

INSPECTION REPORT

WILLIAM BARNES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sturminster Newton

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113676

Headteacher: Mrs O Patrick

Reporting inspector: John Earish

23216

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th September 2000

Inspection number: 800141

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and junior school
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bridge Street Sturminster Newton Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	Dorset
Name of chair of governors:	Dr F M Thomason
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
J Earish 23216	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Information and communications technology; Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
D Willson 12387	<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?
T Allen 31218	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs; Science; Physical education; Religious education.	How well are pupils taught?
L Howard 7336	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Design and technology; Geography; History.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
C Morgan 12116	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Art and design; Music; Foundation stage.	Assessment.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

William Barnes Primary School is situated in the rural town of Sturminster Newton in the Blackmore Vale. There are 212 pupils on roll, who are drawn from the town and the surrounding area. The school is now popular with parents, and is growing in size. Pupils come from a range of home backgrounds, mostly owner occupied or rented housing association accommodation. Thirty per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Thirty six per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, and this too is above national figures. Ten pupils have statements of special educational needs and almost all pupils are of white ethnicity. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, but is below average overall. At the time of the inspection, 26 children were under the age of five, but had only attended school for four mornings.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school, following a period of turbulent change. There is purposeful leadership and a clear drive for school improvement. Teaching is good overall. Standards are rapidly improving at Key Stage 1 and are now satisfactory in mathematics and science, but unsatisfactory in English. At Key Stage 2, standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Information and communications technology is below average at both key stages. The commitment of governors and staff creates a very positive atmosphere in which improvements can be sustained. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards achieved in science at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average.
- Standards in art, music, and physical education are above national expectations at Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good or better in 6 out of 10 lessons
- Pupils' personal development and relationships are good, and their social development is very good.
- The current professional partnership and dialogue between all teachers, senior managers and governors reflect the school's good capacity to move forward and sustain further improvements.
- The headteacher, governors and senior staff provide strong purposeful leadership, and work effectively as a team.
- The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is excellent.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in information and communications technology at both key stages, and in English at Key Stage 1.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' attitudes to work.
- The adequacy of learning resources and accommodation.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made good progress since its last inspection in November 1996. At the time of the last inspection standards at Key Stage 1 were described as 'average in English, mathematics, and science'. However, National Curriculum tests for that year showed standards in reading and writing to be well below the national average, and in mathematics they were below national figures, and they have remained well below or very low in subsequent years. However, the most recent results for 2000 show significant improvement in both writing and mathematics. This is supported by inspection evidence. Standards in English, maths, and science at Key Stage 2 have been maintained since the last inspection, and the most recent results show this still to be the case. Inspection evidence suggests that science is now above national expectations. Pupils' personal development and relationships remain good. However, a significant number of pupils' attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory. The new headteacher and staff were aware of this and have put into place very good opportunities for social development. These initiatives are beginning to have a positive effect on the concentration and motivation of older pupils. The quality of teaching has also improved and is now good overall. All of the key issues identified at the last inspection are being successfully addressed. The most significant improvement has been in the quality of leadership and management. The purposeful leadership of the headteacher and the senior managers has created an ethos in which all who work and learn in the school community feel valued and respected.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	C	B	B
mathematics	C	C	C	D
science	C	C	C	C

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

This information shows that, in 1999, standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 were above average when compared with those of similar schools, and also above the national average. In mathematics, standards were below average when compared to similar schools and in line with the

national average. When averages of the scores achieved over the past four years are considered, the school is shown to be improving at roughly the same rate as the national trend.

The standards of work seen are broadly average in English and mathematics; in science they are above average. In religious education, pupils' attainment matches the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school's published targets for 2000 have been achieved. However, standards in information and communications technology are below national expectations at both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment.
Attitudes to the school	Unsatisfactory overall.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils grow in an atmosphere which supports, encourages and values them as individuals.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils enjoy coming to school but they do not place great emphasis on academic study or learning. A particularly good feature of the school is the positive way in which pupils respond to the many opportunities for personal development, through classroom and whole-school responsibilities, the school council, extra-curricular activities and residential visits.

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.

Teaching quality is good overall. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory. Teaching in 60 per cent of lessons was good or better. This includes 6 per cent of lessons which were very good or excellent. Two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In English, all the teaching was at least satisfactory, and at Key Stage 2 it was often good or better. In mathematics one lesson was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1, and at Key Stage 2 it was consistently good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Their lesson planning is thorough and they share learning intentions with the pupils. Plenary sessions are used well to evaluate progress. Basic skills in numeracy and literacy are well taught, and there are good opportunities to practise these skills in other areas of the curriculum. The school meets the needs of all of its pupils, and new strategies to improve attitudes to learning are having a positive effect particularly on the concentration and motivation of older pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. However, the quality and range of learning opportunities for the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils have equal access to the full curriculum, but there is a lack of appropriate resources to support their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well within a safe environment.

The school has a good partnership with parents. Tremendous efforts have been made to involve the community in pupils' learning, and the contribution of the community is excellent. Good procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' personal development. The lack of a separate secure play area with large and small play equipment inhibits the social, and physical development of young children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff manage the school well and provide clear educational direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are knowledgeable and are very active in supporting the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors are very good at critically appraising their work and seeking ways to improve.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of available finances and its excellent links with the local community.

Leadership has significantly improved since the last inspection. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is shared by governors and staff. This is beginning to have a positive effect on standards particularly at Key Stage 1. Financial management is good. The principles of best value are well applied. Accommodation and learning resources are unsatisfactory and are having a negative effect on the Foundation Stage and standards in information and communications technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children make good progress;• Children become mature and responsible;• Children work hard and achieve their best;• Children like school;• Teaching and behaviour are good;• School is well managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework;• Information about their child's progress.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Overall, the school has a good partnership with parents, and the quality of information is very good. Consultation evenings are held each term to discuss their children's progress and parents feel able to consult their child's teacher at any other time should they need to do so. Parents receive very detailed and informative reports about their children's progress. Homework tasks were set in many lessons during the inspection, but the practice is inconsistent across classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school's results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds showed that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 in English and science was above average. However, the proportion achieving the higher Level 5 in English was average, and in science it was below average. Overall, attainment in English was above the national average; and in science it was average. In mathematics, both the number reaching Level 4 and the number reaching Level 5 were below average. Overall, attainment was in line with the national average. When these results are compared with those of similar schools, standards in 1999 were above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics.
2. Results for the most recent national tests for 2000, for which there are as yet no comparable national statistics, show that standards have been maintained or improved. This is supported by inspection evidence, which indicates that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations in English and mathematics, and above for science.
3. At Key Stage 1, an analysis of the 1999 test results shows the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and the number reaching Level 3 in reading was well below the national average. In writing, the number reaching Level 2 was very low and the number reaching Level 3 was below average. In mathematics, the number reaching Level 2 was well below the national average and the number reaching Level 3 was very low. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading, and very low in mathematics and writing.
4. However, the results of the most recent national tests show a significant improvement in both the numbers of pupils reaching Level 2 and the number reaching Level 3. This is also supported by inspection evidence. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are now broadly in line for mathematics and science, but just below in writing, and below in reading and speaking and listening.
5. On entry to the school, the majority of children achieve standards below those expected of children who are almost five. A significant proportion of pupils have below average communication, language and literacy skills. Although they play sensibly and show interest in the activities provided, many find it difficult to take turns and listen to each other. Within this broad range are children who have special education needs, with well below average skills in English and social skills. At the time of the inspection, 26 children were under the age of five, but had only attended school for four mornings and it was not possible to make a judgement on their attainment or progress. However, scrutiny of the work completed by the previous year's reception class, together with observation of the current Year 1 pupils, suggests that the majority had lower than average levels of development when they entered the reception class, and a restricted experience of the wider world. Personal and social development was particularly low. The children made satisfactory progress but many are still behind nationally average levels of development at the age of five.
6. At the time of the last inspection standards at Key Stage 1 were described as 'average in English, mathematics, and science', and in all other subjects. However, National Curriculum tests for that year showed standards in reading and writing to be well below the national average, and in mathematics they

were below national figures, and have remained well below or very low in subsequent years. However, the action taken by the new headteacher to raise standards at Key Stage 1 is beginning to have a noticeable effect. The school's test results for 2000, for which there are as yet no comparable national statistics, indicate a significant improvement, particularly in writing and mathematics.

7. Pupils at the beginning of Year 2 are on target to achieve standards broadly in line those expected nationally in mathematics, science, but below average standards in reading, writing, and speaking and listening by the age of seven years. In religious education pupils are likely to achieve the standards expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. However, standards in information and communications technology have not been maintained and are now below national expectations. In all other subjects standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

8. Despite satisfactory progress in lessons, many pupils in the early weeks of Year 2 have a limited vocabulary and have difficulty expressing their ideas in a clear way. The youngest pupils have difficulty recognising letter sounds, and do not use their limited knowledge to help them sound out words. More able pupils attempt to sound out simple consonant, vowel, and consonant words. All pupils enjoy hearing stories and say they like books, but they are not enthusiastic about reading. Standards in writing are also below average because they start at a low level, with some pupils still making marks on the paper interspersed with some recognisable letter shapes. By the time they are seven, many can write simple sentences but capitals and full stops are often used inconsistently. The most able write at length, attempting to use speech marks correctly.

9. Pupils make good progress in mathematics at Key Stage 1, and achieve average standards. For example, younger pupils develop skills in remembering and recalling number facts accurately. They can order numbers confidently up to one hundred, in both ascending and descending order. Pupils develop a growing competence in using numbers in a variety of situations, and are beginning to develop a range of strategies for performing simple number calculations.

