

INSPECTION REPORT

UMBERLEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Umberleigh

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113171

Headteacher: Mrs Jennifer Bateman

Reporting inspector: Mrs Rowena Onions
OIN: 18354

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th October 2001

Inspection number: 230970

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: County

Age range of pupils: 4-11 years

Gender of pupils: mixed

School address: Umberleigh Primary School
Umberleigh
Devon

Postcode: EX37 9AD

Telephone number: 01769 540362

Fax number: 01769 540362

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Mary Wilson

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18354	Rowena Onions	Registered inspector	English Art and design Information and communication technology Music Religious education The foundation stage Special educational needs	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
19639	Gillian Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Partnership with parents and carers
15409	Dave Whalley	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities	Pupils' welfare, health and safety Quality and range of opportunities for learning

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA Limited
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Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Umberleigh Primary School is a school of well below average size, with 55 pupils on roll. The school caters for pupils from the age of four to eleven years, with a broadly equal number of boys and girls. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school is situated in Umberleigh village. As well as drawing from the village and surrounding rural area, the school attracts a large proportion of its pupils from outside its catchment area. 38 of its pupils are brought to the school from outside its area. A number of these pupils have experienced difficulties settling into other schools. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is well below the national average, at less than two per cent. The pupils enter the reception class with a range of attainment, but overall, this is about average. There are 12 pupils (22 per cent) currently identified on the school's special educational needs register. This is close to the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has pupils with a range of special needs, most of these have mild learning difficulties, but some have more severe learning or behavioural difficulties. The school site and buildings present a number of challenges. Accommodation is cramped, particularly outside classrooms and there are no facilities available for indoor physical education. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for six weeks.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Umberleigh School is a good school overall, with very effective education provided for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils enter the school with average attainments and leave with well above average attainments in English, mathematics and science. Pupils receive good teaching overall. Over their time in school, most make very good progress and achieve very well. The school has been very well led and, even taking into account its well above average costs, it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6 and in art and design across the school. Standards are very good in these subjects. Standards are good throughout the school in history, geography, design and technology and in religious education.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are very positive. They become increasingly mature and responsible.
- The school has benefited from very strong leadership in the past. The new headteacher has made an excellent start in building upon this success.
- Teachers value individuality, but also assist pupils to contribute to the school community.
- The school provides a rich and varied curriculum.

What could be improved

- Standards in aspects of communication, language and literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough in the reception year and standards in reading and in ICT are not high enough in Years 1 and 2.
- Potentially higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as much as they could in English, mathematics and science.
- Some aspects of management, including the way assessment information is used and the role played by subject co-ordinators is not having sufficient impact on school improvement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, improvement since the last inspection in October 1997 has been good. Standards by the age of 11 have risen in English, mathematics and science. The very good quality of teaching has been maintained in Years 3 to 6. Information and communication technology has developed in Years 3 to 6, but remains unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Schemes of work have been completed in all subjects and are assisting the raising of standards. The last inspection report highlighted the lack of facilities for indoor physical education. Although this situation remains, the headteacher and governing body have taken all possible steps to try to provide the facilities.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	B	A	C	well above A average above B average
mathematics	A	C	B	C	average C below average D well below E average
science	A*	C	A	B	

By the end of Year 6, pupils attained very good standards in English. This is in line with a gradual improvement in standards over several years. Standards in mathematics were good and are rising in line with the national trend. Pupils attained very good standards in science. In all three subjects, the 2001 year group made very good progress since their end of Year 2 assessments. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level (level 4) was very good. This demonstrates what was seen during the inspection, that lower attaining pupils are very effectively supported and are doing very well. Although the number of pupils achieving higher levels was below the number in similar schools, analysis shows that, when their level at the end of Year 2 is taken into account, higher attaining pupils achieved very well during years 3 to 6. This is also in line with inspection findings that all pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science. The school has set and generally exceeded targets for attainment in English and mathematics. The current targets are unambitious and should be easily exceeded by the current year group.

Most children make satisfactory progress in their physical and mathematical development over the reception year and generally attain the goals set for them. They achieve well in their creative, personal, social and emotional development and in most aspects of gaining knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the year, they often exceed the goals set. In some important aspects of their communication, language and literacy skills and in information and communication technology, however, they do not do as well and do not meet the goals set.

In 2001, by the age of seven, pupils attained very good standards in writing, compared nationally and good standards when compared with similar schools. Pupils, including the lower attaining, can write independently. Potentially higher attaining pupils, however, do not do as well because the teaching of some of the basic skills is not sufficiently systematic. These pupils do not achieve well enough. Pupils of all abilities do not achieve well enough in reading and standards in 2001 were well below those achieved nationally and well below those attained in similar schools. This situation has been similar over a number of years and is related to the lack of

systematic development of basic skills. In 2001, standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 were below average, both in comparison with schools nationally and with similar schools. There is, however, no evidence that overall standards are below average in most years for the majority of pupils. Potentially higher attaining pupils, however, do not achieve well enough in mathematics. As in Years 3 to 6, lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in mathematics.

Pupils throughout the school attain high standards in art and design. They attain well in history, geography, religious education, design and technology, games and singing. Standards in ICT in Years 1 and 2 are unsatisfactory because pupils have not had enough opportunity to use computers.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like school. They are keen and enthusiastic both in and out of lessons. They join in very well with all the activities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are well mannered and polite. They behave well in class and in the playground.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils become mature and responsible. They show initiative in both their work and socially. Relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils are very positive.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good

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

Throughout the school, there are aspects of teaching that are very positive. Pupils are very well managed, known and valued as individuals and, as a result, discipline is very good, pupils work hard and enjoy their work. In all subjects in Years 3 to 6 and in the subjects in Years 1 and 2 that are taught by a single teacher, good use is made of the knowledge teachers have about individuals and expectations are high. Pupils live up to these expectations and make at least good progress. One particularly strong feature of teaching in the school is the use of specialists to teach their subjects. These subjects are taught with enthusiasm and verve that inspires the pupils to greater effort. English and mathematics are taught by specialists in Years 3 to 6 and are very well taught. Good attention has been given to teaching of most of the skills of literacy and numeracy, although more attention needs to be given to the explicit teaching of spelling in Years 3 and 4. In the reception year and in Years 1 and 2, however, the teaching of these subjects has been the shared responsibility of two teachers. This has resulted in reduced effectiveness. There has been a failure to systematically develop basic skills in reading and in number in mathematics. This has particularly effected the progress made by potentially higher attaining pupils. Throughout the school, lower attaining are well taught, both by teachers and teaching assistants, these pupils learn well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The school provides a good range of opportunities for learning. The curriculum is enriched by the very good use of visits and visitors and by a wide range of clubs and other activities outside lessons. There are, however, some aspects of the curriculum provided for pupils in Years 1 and 2 that are unsatisfactory. The curriculum in ICT does not meet statutory requirements in Years 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. All pupils are assisted to do their best and to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils are presented with a wide range of opportunities to learn to become mature and responsible young people. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. All pupils are known and nurtured as individuals. The school provides a safe and secure environment in which pupils can work and play together. Although good informal use is made of the assessment of pupils' attainments, insufficient use is being made of the data from assessment and testing to set individual targets or to track pupils' progress.
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The school works in full partnership with parents. The quality of communications is very good and parents are made to feel welcome in the school at any time. The contribution parents make to their child's education plays a very positive part in the progress they make.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school has received very strong leadership in the past and this has helped it to develop its own particular ethos and style. The newly appointed headteacher has made an excellent start and has already shown very good leadership in identifying aspects which need to be changed as well as maintaining the ethos developed in the past. The school staff have been very supportive of both headteachers. Subject co-ordinators have in the past had too little responsibility for the way a subject is taught and developed throughout the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. The governors are knowledgeable about the school and support it fully. They play a good part in deciding upon the priorities for the school's future development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The work of the school was appropriately monitored and evaluated by the last headteacher and by some external advisors. The role of the subject co-ordinators in evaluating work in subjects is, however, underdeveloped.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Careful use has been made of funds to the advantage of the pupils. An increasing under-spend of the school's budget has now been reviewed and money is being allocated to some identified priorities. In some aspects, the school looks well at the value it is providing in relation to other schools. There are, however, no formal systems to enable headteacher and governors to evaluate the effects of their spending on the standards attained by the pupils.

