has maintained an upward trend above that found nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils presently in Year 6 is on track to meet average standards in 2001. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, in line with national expectations. Pupils listen attentively, and many can explain their ideas clearly, although their vocabulary is limited. The school gives particular emphasis to promoting pupils' skills of communication, and encourages them to develop their ideas by sharing them with others. Pupils make good progress in their reading, particularly their ability to read a range of different texts, and standards of attainment are in line with the national average. However, their ability to understand what they read and to gain meaning beyond the literal, using inference and deduction, is less well developed. The school has put a great deal of effort into developing the technical aspects of pupils' reading, but not enough emphasis on their understanding and enjoyment of more difficult texts. Pupils make good progress in attaining standards in

writing in line with the national average. They write in a range of different forms, including stories, reports, diaries and poetry. Higher attaining pupils structure their work well and choose words carefully to make their writing interesting. Most pupils use a limited range of descriptive words and their spelling and punctuation are erratic.

10. In the national tests in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment has varied from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils involved. This year the percentage of pupils reaching the expected national standard was close to the national average, although no pupils gained the higher level. Overall attainment was below average in comparison with all schools, and well below average compared with similar schools. However, since the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment have risen above the trend in national results. The attainment of the current group of Year 6 pupils is on track to be in line with national expectations and to maintain the upward trend in standards. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a good understanding of place value and are beginning to mentally calculate with confidence and speed. Higher attaining pupils show confidence when working out calculations involving decimals, including doubling and halving such numbers. Difficulties arise for many pupils when working out number problems expressed in words. Standards have improved because of the improvement in teachers' planning as a result of the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. This has improved the overall quality of teaching observed during the inspection. However, from the scrutiny of pupils' previous work, it is evident that the good assessment procedures in place are not always used to plan suitably challenging work for pupils of different abilities, especially the more able.

11. In science, the results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have shown an upward trend over the last five years, though they have remained below the national average. The attainment of the current group of Year 6 pupils is on track to be in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a considerable improvement in the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils have gained appropriate knowledge and understanding of life and living processes, physical processes such as light and sound, and materials and their uses. Pupils make good progress in relation to their previous attainment. They record their findings accurately, make sensible predictions of what might happen in their investigations, and carry out their own 'fair' tests. However, pupils are sometimes limited by lessons being too tightly structured so that individual pupils, particularly the more able, are insufficiently challenged by the work.

12. Pupils make satisfactory progress in information technology so that their attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The vast majority of pupils confidently use computers to record their work. They can display their work in a range of formats, and make use of 'clip art' or a digital camera to illustrate their writing. Pupils are able to enter information into the computer and display this in a variety of ways, such as bar graphs and pie charts. The increased provision of resources and more frequent opportunities for using computers is successfully raising pupils' standards of achievement.

13. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards of attainment in religious education are above the expectations of the Locally Agreed syllabus. Most pupils develop a good understanding of Christian festivals and the similarities and differences between different world religions. Pupils show a genuine interest in, and respect for, other people's beliefs.

14. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made satisfactory progress to attain standards in line with national expectations in design technology, geography, history and physical education. It is not possible to make an overall judgement of pupils' attainment in music. Pupils make good progress in art, and their attainment is above national expectations.

15. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards meeting the targets for learning in their individual education plans, particularly when additional adult support is available. All teachers are aware of these pupils' individual needs and set appropriate work. Learning support assistants are well qualified, experienced and skilled at giving informed support in a range of activities. They have a very positive impact upon pupils' attitudes and the learning that takes place. The school has several pupils with severe learning and behavioural difficulties who receive additional support. However, when this support is not available, teachers struggle to provide effective help whilst dealing with the large range of pupils' needs in the mixed age classes. In some cases, the learning of other pupils in the class is affected when the teacher has to spend too much time with one individual.

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

16. Pupils generally have good attitudes to school and to their learning. A high proportion of parents indicated in their response to the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting that their children like coming to school. Pupils are happy to be in school and generally concentrate appropriately during lessons. However, they often lack confidence in their own abilities, and need constant encouragement to take a full part in lessons. Examples of this were seen in a number of lessons, including English and mathematics. Pupils are motivated to achieve well and participate fully in lessons by challenging and lively teaching, which grasps their interest and encourages them to think for themselves. This was often a factor in the examples of better quality teaching observed. Here pupils tackled tasks enthusiastically, and this often influenced the work of others in the class.

17. The school has a sound behaviour policy. It is based upon high expectations and fostering children's self-esteem. Pupils' behaviour is generally good around the school. Behaviour is satisfactory overall in lessons during the foundation stage and at Key Stage 1. Behaviour improves as pupils progress through the school, and is generally good at Key Stage 2. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are generally handled well. The consistent application of the school's behaviour policy and the regular rewarding of good behaviour ensure that pupils learn successfully what is expected of them.

18. In a small proportion of lessons observed, pupils easily become restless and distracted. This is particularly the case when pupils new to the school are still learning the expectations of their behaviour. Consequently, these pupils are sometimes inattentive, find difficulty in sharing resources, and occasionally show little respect for other pupils. Examples of such behaviour become less and less as pupils progress through the school.

19. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are generally good. They are supportive of one another. For example, during a physical education lesson held on a very windy day, pupils helped one another by retrieving footballs from different parts of the playground. Pupils were keen to help others by working in pairs and trios to show various techniques for controlling a football. Teachers help to cultivate the respect that exists within

the school. Although there were occasional minor disagreements in the playground between pupils, they were dealt with appropriately by teachers and other adults. Pupils are keen to carry out tasks, behave sensibly and take their responsibilities seriously, particularly the members of the school council. There is a good range of opportunities for exercising personal responsibility in the school. These include responsibilities such as monitoring other pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, organising learning resources at the start and end of lessons, and organising chairs and equipment at assembly times.

20. The importance the school places upon such as activities as 'circle time' and 'golden time' means that pupils learn to respect others' feelings, values and beliefs. The close relationships evident in this small school work to reinforce such respect, and help children to obtain a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others.

21. Attendance levels are good and above the national average. Few children were seen to arrive late to school in the mornings. This, and the good use made of registration times, ensures a crisp and purposeful start to the school day.

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

22. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although it varies from very good to satisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed, of which 40 per cent were good and 4 per cent very good. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teachers are hard working and committed, and they work together well.

23. Significant strengths of teaching are teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, and the teaching of pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. A weakness is that assessment data is not consistently used to plan work to meet the needs of all pupils, with the result that the same work is sometimes planned for all pupils.