10. Skills learned in numeracy and literacy play an important part in the development of pupils' skills in science at Key Stage 1, and they achieve satisfactory standards. At this key stage, pupils make sound progress in developing skills of scientific enquiry, and learn to predict, experiment, observe and record results. For example, pupils predict what would happen if plants had no water or soil, or were deprived of light. Good use is made of the local environment to develop a care and concern for living things.

11. By the end of Key Stage 2, the standard of work seen is average in English and mathematics, above average in science, but below average in information and communications technology. In all other subjects, standards are in line with what is expected for pupils aged 11 years, with the exception of art, music, and physical education where standards are above expected levels. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The discrepancy between the previous national tests result and the inspection grade for English is due to the composition of the present Year 6 cohort. Data supplied by the school suggest that the numbers reaching the higher Level 5 is only expected to be average by the end of the year. This is supported by inspection evidence. At the time of the last inspection subjects at Key Stage 2 were described as 'satisfactory overall', and 'by the end of the key stage were in line with what was expected nationally; with the exception of music where standards were good'. Standards have been maintained in all subjects except in physical education and science, which are now above average. Standards in information and communication technology have declined and are now below average.

12. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in all aspects of literacy. They speak very clearly and explain their reasoning or justification using sentences in ways appropriate to the occasion. Many read accurately by the end of the key stage. Although they enjoy hearing stories, most prefer to read fiction themselves, using the synopsis on the back of books to make their choice. Pupils use non-fiction texts well to acquire information but have not developed higher-level skills such as scanning and skimming. The majority can write in a wide range of styles, but their use of complex sentences and adventurous vocabulary is inconsistent. The most able pupils are competent writers with a wide vocabulary and a sense of audience. Although the school is consistent in its approach to forming and joining letters in handwriting lessons, these skills do not transfer to other lessons.

13. Pupils' skill in using and manipulating numbers improves at a good rate as they progress through Key Stage 2. By Year 6, most pupils make good progress across most elements of the mathematics curriculum. They sometimes exceed nationally expected standards but this is not always shown in formal assessment situations.

14. Pupils attain standards in science that are above average by the age of 11 years. They make good progress in science throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils of all ages and abilities are able to conduct a fair test, offer hypotheses and draw simple conclusions from their work. Older pupils in particular have a good understanding of the principles of fair testing. By the time they are at the end of the key stage, pupils achieve good levels of understanding in all areas of science. For example, they demonstrate how light travels in a straight line and how shadows are created, and they use mirrors to show reflection. This is mainly due to the quality of teaching, particularly in investigative and experimental tasks.

15. Attainment in information and communications technology is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. This occurs because pupils have previously not received their full entitlement to the breadth of the National Curriculum programmes of study, and have not been able to build soundly on their skills, knowledge and understanding year by year. Progress is unsatisfactory. The school has recently acquired some new computers of good quality, but the numbers are insufficient to effectively deliver the curriculum. Also, pupils in Key Stage 2 do not have direct access the Internet. These factors are having a direct effect on the standards that pupils are able to achieve.

16. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but good at Key Stage 2. The good quality system for setting targets and tracking personal and academic achievement underpins this. However, a significant number of pupils' attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory. The new headteacher and staff are aware of this and have introduced very good opportunities for social development. These initiatives are beginning to have a positive effect on the concentration and motivation of older pupils. The quality of teaching has also improved and is now good overall.

17. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their prior attainment across the school. This is largely due to the good level of support they receive from class teachers and learning support staff. The inclusion of these pupils in the literacy and numeracy hours is ensuring good progress, since work is set to meet their needs and they are given appropriate adult support. The good behaviour management of pupils, and the very good use of praise and encouragement by teachers, ensures pupils make good progress in personal and social development. Good individual education plans are in place for pupils who need them, and they are regularly reviewed.

18. The school has set realistic targets for attainment, and this year has achieved the published targets. The school has implemented a number of detailed strategies to raise attainment, which is proving effective, particularly at Key Stage 1.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. Pupils enjoy coming to school but they do not place great emphasis on academic study or learning. The attitude of pupils towards learning is unsatisfactory overall. Whilst the attitudes of pupils have improved considerably by the time they reach Year 6, the negative attitudes of many younger pupils inhibit their progress and attainment. They do not listen well; their attention span is short and they have a 'laissez faire' attitude to their work. Presentation of work is often untidy, showing a lack of pride. Pupils are often ill at ease when asked to contribute in class discussions. The younger pupils, in particular, find it difficult to work collaboratively and co-operatively. However, when lessons are based on practical activities, pupils show a more positive attitude to their tasks. For example, during a lesson making finger puppets, pupils listened carefully to the teacher and sustained good levels of concentration and perseverance until they had successfully completed the task to their own satisfaction.

20. Behaviour in lessons is satisfactory overall. However, when tasks do not capture pupils imagination or interest, their behaviour occasionally deteriorates and becomes unsatisfactory. Behaviour in the playground is good. Pupils work and play co-operatively, even when not directly supervised by their teacher. No signs of bullying were seen. Following an incident in the playground the pupils responded well to the fair and firm approach by the class teacher to resolve the situation. There have been two fixed term exclusions during the previous academic year.

21. Relationships in the school are good. The ability of the teaching and support staff to work as a team provides a good role model for pupils, and makes a strong contribution to the positive relationships within the school. Pupils relate well to each other and to all adults in the school. They are friendly and polite, and are happy to talk informally with visitors. The great majority show respect for each other and listen to each other's views and beliefs. For example, during a lesson about 'how we can all change', pupils listened very attentively to each other when they talked about how they felt they could change their behaviour or attitude in school.

22. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities for their personal development, which include classroom and whole-school responsibilities, the school council, extra-curricular activities and residential visits. They willingly take responsibility for duties, which support the smooth running of the school. For example, they help to prepare the hall for assembly, have responsibility for putting out the games at breaktimes, and clear away after both. The older children make a positive contribution to the ethos of the school through their involvement in the school council, which meets regularly to discuss school issues and policies. For example, members of the School Council made a very positive contribution by translating the new behaviour policy into 'children speak'.

23. Children under five quickly settle into the caring school environment. Although the majority play sensibly and show interest in the activities provided, many find it more difficult to take part in group activities.

24. Unfortunately, due to an error in data entry, attendance figures for the last academic year were not available. However, scrutiny of registers and trends over the past four years indicate that attendance is at least satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. The great majority of pupils arrive at school on time. Registers are taken quickly and effectively, leading to a prompt start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

25. The quality of teaching is good overall, ranging from excellent to unsatisfactory in a few cases. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of the lessons seen. It was good in 56 per cent, and very good in 7 per cent of lessons. These figures are an improvement on those reported in the previous inspection. The quality of teaching was consistently good in Key Stage 2, where 84 per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better but less so in Key Stage 1 where 40 per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 and one only in Key Stage 1. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in the Foundation Stage.

26. In the two unsatisfactory lessons, pupils did not make enough progress because the tasks were not well matched to their needs, or the pace was too slow, or the management of challenging behaviour was not effective enough. As a consequence, pupils became noisy, learning opportunities were lost, or they made insufficient progress. However, pupils are encouraged to develop their ideas, increase their understanding and work at a good pace in most lessons and in most subjects throughout the school. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 and pupils made good progress in lessons seen.

27. The satisfactory teaching of children under-five in the reception class gives a sound start to their full time education. The teacher, classroom assistant and other adults promote personal and social development through a very consistent and encouraging approach to learning. Questioning is of a good standard and children are given opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through a period of 'circle time' at the start of lessons.

28. Throughout the school, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of subjects. They are fully conversant with the details of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Good cross curricular-links were also seen; for example, when work on the history of Ancient Greece applied scientific principles to the interpretation of evidence from archaeology. Opportunities for speaking and listening are used well in all subjects. In English lessons, teachers read stories well, inspiring enjoyment of the written word. Their good knowledge of the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, particularly at Key stage 2, is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. In Key Stage 2, good subject knowledge of science and mathematics provides clear explanations, enabling pupils to think for themselves and engage in independent learning. Teachers' good expertise in dance and music ensures that pupils interpret moods well through movement, rhythm and sound.

29. The planning of lessons is thorough and learning intentions are often shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Plenary sessions are well used to evaluate the progress made. Resources are well prepared so that learning proceeds uninterrupted and work is matched to the ability of the pupils. Good planning of work for pupils with special educational needs ensures they make good progress assisted by the good support provided by the administrative welfare

assistants. Tasks are clearly planned and provide effective learning opportunities. Generally, the main focus for these activities is the same as for the class lesson, but work is well matched to their level of prior attainment. These pupils make good progress over time and some make sufficient progress to be taken off the special needs register. Commercial tests are well used to assess pupils' performance in literacy and numeracy, and detailed records are kept which show their progress over time.

30. Pupils are fully aware of the routines and expectations of the teachers who have high expectations of behaviour. Teachers expect pupils to work hard, but this is not always achieved despite the best efforts of the teachers, as there is an apparent lack of enthusiasm for work amongst some pupils. However, by Key Stage 2, pupils were consistently challenged to think for themselves, develop hypotheses, predict possible outcomes and test for conclusions, for example in their science lessons. These activities were a success despite the small size of the rooms. This was because the teacher had set clear guidelines for behaviour and pupils understood exactly what was expected of them. The productivity and pace of learning were good and pupils' interest had been ignited.