The school now has a good number of teachers and teaching assistants to teach the curriculum. The use of staff to teach their specialisms is a particularly strong feature of the staffing of the school. The school's accommodation is bright and as well maintained as possible. It is however unsatisfactory because it lacks indoor physical education facilities. The second classroom space used by the older pupils is very restricted in size and its use reduces access to the library and some of the school's computers. There are sufficient resources to support the teaching of all subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That children like the school. • The quality of the teaching and the progress children make. • The approachability of the school and the information it provides. • The way the school helps children to become mature and responsible and to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive about how their child is getting on • The activities provided outside lessons

behave well. • The way the school is led and managed	
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The team agrees with the parents' positive views. It also finds that the school provides an unusually wide and imaginative range of activities outside lessons. The information the parents receive is full and of good quality.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school with a range of prior experience and attainments. There are significant differences evident in the entry assessments for different year groups of children. Overall, however, the attainment on entry to the school is about average. By the end of their reception year, most children have achieved in a satisfactory way in their mathematical and physical development and they meet the goals set for children of this age. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional, and creative development and in the main, in gaining a knowledge and understanding of the world. In these aspects, they frequently exceed the goals set. In some important aspects in their communication, language and literacy and in development of information and communication technology skills, however, they do not achieve well enough. Potentially higher attaining children also do not achieve as well as they could in their development of skills in calculation.
2. In the 2001, in the Year 2 national tests, pupils achieved standards in writing that were well above those achieved nationally and above those in similar schools. This is in large part because the school is particularly successful in helping pupils, including the lowest attaining, to write independently. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The school is not as successful in ensuring that the potentially higher attaining pupils achieve as well as they could in writing. When compared nationally, the school has a well below average number of pupils attaining the higher level (level 3). This places it in the least successful five percent of similar schools. With minor variations, this is a pattern of attainment that has been maintained over several years and despite being based on small cohort sizes, it describes well the pattern of attainment and achievement seen during the inspection. Potentially higher attaining pupils do not achieve enough in writing because there is too little co-ordinated attention given to the development of skills in spelling and punctuation. In 2001, standards in reading in Year 2 were below those achieved nationally and well below those attained in similar schools. Most pupils do not achieve enough. This is again because the school has not taken a co-ordinated approach to the teaching of basic skills in reading and because an individualised approach to the teaching of reading has not been sufficiently successful. Standards in reading have dropped since the time of the last inspection, but standards in writing, for all but the potentially higher attaining pupils, have risen since this time.
3. In Year 6, compared nationally, pupils attained well above average standards in English. It was in line with results in similar schools. This is in line with a gradual improvement in standards over several years and since the time of the last inspection. The 2001 year group made very good progress since their end of Year 2 assessments. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved very well. Although the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was in line with the national average and well below that in similar schools, analysis of data shows that this higher attaining group have made good progress since the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence is in line with these findings. The current Year 6 group are doing well and should achieve results that continue the improving trend.
4. In 2001, standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 were below average, both in comparison with schools nationally and with similar schools. There is, however, no evidence that overall standards are below average in most years. The evidence from inspection shows that most pupils in Year 2 are attaining standards in line with those expected at this stage of the year and they are achieving in a satisfactory way. In general, the school is successful in assisting pupils with lower attainments to achieve well and the vast majority attain the expected level (level 2) by the end of Year 2. In both 2000 and 2001, the proportion of pupils achieving high standards was well below the national average and in 2001, was in the lowest five percent of

similar schools. This is also borne out by inspection evidence. Potentially higher attaining pupils do not achieve enough, especially in the number aspects of the mathematics curriculum.

5. In 2001, standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 were above those attained nationally and in line with those in similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level (level 4) was very good. This demonstrates what was seen during the inspection, that pupils with lower attainments are very effectively supported and are doing very well. The percentage of pupils who attained higher levels was in line with the national average. As in English, although this was below the number in similar schools, analysis shows that, when their level at the end of Year 2 is taken into account, higher attaining pupils achieved very well. An analysis of the tests in recent years shows that the pupils in Year 6 consistently achieve well and that standards have been rising in line with the national trend.
6. The school has set and generally met its targets in English and mathematics. The targets set for the current year are unambitious and should be easily exceeded. The school has not yet devised a system for tracking individual pupils that could be used to calculate targets more precisely, or to amend targets when pupils leave or join the school.
7. The standards in science attained by pupils in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were well above the national average and standards attained in similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was also well above average. Pupils in Year 3 to 6 achieve very well. At the end of Year 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was average. However, the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was well below that attained nationally. Potentially higher attaining pupils do not achieve enough. This is similar to the pattern from previous years and at the time of the last inspection. Although the number of pupils in each year group is small, the evidence from the inspection is in line with the assessment results and throughout the school the results represent a fair picture of attainment and achievement in science in the school.
8. Pupils throughout the school attain high standards in art and design. They attain above expected levels in history, geography, religious education, design and technology, games and singing. In all these subjects, pupils of all abilities achieve well. Standards in most aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 3 to 6 and in other aspects of physical education throughout the school are at the expected level. Standards in ICT in Year 1 and 2 are below the nationally expected level because the curriculum has not met statutory requirements and pupils have not had opportunities to learn about many aspects of the ICT curriculum. Their achievement is, therefore, unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes to school are very good. There is an enthusiasm for learning, and high levels of concentration and attention to their work, which is demonstrated across many lessons. In a Year 4 English lesson, for example, the teacher generated a joy in learning that pupils found infectious, questioning her eagerly for more information. Pupils are very interested and involved in their activities, for instance in Year 6 in mathematics, when pupils try very hard to do their best and are keen to succeed. This helps them to achieve well.

In art, in lessons across all years, pupils are very responsive and they gain in skill. Even younger pupils in Year 1 show a developing individuality of style, for example in drawing and painting houses inspired by the work of Gaudi, which they can discuss with developing confidence and maturity.

10. Behaviour is very good, and there are no exclusions from school. All pupils behave well, including those who have experienced difficulties in other schools. This reflects the school's deep commitment to inclusion and success in integrating such pupils. The high quality of behaviour is seen in all lessons and in the playground. Bullying is very rare, as other pupils do not allow it.
11. The personal development of pupils and the quality of the relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils' understanding of the impact of their actions on others is well developed, for example, in the playground in ensuring the safety of others (including inspectors!) when playing a ball game. In a religious education lesson, pupils' writing showed an understanding of how a better world could be created. Pupils show very good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This was seen in a lesson on Buddha with younger pupils. The pupils worked well together and discussed their feelings with maturity beyond their years. In design and technology, pupils are mature and sensible when working with tools and this helps them to learn safely. The school very successfully engenders increasing initiative and personal responsibility in the pupils. The way pupils develop individually, while remaining part of the school community, is a strength of the school. This is partly achieved through encouraging self-assessment and through the open process of target setting in some subjects. It is also a product of the very strong ethos of valuing all people associated with school for their individual qualities.
12. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Attendance is well above the national average in spite of the disruption during the inspection year caused by foot and mouth disease in the area. Unauthorised absences are very rare.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. Overall, teaching in the school is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection and seven out of ten lessons were good or better. The judgements made about the quality of teaching was based in part on these observations but also on the evidence available from pupils' ongoing work and teachers' planning.
14. Teaching of children in the foundation stage is satisfactory overall. The children have been thoughtfully managed and have settled well into school life and, in most aspects, have been well prepared for their continued education in Years 1 and 2. The children are taught alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils in a mixed key stage class. Activities are well thought out to fulfil the basic requirements of the curriculum for the foundation stage and to fit with the activities undertaken by the rest of the class. Existing planning does not, however, clearly show either the intended learning for these children, nor how this will be developed as the children move through the year. As a result, some children, particularly the higher attaining, have not been sufficiently highly challenged and have not made the progress they could in some aspects of their development. These include, linking sounds with letters and the early reading and writing aspects of communication, language and literacy, in calculating, and in their ICT development.
15. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. There are some subjects in which teaching and learning are good and in these, the quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. These are largely the

ones that are the sole responsibility of one teacher and include history, geography, design and technology, aspects of music and physical education, and religious education. The teaching of art and design is very good. The subject expertise and enthusiasm possessed by the teachers in these subjects is a significant factor in the successful way in which pupils are taught. In all subjects, pupils are well managed. They are treated with respect and are expected to show the same respect for others. This ensures that there is a good atmosphere for learning and successfully encourages pupils to take a positive and confident approach to their work. All lessons are conscientiously planned. Care is taken at the beginning of units of work to show what each group of pupils will learn by the end of the unit. Current lesson planning is, however, less successful. It is rather onerous because it requires the writing of considerable detail about the activities to be undertaken, yet it does not consistently show the different learning for pupils of different ages and levels of attainment in the class. This has particular impact on learning in English, mathematics and science when potentially higher attaining pupils do not always learn enough. Teachers use a good variety of ways of teaching the children. For example, in a music lesson, there was good use made of demonstration, practical participation, talk, evaluation and action to improve performance. Pupils are often given opportunities to work in pairs or groups as well as on their own. They respond positively to this and generally co-operate well. There are occasions, however, when they find working independently of an adult difficult and they seek adult attention too frequently.