24. The quality of teaching of children under five years of age is satisfactory or better, and good in 25 per cent of lessons. The teacher's planning for children in the foundation stage is detailed and appropriate. Children's progress is monitored and recorded effectively on 'I can' sheets, covering the six early learning goals. However, as the teacher is also planning for Year 1 pupils in the same class at Key Stage 1, not all the activities planned are implemented effectively. In reality, the younger children spend too much time in unstructured and unsupervised free play activities, with too little adult interaction to make them meaningful. The class teacher has the able assistance of a classroom assistant, who in effect has responsibility for the pupils in the foundation stage for large parts of the week. However, the difficulties of implementing two curricula place considerable demands on teacher organisation and time.

25. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, with 25 per cent of lessons being good and the remainder satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils satisfactorily. Lesson planning is sound, but what pupils are expected to have learned by the end of the session is not always clearly identified. Appropriate activities are generally planned for pupils of different abilities, but this is not always the case, as was revealed by a scrutiny of

pupils' previous work. In the better quality teaching, activities are tightly structured, which ensures that pupils work at a good pace, making good use of available time. Pupils make good progress in these lessons. In some other lessons, the teacher's introductions are too long, so that pupils become restless and lose concentration.

26. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall, with approximately one in ten lessons very good, five out of ten good, and the remainder satisfactory. Teachers manage the pupils well. Generally, lessons have a good pace, and time and resources are used well. Learning objectives are made known to the pupils, so that they are aware of what is expected of them during the lesson. In the better quality teaching, pupils are challenged by the activities provided for them and motivated to give of their best. The pace of such lessons is brisk. For example, the teacher kept a tight time structure to activities in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson where pupils were learning to work methodically and logically when solving number problems. The activity involved working out the number of handshakes that would take place if everyone in a group of five shook hands with everyone once. The teacher's good questioning enabled pupils to use their previous knowledge to find suitable solutions and to record their reasoning by jottings and diagrams. Pupils worked well in small groups and were given opportunities to explain their thinking to the rest of the class. They then had the opportunity to apply what they had learned to a real situation involving the school hosting a football tournament. Throughout the lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to commit their thinking to paper and work in a logical way. Pupils were very motivated by the tasks, gave of their best and so made very good progress.

27. The teaching of literacy skills is satisfactory. The National Literacy Strategy has raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, and is proving effective in raising standards, particularly at Key Stage 2. The school is still adapting the literacy framework to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. At present, there is an over-reliance on routine exercises, rather than helping pupils to explore their thoughts and ideas and be more actively involved in their learning. The pace of lessons is occasionally slowed by over-long teacher introductions. Support staff are not used effectively to support lower attaining pupils during whole-class discussions.

28. The teaching of numeracy is good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and is having a positive effect on pupils' attainment. Use is made of a range of teaching strategies, including whole class instruction, group and practical work. In numeracy lessons, good use is made of mental arithmetic sessions at the start, and effective strategies are used to consolidate learning during plenary discussions at the end of lessons. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed well in other subjects, for instance in measuring length and time in science and applied data handling in information technology. There has been a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

29. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and occasionally good when they are given additional adult support. Teachers plan specific work for these pupils based on their individual education plans. Classroom assistants provide good quality support when working with these pupils, and they make satisfactory progress overall.



30. Teachers generally make sound use of ongoing assessments to plan future work, but this is not always the case. The scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work reveals that on many occasions, in subjects such as English and mathematics, the needs of more able pupils are not consistently met and that the work that they complete varies little from that expected of other pupils. Homework is satisfactorily used to consolidate, and sometimes extend, what pupils have learned at school.

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

31. Overall, the quality and range of opportunities and the breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum is good throughout the school. The school copes well with the difficulties of mixed phase and mixed age classes. However, the opportunities for pupils in the foundation year to benefit from a curriculum dedicated to their specific needs is inevitably limited by the need to provide a suitable curriculum for Year 1 pupils in the same class. Although the curriculum as planned for the youngest pupils is appropriate, in reality many of the play activities are undirected and unstructured, with little of the necessary adult interaction that these pupils require. Opportunities are also severely limited for regular outdoor play with large-scale equipment and large wheeled toys.

32. A number of issues associated with the curriculum were noted in the previous inspection, and these have been fully addressed. All subjects now have schemes of work that set out the progressive development of skills and knowledge. Teachers' planning now builds effectively on previous learning. Medium and long term planning structures are in place, so that detailed learning objectives for pupils can be clearly defined. The whole curriculum has a coherence and relevance that was lacking at the time of the previous inspection. The school constantly monitors the quality of curriculum provision and undertakes regular reviews.

33. The present curriculum fully meets statutory requirements, including those for information technology, which did not meet requirements at the time of the last inspection. There are sound arrangements for sex and drugs education within the provision the school makes for personal, social and health education.

34. The school has a policy for pupils with special educational needs that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. These pupils are given appropriate individual educational plans, which contain precise and measurable targets that are regularly reviewed. All pupils have full access to the curriculum, but whether individual needs are adequately addressed depends on the amount of additional classroom support available.

35. There are regular arrangements for monitoring that the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are covered effectively. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are in place as intended, though the mixed age and mixed phase classes are an added difficulty. Both strategies are proving effective in raising standards of attainment.

36. Many pupils come to school with limited experiences of the wider world. The school consciously tries to provide a rich and varied curriculum that will engage pupils' interest and broaden their horizons. A camp in Dorset every two years provides pupils with opportunities to visit Maiden Castle and experience life in a recreated Celtic village. In geography, pupils

explore the course of the River Axe from its source in the Mendips to its mouth on the Bristol Channel. The friends of the school association pay half the cost of all trips. The school aims to provide as stimulating a curriculum as possible within the existing time constraints and, with this in mind, it has extended the school week by 50 minutes. While retaining an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, other areas of the curriculum have also been developed.

37. The school maintains mutually helpful links with the community. The school's Friends Association and members of the village community provide a much valued annual Christmas lunch for all pupils. There is an after-school club, partly funded by the school and partly by the community education department. As the area is one of rural hardship, there are specific grants from rural groups, and these are used effectively. The school, in partnership with the community education department, also provides information and communication technology training for adults in the village. There are close links with the local church, and the children take part in several festivals. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good, with a number of sports clubs, music and art activities.

38. The school makes satisfactory provision for the spiritual development of its pupils. Moments of reflection are included in assemblies, and pupils are given opportunities to talk about issues of concern in circle time discussions. Acts of collective worship are well planned and comply with statutory requirements. Particularly valued by the pupils are the opportunities for individual classes to show work of which they are particularly proud to the school as a whole. Religious education makes a good contribution to the school's provision for spiritual development, as pupils are given opportunities to consider philosophical issues such as the correlation between wealth and happiness.