31. Teachers use a good range of methods and strategies to support learning. In good lessons, the teacher works well with one group, while remaining aware of, and responding to, the progress and needs of other groups. Teachers have a good sense of timing and switch activities in order to maintain the concentration of pupils, as was seen in literacy lessons in Year 4. Final summary sessions are used well to consolidate and share what has been learnt. Teachers make effective use of questioning. For example, they start most numeracy lessons with 'quick-fire' questions to speed up the recall of number facts. On other occasions, they skilfully use questions to prompt pupils to think, while at the same time drawing others into the discussion by rephrasing questions at an easier level.

32. Overall, homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils take books home and receive support from their parents. Homework is used to support and extend learning, as was seen in Year 5 lessons in religious education and in a Year 4 homework investigation based on the recovery of dissolved substances. Pupils have to think for themselves, make decisions, perform experiments and record their findings. Inspection evidence shows that when homework is used effectively, it has a positive effect of the progress pupils make, but this is not consistent across all classes.

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

33. The curriculum is broad as all the subjects of the national curriculum and religious education are taught. The curriculum is relevant for the pupils as the tasks set, especially for the older pupils, are varied and interesting, and are well matched to their assessed strengths and weaknesses. Sufficient time is given to each subject. The content of the curriculum is the same for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and for those in Years 5 and 6, though the level of work is different. This arrangement enables teachers to support each other in planning and resourcing these lessons.

34. The planning for the children in the Foundation Stage is good and broadly follows the new curriculum for this age group. However, the lack of resources restricts the quality and range of learning opportunities for this age range, which is unsatisfactory.

35. The school meets the statutory requirements of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, and there are good links with other areas of the curriculum, especially in science, history,

geography and religious education. The provision for the teaching of personal, social and health education is good. There are schemes of work for all subjects, which is an improvement on the finding of the last inspection report. The school's curriculum plan is currently being reviewed to ensure that it meets the new requirements of Curriculum 2000. New schemes of work are in place for history, geography, information and communication technology and religious education. The review of the remaining schemes of work for design and technology, music, science, art and citizenship will be completed this term.

36. The school meets statutory requirements for the provision of religious education in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus, and for all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, some aspects of information and communication technology are not taught to a sufficient depth because there are insufficient resources to do so.

37. Literacy and numeracy have benefited enormously from the effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers believe these strategies are responsible for the recent improvements at Key Stage 1.

38. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The classroom assistants are well-trained and their expertise helps pupils' to make progress. Individual Education Plans are mainly clear and set appropriate targets that extend learning and effectively develop pupils' confidence and skills. Adult help is well planned and pupils receive their full entitlement. However there is a lack of appropriate resources to ensure that they make even better progress. All extra-curricular activities, such as after-school clubs and day and residential visits, are open to pupils of all abilities. Some pupils are withdrawn from their classes to receive specific help with literacy skills. This is well planned and is effective.

39. Good provision for opportunities to learn and develop social skills out of school time is made possible by the participation of teachers and parents in a good range of after-school and lunchtime clubs, which cater for most of the pupils. There are also visits to local places such as the river Stour, the mill, the church, Piddles Wood and the Post Office. Visits are made further afield to Dorchester museum, Maiden Castle, Worldwide Butterflies and the Millennium Dome. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have residential visits to Leeson House Environmental Study Centre and Weymouth Activity Centre. Actors, artists and musicians who support pupils' creative development further enhance the curriculum through visits to the school.

40. The school is very much a focus for the town and the contribution of the community to pupils' learning is excellent. The pupils are involved in services at the church for Harvest, Christmas and Easter. They visit the old peoples' homes, join in the silence at the War Memorial on Remembrance Day and performed at the Millennium pageant. The community supports the school by raising money for specific projects and through keeping the swimming pool running year after year.

41. Links with partner institutions are good. There are regular meetings for head teachers and for co-ordinators within the local pyramid of schools. Pupils also have an opportunity to visit the secondary school of their choice, and they feel confident about their move to another school.

42. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. However, provision for social development has improved and is now very good.

43. The school meets statutory requirements to provide a daily collective act of worship, and provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory overall. Here, and in class religious education lessons pupils have the opportunity to experience awe and wonder, and reflect on their own lives and those of others. For example, illustrations of the biblical story of the creation made pupils gasp with delight. In the religious education lesson for Year 3 and the story time for Year 2, the pupils listened with bated breath to the stories. The stiffened bodies of those in Year 2 visibly relaxed when they realised that the bear was not going to catch the hero of their story.

44. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school works hard to ensure that pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. The difference between right and wrong is made clear to pupils in assemblies, and also through the rest of the day. Teachers deal with moral matters as they arise, as when a group of boys in Year 4 were disgruntled with each other. Their teacher told them in no uncertain terms that threatening each other, seriously or in jest, was unacceptable behaviour. The muttering stopped.

45. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Relationships between all groups within the school are very good. There are good links with other primary schools, the local pre-school provision and the secondary school. Pupils are given responsibilities within the school and some represent their classes on the school council. The links with the community and the residential visits help to make the pupils confident citizens.

46. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. As part of the curriculum review, learning programmes have been planned with opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths, cultures and beliefs. Studies in history, geography and religious education help pupils to understand that other people have traditions, languages and religions different from their own. Traditional English culture is promoted through the school's use of its locality and its links with the community and the church.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. The school is a caring community where all staff know the pupils well and where the needs of the individual child are met. Ninety per cent of parents who returned the questionnaires reported that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and 92 per cent felt that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.

48. The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The school has maintained good standards of care and concern for pupils' health, safety and welfare, both in school and on school visits. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection issues. Procedures are firmly in place and any pupils who may be causing concern are carefully monitored. First aid is adequately covered, with all members of staff and some parents being qualified in resuscitation techniques. The health and safety policy has recently been updated, providing detailed guidance and information. The school buildings are kept clean and tidy to a high standard. Regular checks are made of the premises, and governors are fully involved in the process of ensuring that the school site is safe and are constantly seeking ways to improve the fabric of the buildings and the school grounds.

49. Procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory. During the last academic year, the information on attendance for this period has been incorrectly entered into the data-handling programme. New procedures are now in place to ensure the accurate entry of data into the attendance software. The school has implemented a system for daily monitoring; if a pupil is absent and no telephone message has been received, a telephone call is made to ascertain their whereabouts. Likewise, parents are asked to telephone the school when their child is returning to school following an absence. Appropriate measures are taken when any pupil is absent for a long period of time, or is unable to attend school on a regular basis. However, the school does not feel well supported by the educational welfare office when dealing with the non-attendance of some pupils.

50. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school's behaviour policy was formed in conjunction with parents, staff, governors and pupils. Members of the School Council made a very positive contribution by translating the policy into 'children speak'. There are clear procedures for sanctions, which are well understood by pupils, and parents are involved in setting targets for improved behaviour. Pupils are rewarded for good work, and good and helpful behaviour, through a merit system, and entries into the 'Special Book' are publicly recognised in weekly assemblies.

51. The monitoring of pupils' personal performance and personal development is good overall. Teachers are able to match work closely to the needs of individual pupils because of their good knowledge of their personal development. Social development is monitored through circle time across the school and through individual incidents dealt with and logged by staff. All pupils have targets for improvement. This provides good opportunities for involving pupils in their learning and has a positive effect on the progress they make.

52. At the time of the last inspection, the school was urged to 'formalise the whole –school approach to assessment so as to record pupils' attainment and progress across the curriculum'. Improvements have been good. The school's assessment and recording procedures, particularly in English and mathematics, are securely established and effective. Analysis of pupils' results over time has enabled the school to assess the effectiveness of teaching in the core subjects and to provide targets for groups of pupils. Standard Assessment Test results are thoroughly analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in curricular and teaching provision. Modifications are then made to the curriculum, and targets are set for the school and individual cohorts, in order to raise standards further. For example, a particular focus on writing in Key Stage 1 has raised the numbers achieving the nationally expected levels for seven year olds. Numerical and Literacy targets are set and reviewed annually. Participation by the Literacy Advisory Teacher has supported the moderation of writing across the school. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report when 'teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements needed to be made more secure by further developing moderation procedures'.

53. The school identifies those pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Individual Education Plans are regularly reviewed and appropriate revised targets are set. Parents are invited to participate in the drawing up of these plans, which are monitored by the special needs co-ordinator and the headteacher. Staff involved in teaching these pupils use these targets to move the pupils on in their learning. However, the amount of time allocated to the special needs co-ordinator to carry out her duties is limited.

54. Assessment tasks are built into teachers' lesson planning. Although there is regular oral feedback to pupils in lessons, some of the work in pupils' books is self-marked. Teachers have not supplemented this with written evaluative comments to support pupils' learning. This results in missed opportunities for consolidation and reinforcement in future planning. Also, marking is not always useful in helping pupils to improve their work, as some teachers' comments are often congratulatory and do not set targets for improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Overall, the school continues to have a good partnership with parents, which is based on very good quality information, and a genuine desire to make the partnership work. Parents are very supportive of the school and 94 per cent of parents are particularly pleased about the good progress their children make in school. However, 36 per cent of parents express concerns about the amount of homework their child has to do at home, and 20 per cent feel that they are not kept well informed about how their child is getting on. Inspection evidence does not support the latter view. Parents receive a detailed annual report with information about their child's progress, which includes specific comments about how their child can achieve better work in the core subjects. This is followed by an opportunity to discuss the report with the class teacher. Parents are given two other formal opportunities to consult with their child's teacher, and are encouraged to contact the school at any time should they need to do so. The headteacher is available in the playground at the beginning of the school day and has a 'Surgery' once a week. Evidence collated during the inspection indicates that the quality of homework given is satisfactory but the amount of homework given is inconsistent across the school.