16. Where the teaching is at its best, expectations are high. In an art lesson, for example, pupils were expected to use brushes and paints with a care usually seen in lessons with older pupils. Pupils rose to this expectation and showed themselves very capable of doing this. Evidence from work from previous years, national tests and talking with pupils shows that teaching has not been as successful where responsibility for teaching a subject has been shared and lesson observations show that this remains the case. This is true in the development of number skills in mathematics and in the teaching of basic skills in reading and writing in English. Although efforts are made to coordinate the provision, teachers often have difficulty in building pupils' skills and knowledge systematically and as a result, pupils do not learn well enough. Because the lower attaining pupils are given good quality additional support including from teaching assistants, this does not have a significant effect on the achievement of these pupils. It has its greatest impact for the higher attaining pupils. In addition, ongoing assessment that is very successfully used in many individually taught subjects in Years 1 and 2, is not effectively used in shared subjects and expectations are sometimes too low as a consequence. Overall, the teaching of speaking and listening and writing in English, in mathematics, and in science is satisfactory, but the teaching of reading is unsatisfactory because too little emphasis has been placed on the daily systematic teaching of skills such as phonics. The current relative weakness in the effect of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has been identified by the new headteacher and discussions begun before the inspection about how this matter should be resolved and improved. Where ICT is taught in Years 1 and 2, the teaching is satisfactory, but too little of the curriculum is taught to ensure that pupils learn at an appropriate level.
17. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is very good overall and has been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching is very good in English, mathematics, science and art and design. It is good in history,

geography, design and technology, ICT, religious education, games and singing. Its success is particularly characterised by the effective use of staff to teach their own specialisms. The subject knowledge of the staff, together with the enthusiasm they have for their subjects are instrumental in ensuring that all pupils are inspired to learn well. As in Years 1 and 2, pupils are well managed and the teachers encourage pupils to integrate an element of individuality into their work. For example, in a religious education lesson, pupils were confident in slightly altering the set task to identify ways in which the world could be preserved and improved by human action, and they identified both positives and negatives in this. Pupils who have experienced difficulty in other schools are particularly well managed and rapidly become fully integrated into the school community and learn well. Planning successfully leads teaching and teachers take great care to identify for pupils not only what they are going to learn, but also how they will identify that the learning has happened. This, together with very good use of targets, both general and specific to pieces of work, enables pupils to have a good understanding of their own learning and to know how they can improve. The written planning itself, however, like that for Years 1 and 2, is burdensome, yet does not clearly identify what pupils of different age groups will learn.

18. Teachers use a wide variety of ways of teaching the pupils. These include, the effective use of demonstration, for example, the teacher demonstrating the writing of similes in English or techniques in art, the use of practical activity and first hand experience, as well as direct teaching. ICT is used appropriately to support learning in a number of subjects. Pupils have, for example, used the computer to research information about the Romans for their work in history. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils. They demonstrate clearly how these expectations can be met and, in the main, pupils live up to them. In Years 3 to 6, appropriate attention is given to teaching of most of the basic skills involved with reading, writing and mathematics. There is, however, a need to include more direct teaching of skills in spelling, especially in Years 3 and 4. Throughout the school, good use is made of the staff and resources available. The teaching assistants are well used, particularly in the support of pupils with special educational needs. Their good teaching contributes well to the progress these pupils make.
19. Throughout the school, good use is made of homework to extend learning in school. This work is well designed and the clear information given to parents in the weekly newsletter is particularly effective in ensuring that homework plays a positive part in the pupils' learning.

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

20. The curriculum for children in the reception year is satisfactory. It meets the requirements for the foundation stage. In Years 1 and 2, although the curriculum is broad and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, it is unsatisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2, the ICT curriculum has not been taught frequently enough for pupils to have covered the statutory curriculum, either in the subject itself, or for its use in other subjects. The school has introduced many of the aspects of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2, however, literacy and numeracy are not timetabled on one day each week and this reduces the effectiveness of their implementation. This has had a particular effect in reducing the quality of the provision for the teaching of reading, with subsequent effect on attainment. In addition, an afternoon each week is dedicated to pupils undertaking activities with children who are not yet of school age. Whilst this is very good provision for these young children, and assists a smooth transfer into school, the activities

are not sufficiently stretching for the pupils of statutory school age, particularly those in Year 2. Although the curriculum for Years 1 and 2 has these weaknesses, it also has some significant strengths. The provision for the teaching of creative subjects and of the humanities is strong and is enhanced by the use of specialist teachers.

21. In Years 3 to 6, the curriculum is broad and balanced. It covers all the required elements of the National Curriculum and religious education and much of it provides a rich and rewarding curriculum for the pupils. The high quality specialist teaching supports this good curriculum. Sex education is taught effectively as part of the good personal, social and health education curriculum. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully introduced in Years 3 to 6, where they are helping to improve the breadth of curriculum experience for all pupils. Staff in Years 3 to 6 have worked successfully to ensure that pupils received an appropriate curriculum whether they were taught as a whole group or in two smaller age related groups. Recent changes in staffing have resulted in modifications to the organisation of classes within Years 3 to 6 and this means that pupils are now being taught in the smaller groups for most subjects. This is already paying dividends and the school is well placed to further improve the education provided.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Pupils receive a suitable balance of in-class and additional support from their teachers and the teaching assistants. The individual education plans produced for pupils with special educational needs are good with clear targets for each pupil to achieve. The school is rightly proud of the ways in which all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. All pupils are valued as individuals and provision is made for all to fully access the curriculum. As pupils enter the school, they are made to feel valued and welcome. Their individuality is celebrated, but they are encouraged to play an active part in the school community.
23. The school offers a rich and varied number of extracurricular activities for the pupils. The variety is impressive for any size of school. Given the limited staffing and small numbers of helpers on which the school can call, the provision is excellent. Clubs that pupils are able to attend range from a 'Wake-up Club' where pupils can have early-morning exercise before school, to a website club. A woodcarving club is making totem poles in the school grounds. During the inspection, the hockey club was very well attended. Over the year, the school provides a very inventive selection of activities, including a rocket club and a hobby-horse pony club! The range of clubs makes an extremely positive contribution to school life. The number of sporting clubs, for example, plays a significant part in the high standards reached by the school teams when competing against other schools. The pupils are enthusiastic about the provision, and the skills they learn enhance and extend those skills they learn in lessons. They make an active contribution by running some of the clubs themselves.
24. The planned programme for pupils' personal education is very good. A good scheme of work provides very good opportunities for pupils to find out about a number of health and social matters. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to discuss issues concerning their health, safety and, for older pupils, aspects of their lives that may require them to make personal decisions, including discussing the misuse of drugs.
25. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. School and class assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own experiences

and to think about others. Assemblies meet requirements. They are well led and provide valuable experiences for the pupils. The pupils are keen to talk about their lives and the things they value. They are encouraged to value special moments both in school, for example, being able to see a wild bird trust a human being and at home, for example, through talking about the birth of a baby brother or sister.

26. The provision for promoting pupils' moral development is very good. The school's aims promote a high moral sense. All adults support these aims and there are positive role models throughout the school. The caring ethos that permeates the work of the school encourages all pupils to respect others and to care for the well being of others in the school. There is little or no damage to property and pupils look after each other's things well. During the inspection, for example, one pupil left a calculator outside at playtime. The other pupils knew who it belonged to and did not attempt to move it from where it had been placed. Even the youngest pupils are taught to know and act on the difference between right and wrong. Older pupils are given good opportunities to consider moral issues within school and in the wider community. During the recent foot and mouth crisis, for example, the older pupils discussed the moral issues involved, including the ethics of livestock farming.
27. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. All pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves. This extends to their actions around school and for their learning in the classroom. Because they are taught to understand the responsibilities of living within a community, they readily assist with the devising of school and class rules and accept and adhere to these. Pupils are treated as responsible people by the adults and this is repaid in the very positive attitudes demonstrated.
28. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Pupils learn about their local culture through involvement with the local community and visits to places of interest. There have, for instance, been visits from local people to give an additional perspective on many aspects of life in Umberleigh in the past. Older pupils have visited Torrington as part of their studies about the Civil War and its impact in their part of England. Through their work in art, music, literature and religions pupils learn about a variety of different cultures. Through the study of different religions, both in other countries and in England, pupils learn about the cultural diversity of this country. Despite the limited opportunities for pupils to see the diversity of cultures and beliefs at first hand, the school strives to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of others and are tolerant to their beliefs.
29. Umberleigh School is a focal point of the local community. The school has cultivated very close links and community involvement in school life is actively sought and encouraged. Parents and local people help in school on a regular basis. The school makes very good use of local artists and craftspeople. Members of the local farming community also help, deepening the links between the school and the main local industry. This community involvement is one of the strengths of the school.
30. The school has developed very constructive relationships with other local schools. Many of the teachers at Umberleigh also teach in other local primary schools. This enables a very productive exchange of ideas and expertise that is mutually beneficial. It helps to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the school. There are very good links with the local playgroup that help to smooth the transition for children entering the school and with the secondary schools to which they transfer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. Good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare have been maintained since the last inspection. The inspection supports the views of parents that pupils are well cared for, that staff understand the pupils well, and that the raising of self-esteem is something the school does very effectively. This care is fundamental to the progress the pupils make in school. A culture of including and nurturing all who join the school is illustrative of this. The headteacher has taken due responsibility for child protection and procedures are included in a staff handbook to ensure that new or supply teachers are appropriately informed. Procedures for health and safety are satisfactory and there are no significant outstanding issues.
32. There are very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Registers are well kept and parents are aware of attendance procedures. In spite of the wide and diverse catchment area, punctuality is good and where necessary, this is well supported by good links with local social services. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The policy is brief but the emphasis is on positive action taken appropriately. The ethos of the school promotes very good behaviour through a deep felt care and respect for others. There is good use of circle time, assemblies and personal, social and health education to support this. Behaviour is monitored if necessary and pupils have targets if required. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Bullying is rare and parents confirm that the school deals this with very well so that any issues are promptly resolved.
33. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good and have a high status within the school. Although procedures are informal, they are very strong. The school encourages pupils to be reflective and lessons demonstrate a will to develop maturity in pupils. There are close links with parents and staff have a detailed knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. These are easily shared through regular staff meetings. There are, however, a number of pupils who are presently being educated out of their proper age group. This is an unusual situation for pupils who are not significantly delayed or advanced in their attainments and this provision is not always fully meeting their personal and social needs. There are good links with services such as educational psychology and speech therapy. Personal, social and health education for older pupils, and circle time provide further opportunities to monitor personal development and provide opportunities for guidance and support.
34. When children enter the school, their knowledge and skills are assessed through a baseline assessment. This gives useful information about the developmental stage of the children. In the past, however, the valuable information collected has not been fully utilised. The results are not used sufficiently to identify what children need to learn nor are the results used to show the extent to which children make progress in their learning during the foundation stage. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory in the rest of the school. Teachers analyse the results of national tests taken by pupils in Years 2 and 6. These findings have been used to identify general areas of relative weakness and this information has been used by teachers to inform their teaching particularly in Years 3 to 6. There has, however, been a failure to identify and improve the areas of the