39. Provision for moral development is good, helping to support pupils' social development. A sense of right and wrong is interwoven into much of the daily life of the school, and all staff act as good role models for pupils. The school effectively fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect. Parents are positive about the school's contribution to a strong moral code.

40. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Older pupils take on a broad range of responsibilities around the school and there is an elected school council, which is aware of its responsibility in chasing up the head teacher to implement its recommendations. They see one of their roles as acting as the eyes and ears of the headteacher, who they feel 'cannot be everywhere at once'. Golden time is used as a reward for the vast majority of pupils who are consistently well behaved. The school's behaviour targets are well understood, and pupils express very positive attitudes about the school's ethos. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to take responsibility, such as using the digital camera to record children's achievements during the weekly 'showing' assembly.

41. The school has made considerable effort to develop the cultural horizons of pupils from what is essentially an isolated rural community. Visitors from Japan and Kuwait have helped pupils to appreciate, at first hand, the diversity of cultures in the world. A visiting artist has worked with pupils to create giant figures, and a peripatetic music teacher provides weekly recorder tuition. History topics are enlivened by 'Victorian' and 'Tudor' days. For the latter, the Year 2/3 teacher transformed her classroom into a Tudor ship, and the headteacher grew a beard. The school makes every effort to weave aspects of the pupils' cultural development into curriculum subjects.

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

42. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils. Satisfactory child protection procedures are in place, and there are adequate links with outside support agencies involved in the protection of pupils. Much of the personal support and guidance relies upon informal arrangements and the strong relationships so evident in this small village school.

43. First aid procedures are good and they are carried out effectively. Their good relationships with staff allow pupils to approach them readily with any personal concerns. The head teacher and designated staff regularly carry out a detailed risk assessment of the school site, and any concerns are addressed. The governing body undertakes regular reviews of the buildings of the school and their security.

44. Procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory, though there is evidence that class registers are not always fully completed. The school undertakes regular reviews of absence to identify its causes, in case children are at risk or there are other concerns.

45. The school provides a satisfactory standard of care for pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and other adults give these pupils positive encouragement to promote their self-esteem, so that they play a full part in all aspects of school life.

46. The school has established good systems for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, which include sanctions. Appropriate supervision and a positive approach give pupils good opportunities to discuss their behaviour and its consequences. These opportunities include class 'circle time' discussions, which pupils regard as important. Class teachers who know their pupils well provide good pastoral support. This is helped by some effective links that have been established with parents and carers, who bring their children into the classrooms at the start of the school day.

47. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory, though informal. They draw heavily on the staff's detailed knowledge of individuals, which is a feature of the good child-teacher relationships in the school.

48. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. A key issue identified in the last inspection report was the need to improve the quality of the school's assessment procedures. This had already been recognised in the school development plan as a priority, and the school had begun to analyse the results of standardised tests in order to target areas needing development. This process has continued, so that most teaching is now based on a clear understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do.

49. During the inspection, tasks in lessons were appropriately matched to the learning needs of individual groups of pupils. However, the scrutiny of work suggests that, on other occasions, all pupils in the same year group are given the same tasks, and sometimes this occurs in consecutive year groups. Unsatisfactory use is made of assessment information to effectively plan future work. As a result, lower attaining pupils struggle to complete some tasks, particularly when there is no additional classroom support.

50. The quality of marking is generally satisfactory and some of it is helpful in moving pupils' learning forward.

51. Assessment procedures are well established in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Pupils' progress in English is carefully tracked through phonic record sheets and the results of regularly administered reading tests. Records of all books read are maintained. In mathematics, regular 'check-up' tests from a published scheme are analysed in order to identify particular areas of difficulty.

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

52. Evidence from the parents' questionnaire and from their meeting before the inspection shows that they have positive views of the school and its work. They are keen to know about their children's progress and the school's educational priorities. Parents consider that their children are happy in school. They feel that the school wishes to encourage parents, and believe it is an approachable school.

53. The majority of parents consider the school gives good support and encouragement to children's academic and personal development. There was a concern about three teachers working in one class and the potential for poor communication. Parents consider the school has improved. As an example and for the first time in several years, the entire pre-school intake had transferred to the school.

54. The links between the school and parents have a good impact on children's learning. Many parents give unstinting and high quality support. Parent representatives contribute fully to the work of the governing body and its committees. Some parents support teachers by helping in classes and other areas of the school, such as in reading, art, design and technology activities and cookery. Others assist by accompanying educational visits.

55. Parents are also encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school as members of the strong and active school association, which association raises a significant amount of money for the school. The current major project is the provision of an outdoor play area. Previous efforts have included supplying musical instruments. The links through the association and with parents working in school are good. The support provided at home is less evident, and thus the overall contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory.

56. The information given to parents is sound. The school prospectus is well presented, setting out the required information in a clear and ordered format. Information concerning the curriculum is provided on request, at curriculum meetings held for parents and during consultation evenings. Annual reports on children's progress describe the work undertaken and the progress made by individuals, though there are no detailed targets for the child. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting regretted the loss of the opportunity for pupils to make their own comments in this year's reports.

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

57. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is effective in his role and has made a significant impact on the educational direction of the school. There is a clear commitment to improving standards, which is shared by all staff and governors. The headteacher has successfully raised pupils' standards of achievement, particularly at the end

of Key Stage 2. Plans for National Curriculum subjects and religious education have been thoroughly reviewed, particularly with regard to English and mathematics. The school is now an orderly community where pupils feel valued. The head has raised expectations of what the pupils can achieve, and this is already being reflected in the standards of work and good behaviour seen during the inspection in most classes. The head and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

58. The roles and responsibilities of subject managers are well defined, and curriculum subjects are soundly managed. Inevitably, in a small school, all teaching staff have a number of subject responsibilities. Staff work together well. At present, the head and his deputy, as English and mathematics co-ordinators, have monitored the teaching and learning in their subjects. It is now planned that the science co-ordinator will visit each class to observe her colleagues.

59. The governing body is at present in a state of change due to the resignation of three long-serving governors, whose terms of office have come to an end and who have not sought re-election. However, all new governors have received training, and they are enthusiastic in moving the school forward. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities effectively and are very supportive of the school. There is an appropriate committee structure in place, and it is well led by a relatively new chair of governors, who visits the school regularly. Individual governors have stated responsibilities, and they also visit the school to monitor its work. They visit lessons, have discussions with staff and make verbal reports back to the full governing body. Governors are kept well informed about the work of the school by the headteacher through detailed reports at meetings, and by presentations by subject co-ordinators. Through these procedures, the governing body is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is a high attendance at meetings, and governors are aware that the school has moved forward considerably over the last two years. However, they are not complacent and want to build on the school's successes. Their aim is to make all parents in the area want their children to be educated at the school.