56. Parents also receive very good information through regular and informative newsletters about what their children are to learn, and day-to-day issues. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents both offer very good information about the school. Parents' views have been sought when compiling the school behaviour policy and the Home School Agreement. The school encourages parents to be involved in their child's education through termly information evenings, for example on Literacy, numeracy, assessment and 'Helping Your Child'. Although these are not well attended, those who do attend find them very useful. Since the last inspection, a clear complaints procedure has been put in place.

57. Parents and people from the local community give valuable assistance to the school, particularly with listening to pupils read and with swimming lessons. A very active parent, teacher and friends association works hard to raise extra funds to support the school's work.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The leadership of the school is effective and provides a clear sense of purpose. This is a major factor contributing to the school's recent successful developments. The school has clear and appropriate aims, which are strongly reflected in its daily life, as well as in its documentation and development priorities. The school is successful in achieving these aims.

59. There have been many changes to the governing body since the last inspection, including a new chairman. The governors are committed to the school's well being, and have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They provide very good support to the headteacher through a well-defined committee structure, with clear terms of reference and an appropriate programme of meetings. Governors are kept fully informed by the headteacher's detailed reports.

60. The personal leadership of the headteacher is good. She was appointed two years ago after the school had been through a lengthy period of turbulent change. Working closely with the new chair of governors, she has been able to create a strong sense of loyalty and motivation in staff, and enable all to make a contribution to school development. With the support of all governors and parents, she has created an ethos in which all who work and learn in the school community feel valued and respected, and strive to achieve high standards in all things. The effects of this leadership and management are significant in the good progress the school has made in many areas of its work since the previous inspection. Whilst all members of staff recognise that progress has been made, they are united in their determination to pursue higher standards throughout the school. All policies and documents seen during the inspection met statutory requirements.

61. One of the significant strengths of the leadership of the headteacher and deputy is the degree to which it has created a shared unity of purpose within the school, focused on developing positive attitudes to learning and improving standards of attainment. The new management team quickly recognised that the attitudes of some pupils to learning could be improved, and they put in place a number of new strategies. These include the regular celebration of success in assemblies, a wide ranging programme of residential and day visits, a new behaviour policy, and a school council. Teachers claim improvements in pupils' attitudes, particularly at Key Stage 2, but consistent application of these strategies must continue. The structure of management responsibilities is effective in promoting communication and consultation, and in monitoring progress and implementing change.

62. The school is very well led and managed, day to day. Good communication systems ensure that all staff are kept informed, and well-established routines contribute to the smooth running of the school. Staff are highly committed to their work.

63. Following the last inspection in November 1996, an action plan was prepared in response to the key issues identified for future improvement. Most of the points contained in these key issues have been successfully addressed. They are as follows:

Key Issue 1: Improve cohesion in the management of the school so as to ensure a clear educational direction for the future development of the school.

64. Progress has been good. Since the appointment of a new headteacher two years ago, there has been a positive and active approach to school development and improvements to the interpersonal relationships with staff, governors and parents. Fundamental changes in staffing and membership of the governing body have led to greater cohesion and a shared sense of purpose and direction. The structure of management responsibilities is now effective in promoting communication and consultation, and in monitoring progress and implementing change. Shared School Development planning with the governors has supported this common educational direction.

Key Issue 2: Ensure that statutory requirements are met with regard to the calling of registers at the beginning of all school sessions.

65. Progress is good. Statutory requirements are being met.

Key Issue 3: *Develop more fully the monitoring of curriculum delivery so as to raise standards.*

66. Progress has been good. There is now regular monitoring of planning and teaching in every class by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, advisory teachers, and the link inspector. Teachers are provided with feedback on their lessons. The governors monitor curriculum development through visits to the school, and through the headteacher's reports. Improvements have begun to impact on standards of achievement.

Key Issue 4: *Continue to develop schemes of work for all National Curriculum subjects so that progressions and continuity are assured for all pupils.*

67. Progress has been good. During 1999-2000, there has been a full review of the curriculum in light of requirements of Curriculum 2000, to ensure progression and continuity across the key stages and between year groups. The successful introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has supported these developments. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully monitored, and individual education plans (IEPs) are regularly reviewed by key staff. The school has already identified the need to raise attainment in information and communications technology to support Curriculum 2000. This is a key feature of the current school improvement plan.

Key Issue 5: *Formalise the whole –school approach to assessment so as to record pupils' attainment and progress across the curriculum.*

68. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. New assessment procedures have been introduced alongside curriculum developments to support teachers in carrying out assessment. Statistical data is collected and analysed to support curriculum development and planning for individual pupils. Individual Educational Plans for pupils with special educational needs are well planned and regularly reviewed.

Key Issue 6: *Make teachers' assessments of pupils achievements more secure by further developing moderation procedures.*

69. Progress has been good. A system of regular moderation and assessment has been implemented and recently modified in the light of curriculum developments. Target setting is now an integral part of the assessment process. Numerical and Literacy targets are set and reviewed annually. Participation by the Literacy Advisory Teacher has supported the moderation of writing across the school. Social development is monitored through 'circle time' across the school and through the logging of individual incidents dealt with by staff.

70. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum have been improved since the previous inspection and are good. The headteacher and the deputy monitor the quality of teaching and learning in all subject areas. This has led to improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. However, the school identifies areas which still require work to consolidate developments. These include the monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning by subject

co-ordinators across the school. Although some subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of planning and pupils' work, they have been unable to monitor the quality of teaching across the school, and so are unable to account fully for the standards of provision in their subjects. This has already been identified as a priority for development.

71. Planning for school improvement is good, and reflects the aims of the school. A clear framework for development planning is linked to the budget cycle. An effective system for monitoring progress towards development priorities culminates in an annual review and update of the plan. Governors have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and the standards attained by pupils of differing abilities and ages.

72. The school plans its expenditure effectively. The governors are well informed about finance, and principles of best value are well applied through the use of cost comparisons and effective tendering arrangements. Governors are very aware of the limited funding available to improve teaching resources, and budget very carefully to maximise the income they have. They make good use of the detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools, to target their spending strategically.

73. Day to day financial control is good. Information and communications technology is satisfactorily used for administrative purposes. Information given to governors contains good detail and enables them to fulfil their monitoring role and have an oversight of the school's financial position.

74. The provision for special educational needs is managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator, closely supported by the head teacher. The governors place high priority on the provision for special educational needs and consider it a strength of the school. Additionally eight classroom assistants give support to pupils with special educational needs. The policy for special educational needs complies with the national Code of Practice. The two governors for special educational needs are aware of the issues involved and play a full part as 'critical friend.' The special educational needs co-ordinator has a good understanding of the role and manages it well.

75. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers to meet the school's needs. They are well deployed, and the match between teaching qualifications and subjects taught is satisfactory. Job descriptions clearly identify both general and specific responsibilities. The non-teaching staff make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school, and support teachers' work effectively.

76. Policies, co-ordination and support for staff development are good and have improved significantly since the last inspection. Good quality arrangements for professional review have begun to be implemented as part of the schools performance management strategy. The headteacher and deputy have performance targets set each year by the governors. The quality of the provision for staff development contributes significantly to school development and raising staff morale.

77. Overall, the standard of accommodation and resources is unsatisfactory. Two structurally unsound mobile units were replaced during the summer term by a second-hand mobile unit comprising three classrooms and toilets. However, these teaching rooms are very cramped and leave little space for computers or workbenches. The main buildings have been neglected in the past, and the governors have now set up a repair and renovation programme. Windows on the south side of the school have recently been repainted and repaired, using money raised by the governors. There is no provision for a school library, information and communications technology suite or separate room for special

educational needs. Children under five years have no access to a separate outside play area with large and small play equipment or trikes and wheeled toys. Generally, the provision of resources to support the new Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory, and limits the range and quality of the learning experiences that can be provided. Resources are limited in other curriculum areas such as mathematics, English and science, design and technology, history, geography, and special educational needs. All teachers have to spend a great deal of time in making their own or borrowing them from others. Further resources need to be acquired on a basis of emerging need for the development of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. The school has recently acquired some new computers of good quality, but the numbers are insufficient to meet the demands of the information and communications technology curriculum. Currently the ratio of pupils to computers is high at nearly 29: 1. The mobile classrooms have never been connected to the school network, and pupils in Key Stage 2 are unable to access the network unless they use computers in the Key Stage 1 classrooms. This severely restricts the standards that pupils are able to achieve.

78. When taking into account the attainment of pupils on entry, funds made available to the school, the standards achieved by pupils, the good quality of teaching, the quality of the school as a community, the progress since the last inspection, and the education it provides, William Barnes Primary School provides satisfactory value for money

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. In order to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- Raise standards in information and communications technology by ensuring the school plan for developing information and communication technology capability is rigorously implemented and evaluated. In addition, provide sufficient computers to enable the curriculum to be effectively delivered.
- Raise standards in English at Key Stage 1 by ensuring the school plan for improving literacy across the school is rigorously implemented, monitored and evaluated. In addition, provide:
 - * more structured opportunities for reading in a variety of situations;
 - * more opportunities for speaking and listening for a variety of audiences in all curriculum areas.
- Improve resources for the Foundation Stage so that planning can be effectively implemented, by providing:
 - * a separate secure outdoor play area with large and small play equipment;
 - * additional resources to support the teaching of the nationally recognised 'Early Learning Goals', accompanied by a package of training to enable these resources to be used effectively.
- Improve provision of exciting and stimulating learning experiences at the Foundation Stage and across Key Stage 1 to improve attitudes to learning.
- Provide opportunities for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the quality of resources for teaching their subjects, and use the information gathered to develop a strategic plan for enhancement and replacement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	4	54	36	4	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)	198
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	59

Special educational needs

	YR Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	72

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	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence¹

1998/99

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

1998/99

	%
School data	1.7
National comparative data	0.5

¹ Unfortunately, due to an error in data entry, attendance figures for the last academic year are not available. However, scrutiny of registers and trends over the past four years indicate that attendance is at least satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average.