weakness causing the below average standards in reading in Years 1 and 2. Additionally, there are not yet systematic procedures to use data to track the progress made by individual pupils to identify strengths and weaknesses, to set targets and to monitor and improve the quality of the education provided. There is very little formalised assessment or record keeping in the school. In the main, this has little impact on the quality of the education provided. Teachers use their own assessments well in planning further work for pupils. This works well where one teacher teaches a subject, often over a number or all year groups. It is, however, insufficient where teaching of a subject is shared in Years 1 and 2.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents hold very positive views of the school. They are very happy with standards, progress, attitudes, behaviour, homework, parental links and the way the school responds to their concerns. All parents say that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. Although at the parents meeting all parents were very positive about links and communications with the school, a number responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said they did not feel sufficiently well informed about how their child is getting on. The inspection team do not find evidence to support this.
36. The school's links with parents are very effective, and the quality of information provided, particularly about pupils' progress is very good. Parents are very impressed with the annual reports about their child, and find them thorough and detailed. The inspection team confirms this. Excellent comprehensive weekly newsletters include details about homework and the week's diary of events. At the beginning of the term, there is information about the curriculum to be taught that term. These letters also appear on the school's website. There is a useful home/school agreement. Reading logs are used well and parents value these. There is full attendance by parents at consultation evenings to discuss their child's progress, and the school's 'open door' policy actively encourages the sharing of achievements and concerns. There are monthly 'drop in', and termly meetings. All concerns are treated positively, and parents say that staff are very approachable. School documentation for parents is very comprehensive. Parents of pupils who experience difficulties, including those with special educational needs, are fully informed partners in their child's education.
37. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. They make a very good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. This is facilitated by the high quality of information and communication. Parents are unanimous in their support for the school's approach to homework, and due to the weekly newsletter, they are clear about expectations and are supportive. There is a high level of parental involvement. Parents are encouraged to help as much as they like and mostly help with practical lessons, with swimming and with trips. The Friends Association is very active and makes a valuable and valued contribution to both the school's resources and to the social life of the school.
38. The strong partnership with parents has been maintained since the last inspection. The school is sufficiently well regarded by parents to mean that a significant number of pupils come from outside the designated area.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. The overall leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are good. The last headteacher (who left half a term before the inspection) provided strong leadership and led the school into developing its own character and style. This is one that is greatly appreciated by the parents. The very strong ethos of inclusion of all pupils as individuals has been strongly promoted by this headteacher. This headteacher had a very clear vision for the school and its further development. The current headteacher shares this vision, and in addition, has ideas about ways in which she can lead the staff to further improve the education provided. There has been a smooth handover of responsibility and the current headteacher has made an excellent start and has already begun to take action where she feels it to be advantageous. She has, for example, identified that some of the surplus budget could be spent well in splitting the large Year 3 to 6 class into two smaller ones more frequently. She has been very well supported in doing this by both governors and staff and this indicates that the school is well placed to move forward in a positive and united way.
40. The school has monitored and evaluated its work in a satisfactory way. The staff work very well together as a team. Each has areas of responsibility. Whole school subject leadership has, however, been under developed in subjects that are not taught by a single teacher. This has contributed to the failure to identify relative weaknesses in some subjects. There has been some very useful monitoring of the work of the school, by both headteachers and by external advisors. Other informal monitoring takes place because most teachers teach in all classes in the school. This enables staff to have a good overview of the work going on. Some subject co-ordinators have also assembled portfolios of completed work that are useful in setting standards for the subject, as well as demonstrating the breadth of curriculum provided. There has been, however, no formal monitoring of teaching or planning by subject co-ordinators. The use of data to set targets and to track individual pupils has not yet been part of the job descriptions of the English, mathematics and science co-ordinators and has not yet been sufficient part of a whole school approach to school improvement. The lack of whole school co-ordination has been identified by the new headteacher. Some co-ordinators have already taken on new responsibilities for all the whole school and an extension of this to some other subjects is now needed. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and organised.
41. Overall, reasonable care is taken to ensure that the bureaucracy that can be associated with the profession does not over burden teachers. Current lesson planning, however, is burdensome because it requires teachers to write in great detail what they will do in each lesson. This is unnecessary in a school where teachers are experienced, good or very good teachers. This burden causes some of the planning to fail to show some more important features of what pupils of different ages and abilities in the class will learn.
42. The governing body makes a very positive contribution to the school. They are very well organised and business like. They provide the right level of challenge as well as support. They have well developed systems for gaining information about the school and equally good systems for evaluating and communicating what they have found out. They have compared the school's performance with that of similar schools and have sought the views of parents, both formally and informally. They have begun to use this information in coming to conclusions about the value the school is providing.

43. The governing body, through its finance committee, rigorously monitors the school budget. All governors take these responsibilities very seriously. They have been aware of the rising budget under-spend. This was due largely to the rising, but unplanned, admissions to the school. Each budget forecast indicated that this under-spend would diminish. However, the increased number of pupils resulted in a steady rise in the annual under-spend. This year the governing body has decided to use the surplus funding to increase the level of staffing, providing additional teaching in Years 3 to 6. Whilst the governing body has been very effective in managing the budget once set, it has not yet fully grasped the ways in which a 'best value' approach can be used to identify priorities for spending throughout the school. They already, for example, have procedures to ensure good value with competitive tendering. At present, however, there are no procedures to monitor the impact and effectiveness of spending decisions such as the increase in teaching staff. Money allocated to the school for specific purposes has been well spent. For example, money to train teachers in ICT skills has been used well and the training of teaching assistants has been usefully included.
44. The routine day-to-day finances of the school are very effectively monitored and managed by the school administrative assistant with good support from the local education authority. A recent audit by the local education authority showed that most procedures were working very effectively. The school has already implemented the few suggestions for improvement. The finance committee of the governing body is given good information about the routine expenditure and is able to monitor the school budget.
45. The school's accommodation is attractive and well maintained. Its restricted size, however, places certain constraints on the curriculum that can be provided. The school makes sure that statutory requirements are met, but the pupils' experience of activities such as gymnastics and dance has to be restricted to outdoor activities. The new class is accommodated in the school library. This provides only cramped accommodation for the class and restricts free use of the library and the computers it houses. This has an impact on the pupils' ability to learn to use both. In addition, the lack of a private space for the headteacher to conduct confidential or sensitive business hinders the smooth running of day-to-day administration when the school administrative assistant has to move away from her office space. In the main, the school has adequate resources to allow the teaching of all subjects of the curriculum, however, the locations of computers restricts their use by younger pupils. The current stock of books for pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 to use when learning to read is too restricted and the books are not always of sufficient quality to encourage pupils in their reading.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. In order to further improve the education provided by the school, the staff and governors should:

(1) Improve standards in aspects of communication, language and literacy and in information and communication technology (ICT) in the reception year and standards in reading and in ICT in Years 1 and 2 by:

- Co-ordinating the teaching of all subjects in the reception year and in Years 1 and 2, so that pupils are able to systematically build on what they already know, understand and can do.
- Holding higher expectations for attainment in these aspects of the curriculum.
- Reviewing and revising the way reading is taught and practised through an individualised approach.
- Planning and implementing a programme for the teaching of basic skills in phonics.
- Ensuring that the teaching of skills in ICT is regularly timetabled and that pupils have opportunity to use their skills while working in other subjects.

(Paragraphs 14-16,49,51,57,58,91)

(2) Raise the levels of attainment and achievement of potentially higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

- Ensuring that appropriately high expectations are held for these pupils.
- Indicating clearly on planning what potentially higher attaining pupils will learn in a unit of work and in lessons.
- Allocating sufficient time to science to ensure that the subject can be studied in sufficient depth.

(Paragraphs 15,16, 57,58,61,63, 70,72)

(3) Further improve the management of the school by:

- Using of data from assessment on entry to the school, end of Year 2 and Year 6 tests and from assessments in other year groups to set targets for individual pupils and to track their progress.

(Paragraphs 34,40)

- Identifying and acting to develop strengths and improve weaknesses that these assessments reveal.
- Ensuring that subject leadership includes responsibility for the whole school development of subjects.