60. The three-year school development plan is detailed and contains appropriate targets for the school's future development. There is a named person responsible for overseeing each target. The time scale for achieving targets and the resources, both financial and personal, are clearly stated. The governing body closely monitors the school's progress towards meeting the targets.

61. The school's aims and values are reflected in all its work, and there is a strong and positive ethos that promotes challenge and care for all. Pupils, staff and parents are valued, and parents in their turn clearly support the school and appreciate what it has achieved. Pupils are encouraged to work hard and behave well, and their achievement is celebrated. Much is done to ensure a calm and happy environment for the pupils.

62. The school has sound arrangements for the induction of new staff. The scheme draws upon the school handbook, which follows the guidelines given by the local education authority. The headteacher gives relevant support to new teachers. The school's teacher appraisal and performance procedures are under development. Information from the monitoring of lessons is used to set targets for future development and to inform the professional development of staff.

63. The Victorian single storey building has been enhanced by the addition of a large mobile room with four class areas. It provides children with a satisfactory learning environment. The lack of a covered way between the old and new buildings hampers aspects of the operation of the school. Pleasing displays reflect the range of activities experienced by children. Some of the displays are informative and interactive. They include examples of children's poetry, and work in art, design and technology and information technology. The school has plans to remodel the reception area, to give parents better access and a pleasant waiting area.

64. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, and they are used effectively to support the teaching of all subjects. All classrooms have access to information technology through a network. The good number of books and the suitable range of resources used to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy reflect the improvement made since the last report. Nevertheless, the school recognises the need to improve resources for geography and religious education.

65. The key financial priority recently has been financing an extra teacher in order to provide three literacy and numeracy groups for two mixed age classes. The school has already noted the benefits of this in raising standards, and is continuing to monitor the effectiveness of this major spending decision.

66. The use made of specific grants for their intended purpose is presently satisfactory. At the moment the funding for additional literacy support has been subsumed into the general special needs budget. In effect, money designed to support a broad band of pupils is being used to provide support for a few with particularly severe learning difficulties.

67. The school has prioritised other specific needs, in particular the provision of adequate toilet facilities for the youngest pupils. Funds for this project have been allocated, and plans are now being drawn up. The particular requirements of the new Foundation Year curriculum, in particular the provision of large play equipment and wheeled toys, are also being adequately addressed.

68. Recent building improvements are regularly evaluated for their cost effectiveness, and the school currently gains regular additional income from renting out office space. The governors are fully involved in monitoring spending decisions and the principles of best value are regularly applied. There is little budgetary surplus.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. The governors, headteacher and staff, with the support of outside agencies as appropriate should:
- Improve standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 by:
    - \* continuing to closely monitor the progress of individual pupils;
    - \* improving pupils' abilities to concentrate and persevere in their learning.
  - Improve pupils' standards of attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 by:
    - \* providing more opportunities for pupils to write extended imaginative stories and make better use of description in their work;
    - \* identifying more clearly the specific vocabulary to be learned by pupils in lessons;
    - \* widening pupils' reading experiences and developing higher order reading skills, such as inference and deduction.
  - Make better use of the school's established procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that:
    - \* teachers plan suitably adapted work to meet the needs of the wide range of ability within classes;
    - \* teachers have consistently high expectations of what individual pupils can achieve.
  - Improve the curriculum provision for pupils during the foundation stage by:
    - \* providing more structure and better supervision in free-choice play activities;
    - \* improving the facilities for children's outdoor play.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	56	40	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	84
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### *Attendance*

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2000	8	6	14

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	11	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	79 (77)	86 (77)	93 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	8
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (77)	86 (100)	86 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	72
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	<b>Fixed period</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes:**

##### **YR– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff:**

##### **YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	61

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	<b>1999/2000</b>
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	<b>£</b>
Total income	169492.00
Total expenditure	167902.00
Expenditure per pupil	2239.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	6567.00
Balance carried forward to next year	8157.00

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	88
Number of questionnaires returned	42

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	62	38	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	45	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	41	7	5	0
The teaching is good.	67	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	45	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	29	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	43	48	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	69	26	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	38	10	0	5

### **Other issues raised by parents**

All parents at the pre-inspection meeting feel that the school is making rapid progress and that pupils' standards of attainment have improved considerably. The school's improving reputation in the area now means that all children who attend the pre-school playgroup go on to be admitted to the school. Parents are proud of the school and feel that it is doing a good job.

## **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**

#### **Attainment**

70. Attainment on entry to the school is below that generally found for children of this age, particularly in speech and language, independence and social development. Despite making satisfactory progress, some pupils do not attain the expected levels in all areas of learning by the age of five.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

71. Pupils enter the foundation stage with immature skills in personal and social development. Some lack self-control and several pupils do not have the social skills needed to work effectively as part of a group. However, as the year progresses, the younger pupils' behaviour increasingly reflects the more mature behaviour of the Year 1 pupils in the class, and they begin to respond more positively to being organised. By the age of five most, but not all, achieve the appropriate levels of social development. Most sit quietly and respond to adult questioning, although few listen well to each other and several call out inappropriately in class discussions. Several are unable to organise themselves through different stages of an activity, and frequently sit and ask what they are to do next. Many pupils find it difficult to concentrate for any length of time. When activities are not directly supervised by an adult, pupils quickly abandon what they are doing and drift unprofitably from one activity to another. At the time of the inspection, the children under five had only just begun full time schooling, and many became particularly tired during the afternoon sessions.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

72. Children in the foundation stage share a literacy session with Year 1 pupils. They enjoy stories and join in with repetitive texts. They are becoming familiar with books and handle them correctly. They recognise print and know it tells the story. Some children can already recognise a few key words and use picture clues to help them read simple texts. Most pupils do not use a wide vocabulary, and often answer questions in single words rather than sentences. The children talk to each other when playing, but role-play is seldom directed by an adult, and a more extended vocabulary is slow to develop. A few children know the names and sounds of letters, but do not use this knowledge consistently to help identify words in their books. The children make a satisfactory start in their early reading and writing skills. However, not all of them reach the early learning goal of using their knowledge of letters and sounds to write simple regular words or read a range of familiar words and simple sentences by the age of five.