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	11	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	9	5	11
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	14	20
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	72 (60)	56 (67)	80 (77)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	9
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	18	20	19
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	72 (67)	80 (77)	76 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	14
	Girls	14	10	12
	Total	24	20	26
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	80 (65)	67 (62)	87 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	14
	Girls	14	12	13
	Total	26	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	87 (76)	80 (69)	90 (73)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	185
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	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)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	24.8

Education support staff:

YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	166

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	359401.00
Total expenditure	360380.00
Expenditure per pupil	1685.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	7589.00
Balance carried forward to next year	6610.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	212
Number of questionnaires returned	85

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	35	7	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	49	45	1	4	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	59	4	5	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	45	29	7	4
The teaching is good.	47	41	2	5	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	41	20	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	38	8	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	49	5	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	37	48	12	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	51	35	8	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	44	7	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	40	11	1	2

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

80. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, but is below average overall. At the time of the inspection 26 children were under the age of five, but had only attended school for four mornings.

81. The school has planned the curriculum for the new Foundation Stage in some detail. However, the inspection took place too early in the year to make a judgement on the current effectiveness of this development or on the standards achieved by this cohort of children. The school is, however, aware that major shortcomings in the existing provision will prevent the new curriculum from being delivered effectively.

82. The quality of planning for the new Foundation Stage is good. However, it is clear that, in spite of the detailed planning, the quality and range of curriculum opportunities provided for the youngest pupils are unsatisfactory owing to a lack of suitable resources. Children have no access to a separate outside play area with large and small play equipment, cycles and wheeled toys. Generally, the provision of resources to support the new Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and limits the range and quality of the learning experiences that can be provided. A considerable investment in additional resources must be accompanied by training to enable these resources to be used effectively. The keen, enthusiastic and committed class teacher will then be able to broaden the range of learning experiences through play. This will enable the school to provide a richer learning environment, with greater variety and challenge.

83. Many of the activities observed were organised to establish new routines and to enable the children to make new friendships and relate to the adults supervising them. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in each of the early learning goals. However, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. A significant proportion of pupils enter the school with below average communication, language and literacy skills. Although the majority play sensibly and show interest in the activities provided, many find it more difficult to take part in group activities. Children are learning to take turns, for example when sharing equipment. Relationships between children and the adults they meet are good. The teacher provides a good role model for the pupils and activities are well planned to consolidate and extend their personal and social skills. Lessons nearly always start with children sitting in a circle to share and discuss the learning. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and show interest in all activities, but many do not speak clearly and are reluctant to contribute to discussions. Children are able to sit and listen, but soon become restless and distracted despite the best effort of the teacher to re-focus them on the activity. Most children can say and use numbers to ten, and tasks and activities are well chosen and planned to help consolidate and develop mathematical skills. However, in one of the four lessons observed, the activity was not sufficiently well matched to the particular needs of the children.

84. Scrutiny of the work completed by the previous year's reception class, together with observation of the pupils now in Year 1, suggests that the majority had lower than average levels of development when they entered the reception class and a restricted experience of the wider

world. Personal and social development was particularly low. The children made satisfactory progress, but many are still behind nationally average levels of development at the age of five and still need to have access to the range of curriculum experiences and opportunities planned for the Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

85. At Key Stage 1, an analysis of the 1999 test results shows the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and the number reaching Level 3 in reading was well below the national average. In writing, the number reaching Level 2 was very low and the number reaching Level 3 was below average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading, and very low in writing. There had been a progressive decline since the last inspection, with no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. However, the action taken by the new headteacher to raise standards at Key Stage 1 is beginning to have a noticeable effect. The school's test results for 2000, for which there are as yet no national comparisons yet, indicate a significant improvement on 1999 results, particularly in writing. Inspection evidence for the current cohort of pupils suggests that standards are now just below average, with significant improvements in both reading and writing on the 1999 cohort.

86. Overall, standards in English are in line with national expectations by the time pupils reach the age of 11. This accords with the judgements made at the last inspection. In the 1999 national tests, the results were above the national average. However, the trend over the last four years has shown a variation between average and above average attainment. The discrepancy between the previous national tests result and the inspection grade for English is due to the composition of the present Year 6 cohort. Data supplied by the school suggest that the numbers reaching the higher Level 5 is only expected to be average by the end of the year. This is supported by inspection evidence. The school has met the 2000 literacy targets.

87. The National Literacy Strategy has been well implemented and is supporting attainment throughout the school. Most pupils enter school with skills and knowledge in English that are below average and in many cases well below. They have a limited vocabulary, little knowledge of sounds and letters and have not made a start in reading and writing. Many make satisfactory progress but are only able to achieve below average standards by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and attain average standards towards the end of Year 6, with a significant number achieving higher than this. Pupils who have special educational needs are identified early and given appropriate support, which helps them make progress in line with their classmates.

88. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below expected levels. The majority of pupils find it hard to take turns and listen to each other and the teacher. Pupils have a limited vocabulary and have difficulty expressing their ideas in a clear way. For example, when Year 2 pupils discussed a true story, few knew the word 'trolley', saying instead 'the thing what you push', and some did not know the word 'seaside'. Pupils' vocabulary is developed and extended well throughout Key Stage 2. In Year 3 they were able to identify adjectives like 'ugly' and 'bare', and offer such synonyms as 'lovely' and 'enormous' for the more common words 'nice' and 'big'. By the age of 11, pupils can give coherent reasons for choices and express them clearly, but they still do not use a sufficiently wide range of vocabulary. Younger pupils find it hard to talk in front of a large audience, but by the age of 11, they have gained confidence to do this.

89. Pupils' attainment in reading by the age of seven is below average. The youngest pupils have a poor knowledge of letter sounds and do not use their limited knowledge to help them sound out words. More able pupils attempt to sound out simple consonant, vowel, and consonant words, but mainly rely on known words and familiar texts when reading. By the end of the key stage, even the most fluent readers still read simple, short texts. Some of the youngest, least able pupils hold the books upside down and point randomly to words. Pupils do not use a range of clues such as the pictures, the initial letters or context to help them tell the story. All pupils enjoy hearing stories and say they like books but they are not enthusiastic about reading. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in reading so that by the time they are 11 most reach expected standards. They mainly read accurately in whole class and group work, making good attempts at unknown words. They enjoy hearing stories and prefer to read fiction themselves, using the synopsis on the back of books to make their choice. Again, all pupils say they like reading but all would prefer to do something other than read when given the choice. No pupils appear to be avid readers. Pupils use non-fiction texts to acquire information but have not developed higher-level skills such as scanning and skimming.

90. Despite satisfactory progress in lessons, by the time they are seven pupils attain below average standards in writing. This is because the level at which they begin this stage is low, with some pupils still making marks on the paper interspersed with some recognisable letter shapes. By the time they are seven many can write simple sentences but capitals and full stops are often used inconsistently. They use familiar vocabulary in a simple sentence pattern and try to spell words using their phonic knowledge. The most able write at length in a mainly sequential way, attempting to use speech marks correctly. Their spelling is increasingly accurate, making good attempts at difficult words. They write stories, letters and rhymes. Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2, and by the time they are 11, the majority of pupils reach satisfactory standards in writing. The most able pupils are competent writers, with imaginative ideas, a wide vocabulary and a sense of audience. The majority can write in a wide range of styles, but their use of complex sentences and adventurous vocabulary is inconsistent. Pupils learn spellings well for tests but common words such as 'because' and 'said' are often wrongly spelt. Throughout the school, handwriting is generally unsatisfactory. Despite a consistent approach to forming and joining letters in handwriting lessons, these skills do not transfer to other lessons. Overall, pupils do not take care with their handwriting and presentation.

91. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is always satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, one lesson was satisfactory, two were good and one was very good. All teachers plan well in line with the National Literacy Strategy, including well-matched tasks for different ability levels and efficient use of support assistants. This helps the lesson to run smoothly. The teachers' subject knowledge is good, which enables them to plan interesting activities for the pupils. However pupils' attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory, especially in Key Stage 1. Teachers spend time teaching the basic skills thoroughly, but the youngest pupils find it hard to retain simple ideas such as letter sounds. This is because they come to school with little experience of language skills. However, the teachers persist so that pupils do learn and make progress, and at Key Stage 2 progress is rapid. Teachers use a variety of methods and resources to interest the pupils. In Key Stage 1, they use puppets to help pupils say letter sounds correctly. This grips the pupils' imagination and helps them to concentrate more readily. In Key Stage 2, the tasks are made relevant to the pupils. For example, Year 6 used the school prospectus to study non-chronological texts. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, but pupils' indifferent attitudes to school mean that they often ignore what teachers ask. All teachers consistently expect pupils to behave well and pupils' attitudes improve as they go through the school. There is very little unfocussed behaviour by the time they are in Year 6.

92. A good English policy guides practice throughout the school. Teachers keep detailed records of curriculum coverage and pupil's progress. They make regular assessments that are fed back to pupils. The quality of work is moderated, and staff discuss the progress of the implementation of the literacy strategy. The co-ordinator has a purposeful timetable for monitoring the quality of provision and learning in English. She is well informed by data analysis, sampling work and classroom observation. She discusses outcomes with the deputy headteacher and verbally reports findings to staff meetings and individual staff. This leadership is setting good educational direction for English. The school is addressing issues well, including performance in reading at Key Stage 1, and the quality of handwriting, and is beginning to raise standards. A good quality action plan to raise standards, particularly at Key Stage 1, forms part of the school improvement strategy. The school does not have a library, but each class has a book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction. Insufficient use is made of information and communications technology in the English lessons because of insufficient computers particularly at Key Stage 2.