(Paragraphs 40,60,67,73,94)

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

Ensure that the time teachers spend in planning is efficiently and effectively used.
(Paragraphs 15,17,41)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	9	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0	22	50	28	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		55
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		12

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year			Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001			12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above		10	12	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (80)	100 (100)	92 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above		11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (100)	92 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year			Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001			8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above		8	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (75)	88 (75)	100 (88)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above		3	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (88)	100 (88)	100 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Separate data is not given for the performance of girls and boys because there were less than eight of each in both year groups.

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	52
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.4
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	150,725
Total expenditure	155,512
Expenditure per pupil	2,827
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,079
Balance carried forward to next year	22,292

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	52
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	51	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	55	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	45	0	0	5
The teaching is good.	72	25	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	25	18	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	10	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	20	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	35	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	45	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	45	15	0	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

47. At the time of the inspection, there was only one reception age child attending the school full time and one attending part time. These children had been in the school a very small number of weeks. Evidence was, therefore, gathered from observations of pupils in their first half term of Year 1, through scrutiny of records and planning for the previous term. Baseline assessments from the previous three years were examined and information was gathered during the visit of the 'early years group' (children from ages three to four from the local playgroup) to the school during the inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

48. The children enter the school with a range of personal, social and emotional skills, but overall their development is at an average stage. They are well taught. The friendly 'family' atmosphere in the school, together with the good role models they are set by the older pupils in the class, help them to settle into school quickly. They become happy and well motivated. They are given active encouragement by adults to become increasingly independent and to take care of their own needs. They gain in confidence and in willingness to undertake new activities. By the end of the year, the vast majority have reached and exceeded the goals that are set for children at the end of the foundation stage and, because they have been well taught, have achieved well in this aspect.

Communication, language and literacy

49. Assessments of the children when they enter the school show that year on year, as a group, they have differing levels of attainment in communication language and literacy. The current Year 1 group, for example, had a below average profile in this aspect, while the current Year 2 had an average profile. The children are given good opportunities to develop their spoken communication through conversation about their work and play. Teachers and teaching assistants are very good at listening to the children, respecting what they say and modelling both questions and answers. As a consequence, the children become increasingly articulate. They are also given good opportunities to listen and respond to stories. During the inspection, the reception age children greatly enjoyed listening to the story 'The Train Ride', they listened with concentration and were happy to attempt to move with the rhythm of the story. There are aspects of communication, language and literacy, however, where children are not given sufficiently well structured opportunities to develop and expectations are not sufficiently high. There are not, for example, sufficiently regular or rigorously planned opportunities for children to develop their phonic knowledge or to learn a range of sight vocabulary and few can use these skills to write simple words correctly or to attempt plausible efforts at more complex words. The lack of this knowledge also inhibits their ability to read simple texts. In these aspects, teaching has been unsatisfactory and by the end of the reception year, the children have not reached the goals set for them and have not achieved as much as they could.

Mathematical development

50. As with communication, language and literacy, the children enter the school with different levels of attainment and the group profile differs year on year. In most areas of their mathematical development, the children have received sound teaching and have achieved in a satisfactory way. Good opportunities are provided for the children to undertake practical activities, for example, using different ways of measuring to decide whether objects are longer or shorter than each other. They are taught to count and to recognise and use numerals. They are encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary correctly and to talk about their work. The majority have achieved in a satisfactory way over the year and have now attained the early learning goals for shape, space and measures and in counting. The teaching of these children is, however, split between two teachers. This has caused a lack of systematic development of number skills and many pupils in the current year 1 groups did not meet the early learning goals for calculations. The planning for this group fails to recognise the differing potential attainment of the children and expectations are not always sufficiently high. Some children, particularly the potentially higher attaining, have not been enabled to make the progress of which they are capable.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

51. Children enter the school with differing experiences of the world. Most aspects of the development of knowledge and understanding of the world are well taught and the children achieve well in these and most attain or exceed the goals set by the end of their foundation year. The children learn about their own environment, for example, looking at houses in Umberleigh, listening to adults talking about their own lives in the village and through such experiences, the children develop good concepts of time and place. They are taught to observe closely and to question what they see. In these aspects, they benefit from being part of a class in which older pupils are undertaking scientific activities. By the end of the foundation year, the children have met the goal set for them and have achieved well. Teaching is, however, unsatisfactory in the area of developing information and communication technology skills. This is because they have not been given sufficient structured opportunity to use items such as computers or programmable toys. Most do not meet the goal set in this area.

Physical development

52. There were very limited opportunities during the inspection to observe the children engaged in physical activity. Records and planning show that children are given appropriate opportunities to undertake such activity and that they develop in at least a satisfactory way.

Creative development

53. Art and music are well taught and once again, the children in the foundation stage benefit from being part of a group of older pupils. Activities are well structured and expectations are high. Children develop both good manipulative skills and an ability to make very good quality representations of things they see. A structured approach to singing and other aspects of music is paying dividends and the Year 1 pupils can already use a simple notation to guide their singing and playing. The children are imaginative and confident in all aspects of creative development and by the end of the reception year have met and exceeded the goals set and have achieved very well.

ENGLISH

54. Children enter Year 1 with a range of attainments in English, but in many important aspects, they are below average. By the end of Year 6, pupils have attained well above average standards in all aspects of English. They have, therefore, achieved very well over their time in the school. This is confirmed by the national test results. In Years 3 to 6, standards have risen since the time of the last inspection. Standards in writing have also improved in Years 1 and 2. Although standards in reading have not dropped in Year 2, they have not improved in the way that they have nationally.
55. During Years 1 and 2, pupils have achieved well in learning to speak and to listen. By the end of Year 2, they can talk confidently and fluently about their work in school and their lives at home. They are, for example, able to describe work they have undertaken and to use a good range of subject specific vocabulary while doing this. When talking about music, for example, they talked of being aware of the pulse

and the tempo of different songs they had learned. In this, they have above average attainment. They are less good at listening to each other or to adults when in larger groups. In both instances, they are inclined to follow their own agenda. By the end of Year 2 their attainment in listening is average. Pupils achieve very well in both aspects of speaking and listening in Years 3 to 6. By the time they are in Year 6, they can hold mature conversations, discussing issues such as the rights and wrongs of war or the feelings of a character in a book. They listen well to each other and to adults and consider what they say before replying. The vocabulary they use is mature and specific.

56. In reading, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve enough. This is unsatisfactory. Insufficient focus is given to the teaching of the underlying skills and as a consequence, pupils do not independently use the complete range of strategies open to them when reading. They do not readily combine strategies to use, for example, both phonic information and information about context or from pictures, to help them read an unknown word. They lack the fluency usually seen in pupils of this age. As a result, they find talking about what they have read difficult, even though when the text is read to them they have no difficulty in understanding its meaning. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well. They gain a fluency and understanding that first matches expectations and then exceeds them. By the end of Year 4, pupils are reading at an average level. They are able to read new words confidently using the context in which they find them. They are still hesitant about using their knowledge of letter sounds (phonics) to read words that cannot be accessed by context, for example, when reading names aloud. They are able to discuss their likes and dislikes and to name favourite authors. In class, they begin to show that they can extract meaning deeper than the words themselves say, for example, being able to identify the feelings of the writer of a poem they were studying. By Year 6, pupils read fluently and with some expression, but once again are sometimes hesitant when reading names. They have developed good knowledge of books. They are able, for example, to explain that they can identify the genre of a book by looking at the type of language used in the blurb. Higher attaining pupils are able to take this further, for example, one pupil was able to distinguish the style of the writer of the book they were reading from Enid Blyton by saying that the writer wrote in more depth about characters. Pupils are able to use their reading skills when working in other subjects. They know how to use information books when researching information and can select from what they read to answer questions that they have posed for themselves or that have been posed by others.
57. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to write independently and for different purposes. They can, for example, write to retell stories, to write letters and to write captions or longer information texts. Their writing, however, lacks the accuracy that would lift it into a higher level of attainment. Pupils do not have sufficiently robust knowledge of how to build words using phonics, nor are they sufficiently accurate in spelling familiar common words. Pupils begin to use punctuation, such as full stops, capital letters and speech marks, but once again their level of accuracy is not sufficient to allow them to achieve higher levels. Pupils' handwriting is mostly joined and is legible. It is not, however, sufficiently neat or well formed. In the main, pupils achieve in a satisfactory way in writing, but a number of potentially higher attaining pupils do not achieve as much as they could. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well. By the time they leave the school they are attaining good standards overall. They are able to write, adjusting the tone of their writing according to its outcome. They

can, for example, write a formal letter using formal tone, or can write a letter to a friend using informal language. They can use writing to assemble information, both in their work in English and in their work in other subjects. Their writing in science, for example, is accurate and uses correct scientific vocabulary. Handwriting and spelling gradually improve and the former is good by the time the pupils leave the school. Although standards in spelling are satisfactory, pupils do not achieve as highly in this aspect of writing as they do in its other aspects and the lack of initial training is evident right through the school.