## **Mathematical development**

73. Several children count numbers to ten, and some count beyond this. They can arrange sets of objects using a computer programme, for instance putting five candles on a birthday cake or six birds in a tree. They are beginning to compare two numbers using the terms more or less, and by the end of the year they can add and subtract numbers up to ten. They are beginning to recognise time in whole hours on a clock face, and sequence events according to which time of day they occur in. They can create and describe simple patterns. By the end of the year in which they are five, most have met their early learning goals in mathematical development, but several still find it difficult to solve practical problems. They are developing a facility with numbers, but are less secure when problems are expressed in terms of words.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

74. Several of the children enter the foundation stage with limited experience of the wider world and the vocabulary necessary for describing it. The school works hard at building on children's experience of living in a rural area and widening their experience through a variety of interesting topics and activities. This term the children visited the village church for the harvest service and investigated harvest produce using all their senses. In science, they are investigating different ways of creating light and have talked about differences between day and night. In a lesson observed during the inspection, children were exploring the varying brightness of different light sources, including a torch and a candle. They were encouraged to use their senses to observe the colour, shape and movement of the candle flame, but for many their language skills were inadequate for the task of describing what they saw. No pupil knew initially that the candle was made of wax. A regular programme of interesting visits in the locality, to the pantomime, to the local animal rescue centre or the local hospital helps pupils to develop their understanding of the world around them.

## **Physical development**

75. Most children enter the foundation stage with average awareness of the needs of others and how to manage the space around them. Most have good control over their bodies, although on occasion the school has had to ask for the help of the school nurse to work with families where children have still needed help with toilet procedures. In such occurrences, the improvement of the present totally inadequate toilet facilities for younger pupils needs to be a priority. There are limited opportunities at present for the youngest children to play with large construction toys or wheeled vehicles and the school is taking steps to develop this area. Children have regular opportunities for developing manipulation skills, although several still have poor pencil control at the age of six.

76. Many of the children have experienced little to develop their creative skills or imagination prior to entering school. They make slow progress, and the painting and drawing skills of a significant number of pupils are below those expected by the age of six. Opportunities are provided for pupils to choose their own activities from a selection including painting, playing instruments and role-play. However, many of these activities are insufficiently structured to develop their skills or help pupils make connections between different areas of learning. When activities have a specific focus, children's learning is

effective. For instance, they made and decorated models of carnival floats at the time of the local carnival and proudly described them to the whole school in assembly. Children have the opportunity to undertake a regular designing and making project. Last year, for instance, they constructed their own mini-beast. This was photographed as a starting point for evaluating their work and discussing how they could improve it. In a structured music session, pupils knew some simple songs by heart and were beginning to learn how to handle musical instruments correctly.

## ENGLISH

77. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment in reading and language skills. At the age of seven, evidence from the inspection indicates that attainment in reading, writing, speaking and listening is still below that expected nationally. This is confirmed by the results of national tests for seven year olds from 1998 to 2000, where the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard was consistently below the national average and very low in comparison with schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. However, the numbers taking the tests are very small, and the improvement in pupils' performance has been greater than the national trend since 1998. Considering their low starting point, pupils make satisfactory progress.

78. By the age of 11, however, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard is in line with the national average. In Key Stage 2, all pupils make at least satisfactory progress, and the majority make good progress in terms of their prior attainment. The improvement in pupils' performance is far greater than the national trend and shows a steady improvement over the last three years.. Evidence from the inspection confirms the results of national tests at the age of eleven.

79. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are still below national expectations at the age of seven. By the age of 11, they are in line with those expected nationally. This reflects the efforts the school has made to widen pupils' cultural horizons and knowledge of the wider world, so that language development is rooted in concrete experiences. Pupils' progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The older pupils talk confidently in class, respond appropriately to questioning and give sensible factual answers. A few pupils are very confident in expressing and justifying their opinions but the majority of pupils have a relatively restricted vocabulary and general knowledge and find it difficult to explain more complex ideas. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to express their opinions in whole-class discussions in other subjects of the curriculum and through the use of drama, for example, when Year 2 and 3 pupils acted out the story of 'The Good Samaritan' in a religious education lesson.

80. By the age of seven, most pupils are making satisfactory progress on the structured reading scheme. They recognise most key words by sight, and know the names and sounds of letters and some combinations of letters. However, when presented with unfamiliar texts, pupils struggle to make sense of what they are reading, and several read mechanistically and with little expression. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and other clues to decode words, but this frequently leads to laborious reading, and meaning is lost in the effort to recognise unfamiliar words. This affects pupils' learning in other subjects.

81. By the age of 11, most pupils' progress is good in relation to their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, most achieving at least two national curriculum levels in Key Stage 2. Progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Most pupils achieve national average standards although higher order reading skills are not sufficiently well developed to enable the majority to reach the higher level (Level 5). Pupils' weaker expressive and analytical skills, relatively limited vocabulary and confidence with more complex grammatical structures restrict the numbers reaching Level 5 in writing. Most pupils identify the author and talk about the aspects of the book they like or dislike. They read accurately and with understanding. The school has put a great deal of effort into developing pupils' technical reading but too little emphasis on regular reading to pupils and on group reading, in order to develop pupils' understanding of more difficult texts. Pupils' critical sense is not effectively encouraged through regular book reviews. The school is not sufficiently aware of how the development of pupils' interest in reading can have a beneficial effect on the development of their writing skills, particularly their use of a wider vocabulary and the adoption of more sophisticated grammatical structures. However, pupils make good progress overall when compared to their attainment at Key Stage 1. The majority of pupils are able to use their developing literacy skills to research information in other subjects of the curriculum, such as history and science.

82. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing so that, by the age of seven, most can write short pieces of simple text, usually news or descriptive writing. However, the content of their work is limited, and spelling and punctuation are erratic. Skills practised in worksheets are not applied in pupils' written work. Several pupils have a limited vocabulary and have yet to extend and enhance their work with a variety of imaginative and descriptive words.

83. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils are capable of writing for a range of different purposes and, on occasions, produce pieces of extended writing in other areas of the curriculum. Most pupils write using a satisfactory vocabulary and make clear their meaning by structuring their writing appropriately. Higher attaining pupils structure their writing in a variety of interesting ways, and make use of an extended vocabulary in writing lively, imaginative stories. All pupils can complete grammatical exercises, such as identifying nouns and verbs in a newspaper article, but they do not always transfer these skills to their own writing. Some pupils' work is characterised by erratic spelling and punctuation.