MATHEMATICS

93. The numbers of seven year old pupils reaching the required national standards in mathematics in 1999 was well below the national average, and no pupils reached the higher level. In comparison with other schools which have a similar intake, pupils' results were also well below average. There has been a progressive decline since the last inspection, and no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. However, the action taken by the new headteacher to raise standards at Key Stage 1 is beginning to have an effect. The school's test results for 2000, for which there are no comparable national statistics, indicate a significant improvement on 1999 results.

94. The number of 11 year olds reaching the required national standards in mathematics in 1999 was close to the national average, but the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was below the national average. There was no significant difference between boys and girls. In comparison with other schools with a similar intake, pupils' results were slightly below average. Improvement since the last inspection has been in line with the national trend. Again, the school's results for mathematics in 2000 indicate that standards are continuing to rise but as yet there are no national data with which to compare them.

- These improvements have been made through:
 - * teachers becoming confident with the National Numeracy Strategy;
 - * the provision, by teachers, of work more applicable to the wide range of ability within their classes;
 - * the introduction of target setting;
 - * the use of tests to identify pupils having problems with number work.

95. Children enter the school with below average attainment in mathematics. The work seen during the inspection indicates that, in their first three years in school, pupils make good progress and by the age of seven, the majority of pupils' work is just in line with that expected nationally. This is a significant improvement on the results of the National Curriculum tests for 1999 when standards in comparison with similar schools were very low. About half the pupils in the first week of Year 2 can order numbers confidently up to one hundred, in both ascending and descending order, and can find one more or one less on a hundred square. Evidence from the scrutiny of the previous year's work suggests that pupils

develop a growing competence in using numbers in a variety of situations, and are beginning to develop a range of strategies for performing simple number calculations. However, the presentation of work in pupils' books was sometimes poor and teachers' marking is not always useful in helping pupils to improve their work, as some comments are often congratulatory and do not set targets for improvement. Although there is regular oral feedback to pupils in lessons, some of the work in pupils' books is self-marked. Teachers have not supplemented this with written evaluative comments to support pupils' learning.

96. Between the ages of seven and 11 pupils make better progress. By the age of 11, most pupils' work is comfortably in line with standards expected nationally. The work seen in pupils' books, particularly in Years 5 and 6, shows pupils sometimes exceeding nationally expected standards, but this is not always repeated in formal assessment situations. The good quality of direct teaching in those years and the good support provided for pupils probably mask a need for consolidation and reinforcement of pupils' understanding which is not always being addressed through modification of teachers' planning. Although there is regular oral feedback to pupils in lessons, much of the work in pupils' books is self-marked. Teachers have not supplemented this with written evaluative comments to support pupils' learning.

97. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress compared to their prior attainment. Work is appropriately prepared to meet their individual needs.

98. Of the eight lessons observed in mathematics, the quality of teaching was good in seven and unsatisfactory in one. This shows a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection, where teaching was 'sound'. Planning is detailed and mental/oral activities are appropriately linked to the main learning objectives of the lesson. As a result the different parts of each lesson form a coherent whole and pupils are encouraged to make connections between different aspects of their learning. Ancillary staff are used well to support pupils throughout the lesson. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace with a variety of interesting tasks helping to maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and pupil management is usually firm and decisive. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and included in whole-class activities through sensitive and carefully graded questions. Overall, there is an appropriate degree of challenge in lessons and written tasks are matched to different levels of attainment. In the single unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 1, a quiet working atmosphere was not established at the beginning of the lesson, and a tight and focused learning approach involving all of the pupils all of the time was not maintained.

99. Pupil's attitudes to work are variable across the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and up to Year 4 have yet to develop consistent independent learning skills. Listening skills and levels of concentration are poor, particularly in introductory sessions where they are required to listen to each other as well as the teacher. However, most settle well to practical activities and concentrate for appropriate amounts of time provided there is sufficient adult support. Teachers are working hard at creating and maintaining a purposeful and productive learning atmosphere, and by Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils respond with increasing commitment and maturity to the lively teaching. Pupils are more aware of the need to become independent learners and respond well to opportunities for developing their own thinking and learning strategies.

100. Numeracy skills are applied well across a number of topics in the school. Pupils are able to develop their concept of chronology, and fit their topics into the wider time scale of world history. In science, they use charts, graphs and diagrams to record their experimental results. This type of work helps to place numeracy within a practical perspective. Information and communications technology is beginning to be used to support mathematics, but is inhibited by the lack of equipment, particularly at Key Stage 2.

101. The co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues and has managed the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. He monitors teacher's planning, but has yet to monitor the work in classes by work sampling or by observing lessons. A scheme for co-teaching within and across key stages has begun, but this is moving slowly and the co-ordinator's influence has been more effective in Key Stage 2. More effective development of the co-ordinator's role would allow him to have a clearer insight of how to raise standards further in Key Stage 1.

102. Resources are limited, and all teachers have to spend a great deal of time in making their own. Further resources need to be acquired, on a basis of emerging need for the development of the National Numeracy Strategy.

SCIENCE

103. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments for the end of Key Stage 1 were below the national averages. Inspection evidence shows that attainment of current Year 2 pupils is in line with expected standards. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were in line with the national average and the average for similar schools. Trends over the previous four years have been close to the average nationally. Inspection evidence suggests that standards are now above the national average. Improvements are mainly due to the quality of teaching, particularly in investigative and experimental science at Key Stage 2. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report when standards and progress were satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported.

104. Progress at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. Younger pupils are beginning to use scientific vocabulary with increasing confidence and understanding and make good progress in their investigative skills. They investigate the properties of a range of materials and understand why some materials are useful for specific purposes. Pupils experiment with balls made from different materials to discover which is the 'bounciest', and investigate whether materials are waterproof. In Key Stage 1, most know that bending, stretching and compressing can change the shape of materials and that materials change state by heating. Higher attaining pupils know that some materials can revert back to their original state but others will not. Pupils experiment with forces by pushing and pulling, and discover by independent thinking that pulling can be effective using a flexible rope or string but it is not possible to push using a rope. They record their findings and explain the reason for the differences. Most are able to predict the outcomes of an experiment and have a satisfactory understanding of a 'fair test'. For example, pupils predict what would happen if plants had no water or soil, or were deprived of light. By the end of the key stage they enthusiastically investigate how sounds are produced and how distance affects the volume of sounds. They study the function of different types of food and the role of medicines in healthy growth. Many pupils are developing care and concern for the living things when looking at the habitats of 'mini-beasts' and know that it is important to take care of the environment.

105. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their earlier knowledge of materials. They understand that materials can be solids, liquids or gases and that the properties of certain materials make them suitable for different uses, such as insulators and conductors. Pupils are thoroughly familiar with the approach to fair testing and apply the principle to all investigative work. They test the solubility of solids and generate hypotheses when separating insoluble as well as soluble substances. Pupils understand the importance of a fair test and predict, test, refine and evaluate their work when measuring the clarity of water filtered through soil, coffee and sand. In their study of light, they demonstrate how light travels in a straight line, or how shadows are created, and they use mirrors to show reflection. Effective use of prisms reveals the spectrum of light and the colours of different wave bands. They have a good understanding of the human body and understand the importance of a balanced diet for healthy living. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have made considerable progress in answering factual questions, using appropriate scientific terminology and planning and recording experiments in a logical manner. In their science lessons they use deductive methods well to provide evidence for hypotheses. They identify problems individually, design tests and conduct their own experiments. Most use scientific vocabulary well, and demonstrate a good understanding of such terms as ecosystems, and habitat during their study of life in the River Stour.

106. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report when teaching was described as ‘sound’ at both key stages. Of the six lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good in four and satisfactory in two. Good features of teaching which were frequently seen include:

- * thorough planning with clear learning objectives which are well explained to pupils;
- * good preparation and use of resources;
- * a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, with clear demonstrations and explanations;
- * a variety of activities which interest and stimulate pupils and are well matched to their abilities;
- * good links to other subjects such as literacy and numeracy.

107. Teachers have a secure understanding of the science curriculum and there is a clear emphasis on experimental and investigative science throughout the school. Teachers’ planning and the scrutiny of pupils’ work show that work is related to the prior attainment of pupils and takes account of ongoing assessment to determine what is taught next. In the lessons observed, the objectives were discussed with the pupils so that they knew what they were supposed to learn, thereby enabling them to make good progress in the session. Resources are well prepared and generally appropriate for the experiments being performed. Questions were used well to make the pupils think for themselves and to apply previous learning. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and are eager to learn and reach a good standard by the time they leave the school. Behaviour is generally good in lessons and pupils work together well and listen to the views of others. They take turns and handle resources confidently.

108. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who, although recently in post, is committed to raising standards even higher. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. A scheme of work is now in place; an

appropriate emphasis has been placed on experimental and investigative science, and teachers are more confident at delivering science. All of these improvements are having a positive impact on learning. Attention has also been given to extending pupils of different ability, although progress in this respect is better at Key Stage 2.

109. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work has been adapted to suit the needs of the school, especially with regard to experimental and investigative work. In both key stages, teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and comments provide guidance to pupils as to how they can improve their work. Information and communications technology is, however, not being used to sufficiently for the presentation of work or the analysis of results. Resources are generally good and fully support the teaching and learning of science throughout the school. However there are constraints on some consumable materials due to financial limitations. Good use is made of literacy and numeracy within science. For example pupils make precise measurements when investigating surface tension using the Newton and emphasise the difference between solution and saturation.