58. Overall, teaching of English is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Over the two years, pupils have been actively encouraged to develop their spoken language through the provision of opportunities for talk. Pupils are enthused about books and stories and learn to like to listen and to want to write for themselves. Pupils are well managed and discipline is good. This creates an atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate on their work. In the past, however, there has not been a systematic enough approach to the teaching of basic skills and this situation remains in the current term. This is in part because two teachers take the class. As a result, the full implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has not been totally successful. Aspects such as the systematic teaching of reading and spelling skills and strategies are not undertaken sufficiently often or sufficiently rigorously to help the pupils make the kind of progress seen in other schools. The school's individual approach to the teaching of reading has not been sufficiently successful. In addition, pupils are not taught literacy every day and, as results demonstrate, standards, particularly in reading and for potentially higher attaining pupils, are not good enough. Expectations for the progress of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately high. These pupils are well supported, often through the good work of teaching assistants, and this enables them to attain good standards by the end of. Expectations for potentially higher attaining pupils are, however, not sufficiently high, either of the speed at which they will work or the outcomes of their efforts. This combines with the lack of co-ordinated teaching of basic skills to mean that these pupils do not make enough progress.
59. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good. The teacher is a subject specialist and is very enthusiastic about her subject. This is communicated very well to the pupils, who are inspired to do well. Lessons are well thought out and often contain imaginative teaching methods. A good variety of ways of teaching is used. In one lesson, for example, older pupils were delighted by a dramatic reading of a poem about a crow, were assisted to look at the words and simile used in the poem, before being introduced to a pet crow. This inspired the successful writing of their own similes. Expectations are high and pupils strive to achieve them. There is very good use of assessment particularly in the use of this to assist pupils to assess their own work and to gain an increasing understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses. The teacher uses marking very well to this end. Skills such as spelling are regularly practised, however, there is too little direct teaching of associated knowledge, especially for the pupils in Years 3 and 4, whose attainment in this is not always sufficiently good.
60. The leadership of English has been fragmented and whole school co-ordination has been unsatisfactory. As a result, some of the inadequacies in Years 1 and 2 have not been picked up. Some use of the analysis of data has been undertaken in Years 3 to 6 and the teacher has used knowledge gained from the analysis of national tests well to inform her own teaching. Some testing of pupils in Years 3 to 6 has

been undertaken, but the information obtained has not yet been used to set targets year on year for individual pupils and to track their development. Some monitoring of the quality of teaching has been done, but this has not had sufficient impact, especially in Years 1 and 2. The newly appointed headteacher has already begun some analysis of data, for example, collecting and analysing data about pupils at the end of the foundation stage (at the beginning of Year 1) and at the end of Year 2. From this she had already identified the under achievement in reading and had begun to consider ways in which this could be remedied. In the main, the subject is adequately resourced, but the provision of reading books in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory, both in quality and quantity.

MATHEMATICS

61. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' work shows that they have covered an appropriate range of mathematics and that they attain average standards. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils are generally able to add and subtract numbers to 20, and count accurately well beyond this. The potentially higher attaining pupils enjoy working with number and are fascinated with large numbers, but they get a little confused at times when using numbers larger than 100. They are able to use a ruler accurately to measure objects up to 30 centimetres. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to estimate lengths in centimetres. The pupils in Year 1 have developed a sound understanding of number. They all count accurately to 10, and most are confident in counting to at least 20. They can measure accurately by comparing one length with another. They are developing an interest in the number system. The achievement of average attaining pupils is satisfactory, and by the time they leave Year 2, they have developed a sound level of competence in number enabling them to progress further. Lower attaining pupils are well supported in class by both teachers and the teaching assistant and they are helped to achieve well. Potentially higher attaining pupils, however, do not achieve as well as they should because there is a failure to build upon prior knowledge systematically.
62. In Years 3 to 6, standards have risen since the last inspection. All pupils achieve very well and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. The workbooks from previous years show a very good range of work, with pupils developing very good mathematical strategies to tackle problems. The oldest pupils have a good understanding of the number system. They are able to use their knowledge of number to multiply and divide numbers accurately and quickly. Their understanding of place value is sufficiently secure for them to deal effectively with negative numbers and decimals. They are able to work out percentages of numbers, such as the percentage discount of a product. Many pupils are able to give mature and sensible explanations of their reasoning in working out a mathematical problem.
63. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. The teaching of mathematics is shared by more than one teacher in the Year 1 and 2 class and this creates a difference in the quality of the provision in different aspects of the mathematics curriculum. In individual lessons, teaching is often good. Teachers use a good range of methods to interest and teach the pupils. Practical activity is well used, for example, in one lesson, pupils were asked to measure objects in the classroom using rulers, as well as items such as lengths of ribbon. Discipline is well maintained and the pupils are able to relax and learn in a

supportive setting. Where aspects of mathematics are easily separately identified, for example shape or measures, they are usually taught by one teacher. When this is the case, the teacher is aware of prior learning, there is a planned and effective building of knowledge and understanding in the aspect. Good attention is given to differing ages and abilities in these sessions. Pupils then make good progress. Where an aspect is not easily identified, for example, in number, teachers are less able to know the detailed strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils. This has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Expectations are not always sufficiently high especially of the potentially higher attaining pupils.

64. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 3 to 6. In these year groups, the very good subject expertise of the teacher and his infectious enthusiasm helps pupils to enjoy mathematics and promotes very effective learning. As a consequence, the oldest pupils have a real fascination with solving mathematical problems. They work with sustained effort in a mature and sensible way to solve them. The oldest pupils, for example, were developing nets to make three-dimensional mathematical shapes. They threw themselves into the work with enthusiasm, treating the task as an exciting challenge. They were excited when they made a new discovery about the nets they were making. This infectious desire to learn permeated the whole group of pupils and helped to make their learning very effective. The basic skills are very well taught. Their secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics makes it easy for the majority of pupils to enjoy their learning. The teacher knows the strengths and weaknesses of each pupil well. In lessons, the pupils know that their teacher expects them to achieve high standards. There is an effective partnership in the learning. The pupils like their teacher, and know that the work given will help them to improve their standards in mathematics. Consequently, they try hard to do their best and respond well to the challenges given.
65. The teacher uses a good range of ways of teaching the pupils, the range of work includes an emphasis on pupils learning through a variety of practical investigations. As a result, pupils are able to consolidate and extend their mathematical skills by exploring for themselves in different ways. They also develop a confidence in mathematics that helps them when solving new problems in a wide range of different contexts. They use the mathematics skills in different subjects, for example when measuring temperatures and plotting graphs in science, or measuring accurately in design technology. There is, however, a good balance of mathematics, between the practical investigations and the learning of basic skills of number.
66. Throughout the school, relationships are very strong. Pupils are well managed and discipline is good. The pupils are kept informed about what they have learnt and are able to monitor their own progress. This helps the older pupils in particular to become reflective learners and to demonstrate a mature approach to their work. Their teachers and the teaching assistants give pupils with special educational needs good support and they make good progress.
67. The leadership and management in mathematics have been informal but overall have been satisfactory. The management has been shared between a teacher in Years 1 and 2 and another in Years 3 to 6. This has resulted in a lack of awareness of the quality of mathematics across the whole school. Both teachers are very conscientious in their management of the subject. There is not, however, sufficient

objective monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching in the subject. The newly appointed head teacher has already identified this as a potential area for development. One of the strengths of Umberleigh Primary School is the determination of all the staff to improve standards. The desire to improve the quality of mathematics for all the pupils is very good and is one of the reasons for the high standards attained by the pupils when they leave the school.

68. The accommodation, particularly in one class for the older pupils, is very cramped. The pupils have little space for working. They cope extremely well with the facilities available. The teachers make sure that the quality of learning remains good, but there is a constant battle against the limitations of space. This has an impact, especially during practical lessons.

SCIENCE

69. Because of the way in which science is timetabled in the school, it was not possible to observe any science teaching. Evidence was therefore obtained by an analysis of the work undertaken by pupils, both in the present term and in previous years, through an analysis of teachers' planning and by talking with pupils. This analysis shows that pupils achieve satisfactory standards in Years 1 and 2 and achieve in a satisfactory way. As at the time of the last inspection, most pupils achieve the expected level, but pupils do not achieve higher levels of attainment. The achievement of the small group of potentially higher attaining pupils is unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, the standards are very high and all pupils achieve very well. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Those pupils with special educational needs are provided with appropriate challenges and make good progress.
70. By the end of Year 2, pupils have begun to develop an understanding of scientific principles. They know about the basic conditions for life, and can differentiate between living and non-living things. Most know that living things need food, water and air to survive. They understand that a force can be a push or a pull. When examining different materials most pupils are able to sort them into different groups based on their properties, such as hardness or smoothness. Although they carry out some scientific investigations with help, their ability to carry out their own investigations is limited. Pupils have not developed a secure understanding of a fair test and need considerable adult support to conduct a scientific investigation.
71. By the end of Year 6, nearly all pupils have developed an analytical approach to scientific investigations. The oldest pupils are able to make sensible hypotheses based upon their previous scientific knowledge and understanding when carrying out an experiment. For example, when being asked to find out the friction generated by different materials, they were able to suggest which would create the most and to back up their predictions with reasons based on their prior knowledge. They use careful measurements to support their experimental investigations, for example, when measuring the length of shadows formed at different distances from a light source. When carrying out this experiment the pupils came up with a range of different approaches to solve the challenge set by their teacher, but all made very careful observations and measurements that enabled them to draw sensible and accurate conclusions. Pupils are able to write about their work using the conventions of scientific writing well. Pupils have good scientific knowledge. They have studied, understood and learned facts about aspects such as light, forces and about humans and other animals. The current Year 6 pupils were able to talk articulately about aspects of their study of light, such as how we see things and how shadows are formed.
72. Although no lessons were observed during the inspection other evidence shows that, teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, whilst teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is very good. Teachers all plan very carefully. In Years 1 and 2, however, there is not sufficient indication as to what the pupils of differing ages and abilities in the class will achieve in each lesson. This has an impact on the quality of learning, especially for potentially higher attaining pupils and is one reason for their relatively low achievement. In the past, a relatively short amount of time has been allocated