84. The National Literacy Strategy has been instrumental in raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. It is proving effective in raising standards, and the school is adapting it appropriately to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. At present, the teaching of English is consistently satisfactory, but very little is good. This is nevertheless an improvement since the last inspection, but there is too heavy a reliance on mundane tasks. It is only when teachers help pupils to explore thoughts and ideas and take an active part in their learning that teaching comes alive. The pace of lessons is occasionally too slow, and pupils become restless when kept too long on the carpet. Given the wide range of abilities and ages in all classes and groups, introductions are sometimes too long, and support staff are not used sufficiently early in the lesson to interpret the work for lower attaining pupils. In all the lessons observed, writing tasks were matched appropriately to the learning needs of different groups of pupils, but the scrutiny of work suggests that this is not always the case. When specific areas of difficulty are identified in teachers' marking, subsequent work does not adequately address those areas of difficulty. For instance, a pupil is not being shown how to leave spaces between words, despite this having been noted as a problem since the beginning of the year.

85. Where they are given additional support, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory and occasionally good progress. Learning support assistants are skilled and dedicated. They are frequently used well to support a group of pupils in addition to the particular pupil to whom they are specifically dedicated. However, there are other pupils with less severe learning difficulties who do not receive sufficient help to enable them to fulfil their potential.

86. English is led by an experienced co-ordinator, who has initiated a range of useful assessment and recording procedures but has a limited overview of progress throughout the school. The school is aware of the need to raise standards further, particularly in spelling and vocabulary, and has carefully analysed evidence from national tests to set further targets for improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. The results of national tests in 2000 for pupils aged seven in mathematics, show pupils' attainment to be close to the national average when compared to all schools, but well below average in comparison with all schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. Since the time of the last inspection, pupils' standards of attainment have risen considerably. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils presently in Year 2 is on track to be average by the end of the academic year.

88. The results of national tests in 2000 for pupils aged 11 show the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (Level 4) to be close to the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) was well below average. Pupils' standards of attainment were below average in comparison with all schools, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. However, the number of pupils involved in the tests is very small and consequently standards vary widely from year to year. Since the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment have risen considerably above the trend in national results but remained below national averages. The attainment of the current group of Year 6 pupils is on track to be in line with the national average in 2001.

89. The National Numeracy Strategy is helping teachers to structure their teaching more effectively and to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. Numeracy has been a specific focus for development. The school trialled the National Numeracy Strategy before its official implementation, and has had additional input from a local education authority advisor. All teachers have received specific training and have observed numeracy lessons in other schools. All teachers are regularly observed teaching mathematics and are given written feedback based on specific criteria. In half of the lessons observed during the inspection, the teaching was good, and no teaching was less than satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

90. Evidence from the inspection confirms that pupils throughout the school are becoming more confident in handling numbers and devising strategies for solving number problems.

91. Children enter the school with below average standards of attainment in mathematics, but, by the age of seven, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Most pupils can order numbers to one hundred, add and subtract numbers accurately to twenty, and add and subtract money up to 50p using coins to support their calculations. They understand



the concept of estimation, can double numbers to 50, and are familiar with a range of mathematical terms, such as more than, less than, and difference. They are beginning to apply their knowledge in a range of different situations, such as weighing, but have more difficulty when number problems are posed in a word format.

92. By the age of 11, most pupils have a firm grasp of place value to one thousand, and some have extended their understanding to decimal fractions. Most pupils are beginning to develop mental dexterity with numbers. They are helped to devise different mental strategies when solving number problems, and to look for recurring patterns in their number work so that they can generalise theories from given examples. When problems are set in a written form, pupils have more difficulty working out which number processes to use.

93. Pupils are beginning to apply their knowledge in other curriculum areas, such as science investigations. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 used estimation and accurate measuring skills while investigating different forces, then entered their results on a data handling computer programme. However, several Year 5 pupils could not interpret the resulting bar graph, nor explain why it was the most appropriate format.

94. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress when they receive additional support in lessons. In the lessons observed, tasks were matched appropriately to the needs of individual groups of pupils. Scrutiny of the work in pupils' books, however, suggests that all pupils in a lesson are often given the same work, and that some pupils are struggling to complete it successfully.

95. All work in pupils' books is marked regularly, often with useful comments that help pupils to understand what they must do to improve their work. Pupils' understanding of different aspects of mathematics is regularly assessed through use of commercially produced material and non-statutory tests. These are analysed carefully to identify areas of general difficulty, such as data handling. Pupils' progress is tracked and targets for improvement set, occasionally generated by the pupils themselves.

96. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. Subject planning and the teaching of lessons are regularly monitored. Teachers have received regular feedback on the strengths and weaknesses in their work. There are effective assessment procedures in place to track individual pupils' progress and attainment. These include end of key stage national tests, the Qualification and Curriculum Agency's optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, and termly assessments based on a commercial mathematics scheme. These are used to inform future planning by highlighting pupils' difficulties and areas of work that need to be revisited. Teachers undertake a detailed analysis of end of key stage national tests each year, and the information is used to improve curriculum provision and teaching of the subject. This year, the teaching of strategies to help pupils solve number problems was highlighted. The subject is well resourced.

## **SCIENCE**

97. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 showed the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 (the expected level) to be close to the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) was below the national average. Inspection evidence from the work of the current group of Year 2 pupils confirms that pupils'

knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of science is average overall. However, pupils' are very dependent on their teachers when carrying out their own scientific enquiries. Most pupils understand that scientific tests need to be fair, but they require considerable help in identifying the different variables that need to be controlled in order to bring this about.

98. The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have shown an upward trend over the last five years, though they have remained below the national average. The attainment of pupils presently in Year 6 is on track to be in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a considerable improvement on the standards reported at the time of the last inspection.

99. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils name the main parts of the human body and talk knowledgeably about how the digestive system works. Pupils are aware of the function of the blood system in carrying food to the different parts of the body in order to create energy. They describe a force as a push or a pull, and are aware of the natural force of gravity. As was observed during the inspection, pupils are aware that magnets attract many but not all metals, and have some knowledge of how this property is put to use in everyday life.

100. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are knowledgeable about the human body and the functions of different organs, such as the heart. They are aware of different natural forces and the effects of phenomena, such as air resistance, upthrust and friction, and the movement of objects. Most pupils know the properties of everyday materials, and how some materials make good conductors of electricity. They know that light travels in a straight line, and that its course can be altered by using mirrors and reflection. As was observed during the inspection, Year 6 pupils are able to record their findings accurately, make sensible predictions based on their previous knowledge, and control variables when carrying out a 'fair' test.

101. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are supported well. Across the school, pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of scientific facts. For example, Year 1 pupils learn to use their senses well when observing scientific phenomena, such as the burning of a candle. Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of the properties of magnets to carry out simple experiments, such as calculating the force exerted by the number of paper clips it can pick up. Pupils' abilities to apply their developing knowledge at this key stage are below average, and they are very dependent on their teachers when carrying out practical activities. At Key Stage 2, pupils begin to think more for themselves, and to apply their existing knowledge in carrying out their own investigations. By Year 6, they are able to explain which forces are operating in their own tests. They know how to adjust the equipment they use to achieve the desired result, for example to make a mangonel (a medieval war machine for throwing boulders) hit the required target. At both key stages, the progress of more able pupils is sometimes limited by over-direction by the teacher or by limited resources, such as having to work in large groups because the number of magnets available is very limited. Sound use is made of pupils' developing numeracy and literacy skills to record their work. As was observed during the inspection, pupils made appropriate use of equipment to measure length and time in their experiments, and to record their findings in graphs and charts.

102. The quality of teaching is good overall, although it varies from good to satisfactory. Lessons are planned well, with activities that are generally appropriate for the needs of different ability groups within classes. However, the needs of more able pupils are not consistently met. There is a tendency to over-direct pupils when carrying out investigations, which limits the level of challenge these activities offer. Teaching encourages pupils to have good attitudes to the subject and to listen attentively in lessons. However, there is a tendency for pupils to be passive in their learning, and this is particularly evident at Key Stage 1. Pupils, including the more able, often ask what they have to do next, and frequently wait to be directed. Staff are aware of this and work hard to encourage pupils to show more initiative and take responsibility for their own learning. Resources are well prepared and readily to hand, but the level of resourcing is sometimes limited. Appropriate links are made with other curriculum areas, especially literacy and numeracy. Within the mixed age classes, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. Evidence from scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work shows that the quality of work within the mixed age classes sometimes varies little between year groups. Frequently, each child in the class covers the same work. A record of how successfully pupils have understood the work in previous lessons is maintained by using a red, amber and green highlighting system. However, as pupils' starting points in lessons are frequently the same, these records are not used well to plan future work. The school makes good use of classroom assistants, parents and governors in giving appropriate support to pupils. They are well briefed by teachers about the activities they will take part in and make an effective contribution to pupils' attainment and progress.

103. The subject is soundly managed by the enthusiastic co-ordinator. There is a subject policy in place, and the school makes good use of official guidelines when planning pupils' work. The co-ordinator has had few opportunities to monitor her colleagues' teaching, but has used a team-teaching approach with her Key Stage 2 colleague. She is aware of the need to make better use of pupils' records in planning future work. The quality of resources has improved greatly, though there are not always enough to allow pupils to work in small groups at their own pace.

## **ART**

104. Standards in art are broadly in line with the standards expected by the age of seven, and above those expected by the age of eleven. Only two art lessons were observed during the inspection, but displays indicate that pupils throughout the school are working confidently in a variety of different media, with skills that are developed progressively as they get older.

105. Most pupils enter the school with very little expertise in handling paint, but, by the time they are seven, they can mix colours, draw from careful observation and create interesting compositions, such as portraits of their friends.

106. In Key Stage 2, pupils use their sketch-books to experiment with different ideas and techniques. Although much of the art work is linked to topics, teachers ensure that the development of skills is still central to their teaching. Their Tudor portraits demonstrate sophisticated handling of paint. Pupils learn about a range of different artists, usually related to topics in other subjects.

107. The planned curriculum covers work in textiles, of which an impressive example is the 'elephant' hanging, combining block printing and fabric stitching. Skilled input from parent helpers ensures that needlework, fabric printing and tie-dying are regular elements of the curriculum for older pupils. Pupils made a rag rug in connection with their history project on World War II.

108. Pupils throughout the school have opportunities to work with clay, and a regular pottery club extends this provision further.

109. The co-ordinator, although only in school for two days each week, gives good support to colleagues and has managed to raise the profile of the subject since the last inspection. In Key Stage 2, simple individual records are maintained of the skills and areas covered.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with expected levels by the end of both key stages. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, but the subject is closely linked to art. For instance, collage and sewing skills are combined in the creation of Christmas cards and stockings. Certain skills are developed as they link to other areas of the curriculum.

111. In Key Stage 1, the younger pupils have regular access to construction toys, but these opportunities are not managed as part of a structured programme and skills are not built on incrementally. Pupils have made carnival floats from junk materials, decorated with 'ballet girls and hedgehogs'.

112. Specific projects in Years 2 and 3 develop design and construction skills. Finger and string puppets have moving parts; pupils evaluate them and suggest ways in which they can improve their work. Sketch books are well used to try out initial designs.

113. A yearly project is planned with other local schools so that ideas and initiatives can be shared. Visiting artists supplement the expertise within the school. In the previous academic year, pupils created giant willow framed statues for a local area project, working with a visiting artist, and using locally produced materials.

114. Pupils are benefiting from a number of worthwhile initiatives, and designing and making skills are developed appropriately.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

115. Pupils' standards of attainment are at expected levels at the end of both key stages. The school appropriately concentrates on developing an in-depth understanding of specific topics. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work from the previous year indicates that mapping skills remain relatively undeveloped. No lessons in geography were observed during the inspection. At Key Stage 2, pupils cover a variety of topics, including the weather and the course of a river, in a two-year rolling programme.

116. In the previous year, Year 5 and 6 pupils followed the course of the River Axe from its source in the Mendip Hills to its mouth near Burnham on Sea, on the Bristol Channel. They measured the speed of the river, noting that at its mouth the tide was so strong that the flow of the river was reversed. The school makes good use of the local area. A local studies project looks at how peat is formed and how it is extracted as a vital part of the local economy. Pupils research the ecology and geographical features of the Somerset Levels in a Wetlands project. They undertake a range of detailed scientific investigations, including a pollution study of the local river.

117. Geographical topics are tackled in a meaningful way and re made interesting to pupils. Regular trips and field-work give pupils first hand experience of geographical skills and phenomena, rather than superficial coverage of several topics.

## **HISTORY**

118. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with expected levels at the end of both key stages.

119. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils talk knowingly about various Tudor monarchs and recall some of the major events of their reigns. They talk about the reasons why Henry VIII had six wives, and how this led to the establishment of the Church of England with the sovereign as its leader. They develop a sense of chronology, and can explain some of the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are knowledgeable about some of the main historical events in Britain since 1930. They are aware of the privations caused by the Second World War, and why rationing was introduced. They recall the reasons for the evacuation of children from the cities during the Blitz and how, for some children, this was an unhappy experience. Pupils are beginning to relate events to their own experiences, such as the keeping of allotments today and their growth during the war to provide a larger supply of home-grown food. Pupils demonstrate good knowledge of the Tudor period, including the reasons for assembling the Spanish Armada and its eventual failure.