ART

110. Only one art lesson was observed during the inspection but scrutiny of samples from the previous year's work suggests that pupils by the age of seven achieve nationally expected standards and by the age of 11 pupils generally exceed them. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report when standards at Key Stage 2 were described as 'broadly sound'. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching.

111. The school manages to maintain a high profile for art within the curriculum. Elements of the subject are linked to topics in other curriculum areas. However, an appropriate emphasis on developing basic skills is maintained and art is valued as a subject in its own right. Pupils under seven make satisfactory progress, but progress accelerates in Key Stage 2, where specialist teaching by the co-ordinator enables pupils to experience a wide range of different approaches to art with frequent opportunities to develop individual creative, imaginative and practical skills.

112. By the age of 11, pupils can produce sensitive and skilled work in a variety of media. For example, Year 6 pupils make careful drawings of their fingerprints and then develop these into abstract patterns. The activity successfully combines the development of precise observational skills and opportunities for individual creativity. Visits to local galleries and collections, such as the sculpture garden at Deans' Court in Dorset, enable pupils to see original work and articulate a critical response to the work of a range of different artists. Displays of work have been sent to the local library and secondary school, helping to foster links with the local community.

113. The co-ordinator provides effective support for colleagues, many of whom have good subject knowledge and confidence in teaching art. The existing scheme of work is detailed and comprehensive and provides for the effective development of pupils' skills as they move through the school. A record of displays is kept but as yet there is no portfolio of moderated work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Throughout the school pupils' progress in design and technology is satisfactory and, by the time they are 7 and 11 years, they reach nationally expected standards. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching overall, since there were limited opportunities for observation during the period of the inspection. However, the small numbers of lessons seen in Key Stage 1 were of good quality.

115. In Year 1, pupils drew designs for finger puppets. The teachers provided a wide range of resources and pupils freely chose which to use. Pupils used scissors carefully and correctly to cut card, paper and material. They realised they had to use more force to cut the thick material. They tried to measure accurately by laying the material over their design to see if it fitted. They joined by sticking with glue or sticky tape. As the puppets neared completion the pupils began to play with them. This showed up faults in the making as some fell apart. The pupils were able to see what was wrong and correct it. The teachers supported the pupils by recommending other materials or methods to them, but still let the pupils make the final decision. By the end of the lesson, all pupils had made a recognisable puppet of which they were proud. One girl had made a tiny squirrel with four legs and a tail in grey fluffy material, which was of a standard above that expected at this age. Some pupils had time to play with their puppets in the puppet theatre, and this quickly reinforced idea that puppets must be durable.

116. Teachers' plans show that they choose tasks that are relevant to the pupils' needs and stimulate their imaginations. Pupils are then enthusiastic, concentrate on the tasks and produce something of which they are proud. Year 5 pupils designed a box to hold their lunch and then made it out of card. They evaluated their designs and then adapted them so they were big enough to hold all they might want for lunch. When studying frameworks, Year 6 pupils used twigs to hold mesh fabric to represent stained glass windows. They used a variety of methods to join the twigs and hold the mesh in place. These were proudly displayed in the hall.

117. Resources for the subject are limited. There are cases of tools for pupils to use, but the consumable stock is limited. Many of the consumables come from a 'Materials Bank', financed by the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

118. Throughout the school pupils' progress in history and geography is satisfactory, and by the time they are aged seven and eleven years, they reach the nationally expected standards for their age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. Teaching is mainly good in both of these subjects and pupils enjoy the lessons.

119. Six lessons were observed during the inspection; three were satisfactory and three were good. There were no significant differences of quality between the two subjects or between the key stages. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report when teaching was described as sound. Teachers plan interesting activities that arouse the interest of the pupils. There is thorough planning and good use of well-prepared resources. Pupils are well motivated towards using their own research and enquiry skills, which has a positive impact on learning. They have good opportunities for individual enquiry, and they are motivated to enquire further. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils are learning about archaeology and how artefacts tell us about the life in the past. Each group of pupils had

a large box of sand in which fragments of china and fabric were buried. There was great excitement as pupils unearthed them and tried to identify and piece them together. One pupil shouted, 'I've made a connection!' as she carefully matched the pattern on two pieces of a cup. Others eagerly gathered round to look. At the end of the lesson a boy showed how he had joined three pieces of china to make a plate. The teacher said, 'Are you sure it's a plate?'. Another boy said, 'No. It's a saucer.' The teacher asked why he thought that. He replied, 'That middle bit is just the right size for a teacup.' The teacher's persistent questioning had made the pupils think more carefully about their hypotheses.

120. In the Years 5 and 6 geography lessons, pupils were trying to decide the best route for a bypass for their town. This activity was particularly relevant to them as they had previously walked into Sturminster Newton and seen at first-hand the problems of a large amount of traffic travelling through the narrow streets. The teacher had planned a number of activities that were carefully matched to the differing abilities of the pupils. By the end of this lesson the more able pupils were able to use six figure co-ordinates to plan their preferred route, while those who needed support were able to give a reason for the route they had chosen and drawn.

121. Teachers in Year 1 planned a task to be done at home as a start their study of toys. Pupils were asked to find and bring to school toys they had used when they were babies and toddlers as well as their current most favourite toy. They arrived next day clutching large bags of toys, and some had brought photographs as well. This generated a lot of discussion about the reasons for their choice. The teachers skilfully guided the talk round to the relationship between what small children can do and what skills they need to play with a toy. By the end of the lessons the majority of pupils could place toys in the chronological order in which they were played

122. By the time they leave the school, pupils understand chronology and can place events and changes in the right order. They research information about people and places over time in the local environment and further a field. They understand the way settlements develop and change through natural causes or man-made ones. They compare and contrast their own environment with one in a less economically developed country such as Kenya. They learn to use maps with a variety of scales.

123. The school's own resources are inadequate to deliver either of these subjects fully. Teachers buy resources themselves and rely heavily on what they and others bring in to school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. There were no opportunities to see direct teaching of information and communications technology during the inspection. Evidence was obtained by direct observation, from displays, by the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans, and through discussions with pupils and teachers. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching.

125. Attainment in information and communications technology at the end of both key stages is below national expectations. This occurs because pupils have previously not received their full entitlement to the breadth of the National Curriculum programmes of study, and have not been able to build soundly on their skill, knowledge and understanding year by year. The school has recently acquired some new computers of good quality, but the numbers are insufficient to deliver the information and communications technology curriculum effectively. Currently the ratio of pupils to computers is high at nearly 29: 1. The new mobile classrooms have yet to be connected to the school network, and

pupils in Key Stage 2 have been unable to access the network from the mobile classrooms because of the cost of installing the cabling to these temporary structures. If pupils wish to access the Internet, or software stored on the central server, they must go to the main building and ask to use computers in the Key Stage 1 classrooms. This constraint restricts the standards that pupils are able to achieve.

126. Pupils at both key stages are making unsatisfactory progress over time, since there are insufficient peripherals, software and staff training to support developments within this curriculum area. The narrow range of study inhibits progress. Insufficient time is spent on the use of programmable toys to enable younger pupils to learn to programme instructions and see outcomes. Also, there are not enough opportunities for interacting with multimedia programmes to explore and alter details in real or imaginary situations. Older pupils have not been given enough opportunities to control events, to use spreadsheets and to monitor and collect data, or to use sensors. Progress in the use of information and communications technology to capture, store and retrieve, analyse and present information is further inhibited because previously it was not securely integrated within the planning of other subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

127. The school is working hard to develop the use of word-processing skills, and pupils across the school enter text into word-processing packages, successfully select appropriate fonts, and change the properties of text, including size, style and spacing. Pupils are being successfully introduced to the skills for accessing the Internet and for sending and receiving electronic mail. However, there are severe limitations on its use for pupils in Key Stage 2, since they do not have direct access to the World Wide Web.

128. Whenever pupils are seen working on the computers, their response is always good. They are enthusiastic and work well together, supporting each other. They receive help from knowledgeable classroom assistants, but many have gained their knowledge from working at home on personal computers. Pupils with special educational needs work alongside other pupils and are well supported and make good progress in relation to their previous attainment.

129. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. Although some records of assessment exist for individuals, there is no whole-school system for tracking progress or for analysing the performance of particular individuals, groups or cohorts. However, a new procedure has recently been introduced for Key Stage 1, which will soon be extended to Key Stage 2. The school is aware that the portfolios in information and communications technology need completing in order to ensure the accuracy and consistency of teachers' assessments.

130. The headteacher and governors are very aware of the deficiencies in information and communications technology and have devised a good detailed development plan which is a key feature of the current school development strategy. All of these unsatisfactory elements are being addressed, including staff and curriculum development. However, additional funding still has to be found to increase the number of computers of good quality and to complete the networking of all temporary classrooms.

131. The co-ordinator, in post since the beginning of the year, is very enthusiastic about the subject and has worked hard to set up the new computers and provide help and advice to teachers. She has wisely introduced the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines, and is acutely aware of the lack of software and training to support developments within the subject. She is currently identifying links with other subjects as part of the Curriculum 2000. However, she has not been given the

opportunity or support to develop her role in a coherent way, to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, or to develop whole-school assessment procedures.

MUSIC

132. There were limited opportunities to observe music during the period of the inspection. One music lesson was observed in each key stage. Evidence was obtained by direct observation, by the scrutiny of teachers' plans, and through discussions with pupils and teachers. Many pupils enter the school with very limited musical experience but leave at the age of 11 with a firm grounding in music skills and an enthusiasm for group-music making. Pupils up to the age of seven make satisfactory progress, but progress accelerates markedly in Key Stage 2, where a wider range of stimulating activities captures pupils' interest, and attitudes to the subject are very positive.