to the teaching of science in Years 1 and 2. This means that there has been difficulty in covering the curriculum in sufficient depth to allow pupils to progress to higher levels of attainment. In Years 3 to 6, one teacher who has very good subject expertise teaches all the science. This is reflected in the very rich and interesting curriculum provided for the pupils and has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Most pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, are keen and enthusiastic about science. The evidence from their workbooks shows that all pupils take a pride in their work, and strive to do their best. They know that their teacher sets high standards and work to achieve these. The very cramped accommodation makes it very difficult for pupils to carry out practical work. The range of experimental work is even more impressive given the limits of the space available.

73. Overall, leadership in science is satisfactory. Work to produce and deliver a good curriculum has been effective, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The co-ordination of science across the school, however, has been unsatisfactory. It has been informal to date with little or no over-view of the quality of teaching and learning. This situation has changed since the arrival of the new headteacher. The present science co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has a very good understanding of how to improve standards further. He has already recognised the areas for development in science and has begun to consider the issues associated with whole school co-ordination. This includes the modification of the arrangements for teaching to improve the consistency of provision throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

74. Attainment in art and design throughout the school is well above the expected level. It is further improved since the time of the last inspection. Pupils are very well taught by specialist teachers and, as a result, they achieve very well. By the end of Year 2, they have very good control over the technical skills associated with a range of materials and media. They can, for example, use paint with skill to make very good representations of the school's buildings. They can draw from life, for example, drawing each other dressed up as kings and queens. They have experience of working with textiles to sew and weave and of making larger structures. Pupils develop the ability to make very recognisable representations of what they see and can make choices about colour and composition in their work.
75. In Years 3 to 6, pupils develop their skills further. They are able to prepare for a project by making collections of preliminary ideas in sketch books, refining their thoughts while working and evaluating and improving the product. In a lesson during the inspection, for example, pupils, having looked at some still life pictures by a number of artists, were able to assemble a still life and draw it with above average skill. Some pupils displayed artistic imagination and sufficient confidence to produce individual effects, for example, by adding imaginary and somewhat surreal elements to their work. Pupils have had good opportunities to work in three dimensions, for example, working with a visiting artist to create a willow sculpture for the school grounds and in making fantastic hats for a county exhibition.
76. Teaching and learning in art and design is very good. The teachers are both specialists and are knowledgeable and confident in the ways they work with the pupils, therefore, pupils are also confident and work without inhibition. Good use is made of different ways of teaching the pupils, with due emphasis given to talking about work both before and after its creation. Teachers are able to demonstrate with skill and can teach pupils the basic skills they need. This enables pupils to learn very quickly a good range of techniques from which they can select when undertaking their work. Good opportunities are given for practical work and resulting pieces are treated with great respect. Relationships are very good and pupils try very hard to improve their work. Pupils evidently enjoy what they are doing and are justly proud of what they produce. The skill of the teachers allows each pupil,

regardless of his or her level of artistic ability, to produce work of increasingly good standard.

77. The leadership of the subject has been very effective. Good decisions have been made to base the work on a national scheme of work for art and design but to expand upon this to enrich the pupils' experiences. This has created a curriculum that promotes good progression throughout the school as well as being exciting and stimulating for pupils. A portfolio of work has been collected that demonstrates this as well as providing evidence of the standards achieved to help ensure that these are maintained in the future.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

78. Standards in design and technology are above average throughout the school and pupils achieve well. Standards have improved since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to plan a design, for example when making a model house. They can use simple tools to assemble their products, using accurate measurements where necessary. They are beginning to evaluate the effectiveness of their products. By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed good designing and making skills. They can plan a careful design from a brief given to them by the teacher. When making picture frames, for example, the pupils produced very careful designs, which were based on their knowledge of the materials available, and their own abilities. When making products they are conscientious and careful. They measure carefully and with increasing accuracy, and modify their product where necessary. When making moving card models to demonstrate the use of levers, for example, the pupils produced very careful and imaginative products that demonstrated their skills. The pupils also use their knowledge from other subject areas such as mathematics and science in their work in design and technology. When making torches, for example, they used their knowledge and understanding of electricity and their measuring skills.
79. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. All teachers prepare their lesson carefully. They know their pupils well and make provision for all pupils to learn well. The range of materials and the resources they provide are good and help to enrich the learning experience for the pupils. The pupils' enthusiasm is fostered through careful teaching and the very good relationships between the pupils and all adults in the school. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the oldest pupils were making vegetable soup with a teaching assistant. The assistant managed the pupils very effectively, making their learning fun. This helped the pupils to concentrate well and ensured that they enjoyed what they were doing. The teachers know what the pupils are capable of producing and provide challenges that make them achieve improved products. Through sensitive and perceptive questioning, the teachers find out what the pupils understand and then provide them with the information they need to make further improvements in their learning. This good practice permeates the teaching. The teachers show a dedication and care for their pupils. Through their own enthusiasm, they enthuse the pupils. The woodcarving club, for example, helps to give pupils a different experience of design and technology in a more informal environment. Despite the very cramped and inadequate accommodation, especially in Years 3 to 6, the range of activities given is good. In lessons, the pupils work extremely well in the crowded conditions. This helps promote their learning.
80. The leadership and management of design and technology are good, but informal. The shared co-ordination has been made effective by the work the co-ordinators have done together to create a curriculum for the school. There is a desire on the part of all staff to strive for high standards. This shared commitment helps to promote these. The curriculum for design and technology is based upon a nationally produced scheme of work. The scheme has been carefully and imaginatively modified to meet the needs of the pupils in the school. This ensures that the curriculum remains relevant to the pupils and helps them to receive tasks that mean more to them.

GEOGRAPHY

81. Due to the way in which the teaching is organised, it was not possible to see any geography lessons during the inspection. The findings are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work from the current and previous years, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and through discussions with teachers and pupils.
82. Standards in geography throughout the school have improved since the time of the last inspection. They are now above average and pupils achieve well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about their own environment. They make visits into the village and find out about the locality as well as studying some places further afield. Pupils begin to develop an understanding of simple maps. They draw maps of their own school and plans of the school grounds. The pupils have visited the tearooms in Umberleigh and found out facts about the business. They have, for example asked about the number of people visiting the tearooms and the times of year when it is at its busiest. This enables the pupils begin to develop an understanding of how human activity influences the environment. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn more about the wider world. By the age of eleven, they have a good knowledge of geographical facts and skills. Most pupils are able to read maps accurately and effectively. They have a good understanding of scale and direction on maps. Through their studies of other countries, such as India, they are able to link geographical ideas and concepts. Pupils are able to select different sources of evidence, for example, using books and the Internet to research information. They have a good understanding of current issues, for example, the way changed farming methods have influenced the spread of foot and mouth disease and how humans have affected environmental change, for example, the effect of the disposal of rubbish on world resources.
83. Teaching throughout the school is good. This good teaching fosters the enthusiasm of the pupils. Teachers plan their work carefully. They use a nationally produced scheme of work, which is carefully modified to meet the needs of the pupils in Umberleigh School. This ensures that the curriculum is not only broad, but also very relevant. All pupils are enthusiastic in their learning. They enjoy finding out about places and researching geographical facts. Their workbooks show that they frequently work with sustained effort and concentration. In finding out about different countries by using books and the Internet, for example, pupils showed an ability to research thoroughly. These positive attitudes and work-habits help the pupils to learn effectively. The teachers know their pupils well and help all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve good standards. They are sensitive to individual needs and know how to help each pupil to make good progress. ICT is beginning to be well integrated into work in Years 3 to 6, but pupils in Years 1 and 2 lack the basic ICT skills to allow this to be the case.
84. The management of geography is good. Sensible decisions have been made about the curriculum and the fact that geography is taught throughout the school by one teacher makes formal co-ordination unnecessary. The subject has not yet had the benefit of being formally monitored, but the quality of the work indicates that this has not had a detrimental effect.