120. At both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge of the periods of history studied. They show a developing understanding of chronology, and are aware that the Roman invasion of Britain took place approximately 2000 years ago and that the Tudors ruled Britain 500 years ago. They are aware of some of the similarities and differences between life today and in the past. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and make satisfactory progress in relation to their previous learning.

121. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although it varies from good to satisfactory. Lessons are planned well and teachers manage pupils well. Appropriate activities are provided, though they are structured more to help pupils acquire factual knowledge than to develop their enquiry skills. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy finding out about the past and behave well in lessons. They settle to their work appropriately and work well together when required. Teachers monitor pupils well and ensure that the tasks set are completed. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, but little use was made of them in the lessons seen during the inspection. Good use is made of visits to places of interest, such as the Bath and Rural Life museums, to give pupils first-hand experience of past times.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

122. Pupils' standards of attainment reach the levels expected at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection. As no lessons were observed during the inspection, no overall judgement of the quality of teaching can be made. Evidence is based on discussions with pupils, observation of pupils using computers, and scrutiny of their previous work and teachers' planning.

123. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop their word-processing skills effectively as they use the computer to write short pieces of work in subjects such as English and history. Most pupils are able to change the size and type of text they use, and to save and print their work with a little adult help. Pupils learn to use art programs, such as 'Dazzle', to illustrate pictures. They make use of the draw and spray functions to create good quality pictures. When using simple data-handling programs, pupils are able to enter information and produce graphs, such as bar charts. No work was seen in the use of control technology, but teachers' records show that this is planned for next term, as well as skills of importing graphics into text.

124. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are confident when starting up the computer, loading programs, and saving and printing their work. They develop effective keyboard skills as they write text, such as their imaginative writing from a visit to Harwell Hall or reports about the discussions held at school council meetings. They make use of graphics, such as pictures from the 'clip art' program and the school's digital camera, when illustrating their work. Pupils are able to display information in a variety of ways, including personal data about hair and eye colour, when using data-handling programs. They make effective use of simulation and control programs, such as 'Crystal Maze'.

125. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the subject and become confident users of computers. They learn to develop their ideas by refining and reorganising their writing, and adding tables and graphics to illustrate it.

126. The subject is soundly managed by the co-ordinator. Resources have improved considerably, and the establishment of a small computer suite has meant that all pupils have frequent opportunities to apply their skills. At Key Stage 2, weekly taught lessons help pupils to acquire a range of new skills, which they then have opportunities to practice during the following weeks. There is a written school policy. The school makes effective use of official guidelines as the basis for its scheme of work. Pupils have additional opportunities to use computers during breaktimes and when attending the privately run after-school club each evening.

## **MUSIC**

127. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement of pupils' standards of attainment in this subject. However, discussions with teachers and scrutiny of their planning indicate that provision for the subject is satisfactory. Weekly lessons are provided for each

class, and a specialist teacher is hired to help with the teaching of the subject. Reception and Year 1 pupils were observed singing a range of songs from memory, and learning a new song for the school Christmas production. Pupils were learning to sing tunefully, although many had not yet learned to do so. When accompanying their singing, they were learning to handle untuned percussion instruments correctly and to start and stop playing at the right times.

128. Provision for the subject is enhanced by the opportunity for interested pupils to learn to play the recorder or keyboards. Resources for the subject have been improved since the time of the last inspection and are now satisfactory.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

129. During the week of the inspection, it was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Inspection evidence is drawn from observations of lessons in dance and games at Key Stage 1, and games and swimming at Key Stage 2. At the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards in line with national expectations in those aspects of physical education observed. Standards in swimming are above national expectations.

130. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show reasonable co-ordination and skill in their movements. They stop and move to their teacher's commands. They pass a ball accurately over short distances, and work energetically to improve their performance. In dance activities, pupils skip and jump showing suitable control. They are beginning to be imaginative in their movements as they pretend to be on a magic carpet, and visit hot and cold places on their journey. At Key Stage 2, pupils show good control as they dribble a football, and direct it with some accuracy at a stationary target. Pupils understand the need for rules and develop a sense of fair play. Most pupils become confident swimmers and can swim a minimum of 25 metres. The majority demonstrate the ability to tread water, collect an object from the pool bottom or scull forwards or backwards across the pool. A significant number of higher attaining pupils develop a good style when swimming on their front or their back. They learn to swim considerable distances. Pupils make good progress during the twelve weeks of swimming they enjoy each year from the age of seven onwards. They make satisfactory progress in their games skills, learning to throw and pace a ball with some success.

131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good in two of the three lessons observed. In the better quality teaching, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and use this to provide stimulating activities that fully involve pupils. Good use is made of coaching points to help pupils improve their skills. Pupils have good attitudes to lessons and enjoy physical activities. They learn to work together, share equipment and take turns. They are appreciative of the achievements of others. Pupils work energetically during lessons, and improve their performance through practice.

132. No gymnastics lessons were observed during the inspection, but the small size of the hall does limit the activities that pupils can be asked to carry out. The school provides frequent opportunities to take part in physical activities, through after-school clubs and involvement in inter-school matches and area sporting events.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and by the age of eleven, pupils often exceed them. The curriculum has been further refined and developed since the last inspection. Although still based on the local Somerset Agreed Syllabus, it also includes ideas from national initiatives.

134. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop their knowledge through the study of important festivals. They go to the local church for the harvest festival, and use harvest as a focus for work in other curriculum areas. They know a number of Bible stories, as well as stories from other religions.

135. In Key Stage 2, pupils study all the main world religions on a two-year rolling programme. At the time of the inspection, older pupils were investigating Judaism in some depth, and developing a real understanding of the similarities and differences between different faiths. Activities included making a challah for the Shabbath meal, and designing and making a challah cloth. Pupils show a genuine interest in and respect for other peoples' beliefs. They also explore other more philosophical ideas, including "Will being richer make me a better person?"

136. The quality of teaching is good. The aspects taught reflect the particular interests and expertise of individual teachers. Lessons are taught with a real sense of enthusiasm, which encourages pupils' interest. Good use is made of the local resources centre to supplement the school's resources, and teachers also provide resources of their own.

137. The co-ordinators have had a major influence in establishing the importance of religious education in the curriculum. It is playing an important part in the school's provision for cultural, social and moral education.