133. In Year 2, pupils begin to learn the names of simple percussion instruments and to match the instruments to recordings of the sound they make. They learn simple songs and how to work co-operatively to achieve satisfactory results. In Year 4, pupils are introduced to conventional musical notation, learning the names and values of notes and how to group them in bars. They clap simple rhythms in four beat phrases and sing rhythmic songs.

134. The quality of music teaching ranged from satisfactory to excellent, and the best teaching was seen at Key stage 2. In Year 2, the class teacher has good subject knowledge and worked strenuously to inculcate the level of listening and participation skills required for effective learning in music lessons. In Key Stage 2, much of the music teaching is undertaken by the music co-ordinator. Her inspirational teaching ensures a level of co-operation and enthusiasm in the pupils, which is leading to above average standards of achievement. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace with a variety of stimulating activities, to develop pupils' aural skills. There is an excellent balance of theory and practical activities and pupils are encouraged to apply new knowledge in a range of challenging tasks. Relationships with pupils are excellent and lessons take place in an atmosphere where pupils feel able to express their enthusiasm and contribute their own ideas.

135. Music has continued to maintain the high profile in the life of the school noted in the last inspection, and continues to make a substantial contribution to assemblies and pupils' cultural and spiritual development. There is a choir, two recorder groups, and a small orchestra supported by peripatetic music teaching in strings, woodwind and brass. In conjunction with other local schools, visiting musicians come each term and hold workshops in classes. Each summer there is a large-scale musical production.

136. Through team-teaching, the co-ordinator ensures the development of music teaching skills and confidence in her colleagues. She ensures that the key strands of performing, composing, listening and appraising are integral parts of the curriculum and that skills are successfully built on as pupils move through the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. Pupils' attainment in physical education is in line with the standard expected for their age and ability at the end of the Key Stage 1, and above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Standards have improved

since the last inspection when attainment and progress were broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages.

138. The school covers all areas of the physical education curriculum, including swimming. In Key Stage 1, pupils exercise control and awareness of space when engaged in warming up exercises, through the use of simple games which demand changing pace, assuming different postures and using all the space at their disposal. Pupils use space sensibly, control their body movements and vary form, speed and expression. These are developed in dance routines, as was seen in a Year 1 lesson, where pupils develop phrasing, repetition and rhythm in simulating the movements of a puppet. They effectively demonstrate the range of movements from a crouched position to raising one arm, then another until the puppet is on his feet in an active dance. Pupils work well in pairs and take turns at being the puppet or the puppeteer. They use posture and expressions well to reflect these roles. Year 2 pupils improve their games skills during a lesson on catching and throwing, using a beanbag. Working in pairs, they practise their throwing and passing skills and praise and encourage each other. Team spirit is encouraged when two teams compete in throwing the bag around a circle to see which team returns the bag to the starting point first.

139. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 interpret and simulate the movements of a 'mean machine', from starting the engine, increasing the speed of its movement, pulling, pushing and slowing down to a stop. Pupils design their own demonstrations to reflect different aspect of the machine's motion, and then work in pairs to perfect harmonious action. They soon learn to distinguish between push and pull, and develop their ability to think independently. They are encouraged to evaluate their movements and use a range of interesting words to express their thoughts. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils use the painting of 'Bathers' by Seurat as a stimulus to create a series of dance movements reflecting the mood of the characters in the scene. They create a variety of movements from one position to another, being careful to show awareness of the season and weather conditions and how this would affect the pace and type of movement. By the end of the key stage pupils confidently perform dance routines for an audience and are adept at making constructive criticism of their performance. They exhibit a range of ideas responding to the high demands of their teachers. Pupils in all year groups practise games skills in preparation for competitive sport. They practise skills of catching and throwing, marking and defending. Pupils work individually, in pairs and in groups and evaluate their own performance as well as that of their peers. They understand the effect of exercise on the body and appreciate the importance to the body of warming up and cooling down activities. All pupils have swimming lessons during the summer term. By the time pupils leave school at the age of 11 all are able to swim at least 10 metres. Over 90 per cent of pupils are able to swim a minimum of 25 meters and some become very competent swimmers.

140. Pupils make good progress from a low starting base on entry to the school, and achieve well co-ordinated movements by the end of the Key Stage 2. They make sensible use of the space available, show pride in their work and demonstrate good quality performance to the rest of the class. As they move through the school, progress is particularly good when pupils are given challenging tasks to perform, as in the dance routine in Year 6. In games they make progress in the development of skills aided by extra-curricular activities in after school clubs. The emphasis on skills training at Key Stage 2 has a positive impact on pupils' performance. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress and participate fully in all activities. In swimming the voluntary support given by a qualified parent who organises swimming lessons, and by other helpers, contributes positively to attainment and progress.

141. Attitudes to physical education are good. Pupils show enjoyment of the subject and take part with enthusiasm. They particularly enjoy their dance and games lessons and work hard to make improvements. Behaviour is generally satisfactory. Most pupils work co-operatively,

showing respect for the feelings of others. Relationships between pupils are generally good in Key Stage 2, but some pupils exhibit challenging behaviour at times. Pupils generally dress correctly for activities and handle equipment safely. They follow established routines, help with the apparatus and follow their teacher's instructions carefully.

142. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report when the quality of teaching was found to be satisfactory at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, one lesson was good and one was satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, four lessons were observed and all were of good quality. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject, which ensures that the basic skills are taught well and that pupils learn skills in a logical sequence. They have high expectations of their pupils and show enthusiasm for the subject, use praise appropriately and provide opportunities for pupils to improve their performance. They manage the pupils well using a variety of strategies to keep them on task. Resources are made available and appropriately used to achieve the lesson objectives. Demonstrations by teachers and by pupils are used well to improve the quality of performance and to give other pupils ideas for their own activities. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in Key Stage 2, and this has significant impact on the quality of learning.

143. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who provides help and guidance to colleagues in the drive to raise attainment and increase progress. She has attended a number of training courses, including 'TOP play' and 'TOP Sport' as well as courses for developing skills in netball and gymnastics. Resources are plentiful and of good quality for delivery of the curriculum. The subject benefits from the availability of a spacious hall and a large, well-kept playing field. There is a clear policy as well as a scheme of work for physical education. A number of extra curricular sports activities enhance the subject. These include after school clubs in football, netball and swimming. Inter-schools' competition amongst local schools has resulted in the winning of a number of sports trophies, especially in swimming. These extra-curricular activities have a positive impact on pupils' attainment through high expectations and the desire to improve standards of performance. In addition there is a well-planned programme of outdoor education, including orienteering courses in the playground, a lifeguard course and a two-day camping expedition in Year 4.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. The standards achieved in religious education in both key stages are in line with the expectations of the Dorset local Agreed Syllabus 2000. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. In Key Stage 1, pupils understand the importance of the main Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and the significance of worship on Sundays. They know some of the stories in the life of Christ and understand that He is a very special person for Christians. They learn about Rama and Nirvana in the Hindu religion and understand the celebration of Diwali and the significance of light in religious teachings. Pupils explore the contrasts between light and dark and recognise that all religions attach significance to light and enlightenment. Many are able to link this to the Christian belief that Jesus is the light of the world. They recall stories from sacred texts and recognise key feelings of joy, anger, hurt and forgiveness. Pupils are aware of moral codes embracing forgiveness, love and caring for the world, and understand concepts such as caring for others, having friends and neighbours and sharing with others. By the end of the key stage pupils are familiar with some of the customs of Hinduism, Judaism and the Christian religions and begin to relate these to their own lives.

145. In Key Stage 2 pupils extend their knowledge of Judaism, and understand the importance of the Ten Commandments, the Torah as a holy book and a selection of Jewish festivals. They develop greater understanding of the differences as well as the similarities between people of different faiths. Pupils know the story of Jacob and his 12 sons and learn from it the importance of loyalty, love and forgiveness. Many relate this to their favourite possessions and learn to take care of the things they value, including their own families. Pupils know the links between Christianity and Judaism and that Christ, the founder of Christianity, was a Jew and that the Jews do not accept Christ as the Messiah. In Year 6, pupils understand the importance of specific customs in different religions and compare practices such as baptism and marriage, which mark stages of commitment to their faith. By the end of the key stage, pupils are beginning to apply their knowledge of religious beliefs to the moral issues in the world.

146. During the inspection four lessons were seen in religious education, two in each of the key stages. In Key Stage 1, lessons were satisfactory or good and in Key Stage 2 they were good or very good. Where teaching is good or better, teachers' subject knowledge is good so that they are able to answer searching questions to the satisfaction of the pupils. The enthusiasm of the teacher is transmitted to the pupils, who ask searching questions and think deeply about ideas raised. Class management is good and most pupils respond with good behaviour and hard work, remaining on target to achieve the objectives of the lesson. Teachers' high expectations result in the pupils concentrating throughout the lesson and the good pace of delivery stimulates pupils' interest. Opportunities were given for pupils to reflect on the ideas discussed, thus supporting their own spiritual development well.

147. The subject is efficiently managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who takes an active part in courses to improve the subject. She is involved in planning as well as monitoring through analysis of pupils' work. A clear policy and scheme of work are based on the Dorset Agreed Syllabus 2000. The curriculum is enhanced by the visits made to places of religious significance, for example the Hindu temple in Southampton, and by the number of visitors to the school. They include representatives from evangelical groups, from the synagogue and the mosque. The parish vicar is normally a regular visitor to the school taking assembly as well as talking to pupils in different classes. Acts of collective worship support religious education, as was seen in the assembly on the theme of the creation story of the Christian faith. Additional artefacts have been acquired to enhance the teaching of the subject but these are limited in quantity and quality.