HISTORY

85. It was not possible to see any history lessons during the inspection. The findings are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work from the current and previous years, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and through discussions with teachers and pupils.
86. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in history throughout the school are above average and pupils achieve well throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils find out about the history of their area. They have visits from 'Grandma Pickles' who tells them about what life used to be like locally. They enjoy finding out about the past in this way. Older pupils commented on how they enjoyed finding out about 'Grandma Pickles' life. By this first hand approach, the pupils were able to relate aspects of their own lives with the life of an earlier generation. Even the youngest pupils were, for example, fascinated about how farmers managed before the days of combine harvesters and other mechanical devices that they now take for granted. This interesting, practical approach to learning is extended to the pupils finding out about the evolution of their own school. They have experienced life as a Victorian pupil and found out how the lives of children in previous generations differed from their own. In this way, they have developed the beginnings of a sense of chronology.
87. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to extend their knowledge and understanding of history. Through a good mix of local, national and international examples, the pupils find out about historical events. They use an increasing range of evidence to investigate historical facts. In their study of the Civil War, for example,

they use the extensive local resources. Because the area was deeply affected by this period of history, the pupils visit to the 'Torrington 1646' exhibition enabled them to relate the events to their own environment. Pupils are encouraged to consider the moral and ethical issues of conflicts such as the Civil War and they are beginning to relate their knowledge of the past to the present. By the age of eleven, pupils understand that history is an investigative subject and that opinions are often subjective. In their study of the Civil War, for example, they have looked at the evidence from both sides and considered what might have happened had the outcome been different.

88. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. The teachers plan carefully. They know their subject well and provide a rich range of learning opportunities for the pupils. The curriculum is based on a national scheme of work. The scheme has been carefully and imaginatively adapted to meet the specific needs of the pupils in Umberleigh Primary School. This helps to provide good learning experiences that pupils enjoy and from which to learn. The very good provision for staff to improve their skills and knowledge of history has been reflected in the good achievement of the pupils. There is a determination on the part of all staff to improve standards even further. ICT is used in an appropriate way to extend and enhance pupils' learning in history.
89. The leadership and management of history are good. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has worked hard to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs of the pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

90. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in Years 3 to 6 are average in most aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum. Pupils are able to use computers effectively to research and store information, using the Internet to undertake, for example, research for their work on the Romans. They can use both the Internet and prepared databases to do this. They can use the word processing facilities and are aware that they can change size and font according to the purpose for which their work is intended. They know how to import pictures, both drawn by themselves and from 'clipart' files, to further enhance their work. Pupils have used the e-mail to communicate and know the conventions for doing this. They have some experience of using the computer to analyse and display data, for example, to show graphically their results from a science investigation into the link between the size of a shadow and the distance of an object from a light source. They are, however, less experienced in this and in aspects of control technology and their attainment in these areas is below average. Until recently, the school has lacked the resources to enable pupils to have full access to the ICT curriculum, but since additional computers have been available, pupils have been able to make good progress and they now achieve in an appropriate way in the aspects of the curriculum that they have been taught in depth.
91. In Years 1 and 2, however, pupils have not had sufficient access to computers to allow them to make the progress of which they are capable. The curriculum has not met statutory requirements. Consequently, pupils' attainment is below average and they have not achieved enough. This represents a deterioration since the last inspection.
92. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good. Work is well planned and structured and good care is taken to make careful assessments and records of the skill level of each pupil have been started. This enables the teachers to target

their teaching to ensure that all pupils, despite their differing experiences of computers at home are assisted to make good progress. The teachers have recently undertaken training to ensure that their skill level is sufficient to enable them to teach the pupils successfully. The interest that the adults have assists the pupils to begin to understand the range of ways in which the computer can be used. The development of the school web site, for example, although initially managed by a teacher is beginning to carry contributions from the pupils. Pupils are interested and excited by the use of the digital camera to record their work and experiences and often suggest to their teachers that they should make this type of record.

93. ICT is now regularly timetabled for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and this ensures that the pupils have appropriate subject specific teaching. As pupils' skills increase, they are making increased use of computers to enhance and extend their work in other subjects. Where ICT is taught in Years 1 and 2, the teaching is satisfactory. There is, however, no timetabled opportunity for these pupils to learn ICT skills. This regular timetabling is inhibited by the lack of access to computers. Although the school has a satisfactory number of computers overall, most of these are located in the main school building and there are too few directly and easily accessible by younger pupils. As a result, there is too little teaching and the overall impact on learning is unsatisfactory.
94. Until the appointment of the new headteacher, there had been very little whole school management of ICT. This was unsatisfactory. Sensible decisions had been made about the curriculum and timetabling of ICT in Years 3 to 6, but the lack of whole school monitoring of standards and teaching had not highlighted the weaknesses in Key Stage 1. Since her appointment, the new headteacher has redefined the role of the ICT co-ordinator to ensure that there is a whole school brief. It is, as yet, too early for this role to have begun, but the coordinator is aware of the work to be done and is well placed to make the necessary improvements.

MUSIC

95. Over the last year, the school has been involved in an in depth project to improve the quality of music in the school. This project has been structured to work on different aspects of the music curriculum in sequence. The initial phase of the project is based on working on the basic skills and knowledge of music through singing. As a result, standards in singing, in the control of voice and in the understanding of elements such as rhythm, pulse and dynamic are above average throughout the school. In addition, pupils in Year 2 are able to follow a simple rhythmic score and to play instruments with control. Overall, attainment and achievement is satisfactory. Because they have not yet become a focus of the work, standards in performing, composing and in listening to and appraising music are currently below those expected nationally, especially in Years 3 to 6. Clear plans for the development of these aspects are made and the school is still receiving a good quantity of in-service training to ensure that all aspects of the music curriculum become well taught so that standards will rise as they have in singing.
96. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, but external monitoring of the teaching of music over the last year shows that the quality of teaching and learning in the basic skills associated with singing is now good throughout the school. The teachers concerned with the project have received considerable regular training and this has significantly raised their effectiveness. Teachers now take a confident

approach to teaching music and are prepared to demonstrate and to structure lessons so that pupils are given good opportunities, not only to sing, but to improve on their performances through evaluation and practise. Lessons are now well planned and a scheme of work is being developed that will fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. In the lesson seen in Years 1 and 2, the teacher showed that she had high expectations of the pupils and, despite their fatigue towards the end of a day, the pupils responded well and enthusiastically did their best to fulfil these.

97. The involvement in the project has meant that the school's music has been largely and successfully led by the external advisor. The new co-ordinator has, however, begun to take on some of this role and is beginning to show enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership. As a consequence, the school is well placed to develop music further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

98. The way in which physical education is taught and managed in the school was being changed at the time of the inspection. In the past, physical education was taught by the previous head teacher. The new subject co-ordinator had just begun a process of induction and training in the subject. To facilitate this process the school has appointed a physical education teacher to demonstrate good practice. This specialist teacher, therefore, taught the only lesson observed during the inspection.
99. Standards in physical education overall are in line with those expected and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory throughout the school. This is similar to the findings at the time of the last inspection. The school has very limited facilities for physical education. There is no inside space for pupils to do gymnastics or to have physical education during inclement weather. Pupils do not have opportunities to use large physical education equipment such as climbing frames. They have not the facilities to improve their ability to do gymnastic movements such as forward and backward rolls. The standards in gymnastics are, therefore, naturally somewhat lower than in many schools. The school, however, compensates by giving good opportunities for other aspects of physical education. Standards in games skills are generally good. There is a very good range of sporting clubs for the pupils to attend. Most do so and this, together with lessons, enables them to learn to play a wide range of different games, including tag rugby, netball, football and hockey. The teachers encourage teams to compete against other local schools in a range of sporting fixtures. Umberleigh School has a good record of achievement in these events, demonstrating the good achievement in this aspect of physical education. Pupils learn to swim and can swim a minimum of twenty-five metres by the end Year 6.
100. The pupils enjoy physical education many taking full advantage of the clubs offered. During the inspection, for example, many pupils took part in the hockey club held during the lunchtime period. At playtimes and at lunchtime, pupils practice their games skills. At lunchtimes, for example, pupils play netball with one of the lunchtime supervisors. Although these arrangements are informal, the enthusiasm of the staff helps to consolidate skills the pupils learn during their lessons.
101. The teaching seen was very good. The very good subject expertise of the teacher combined with a sensitivity to the individual skills of all the pupils helps to ensure that the quality of learning is very good. The present arrangements for teaching physical education in Years 3 to 6 are very good. The pupils have a very high quality of teaching, which is also providing excellent professional development for the school staff. This imaginative and creative approach to curriculum development and improvement is a strength of the school. It helps to create the unique nature of Umberleigh primary school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

102. Standards attained in religious education throughout the school are above those identified in the local authority agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve well. They have good knowledge and understanding of aspects of the Christian faith and of some Christian stories, beliefs and traditions. They know, for instance, the story of the

prodigal son and can relate this to some of their own experiences of saying sorry and being forgiven. They have good knowledge of the story of Christmas and as a consequence, understand that the festival is about more than receiving presents. Pupils also develop knowledge of other faiths, for example, they have some understanding of the way that Jewish people celebrate their religious festivals. Pupils begin to be able to think about some deeper meaning, for example, being able to think about what makes them feel emotions such as sadness or peace.

103. In Years 3 to 6, pupils begin to develop wider knowledge of Christianity and of other faiths, for example, the Jewish and Hindu faiths. Pupils have knowledge of different stories from different faiths and begin to be able to relate these to each other and see similarities and difference between them. Older pupils were able, for example, to identify differences between creation stories, identifying, for example, that some had a creator figure and others do not. Pupils are increasingly able to consider some of deeper questions, for example, what causes strife in the world and what actions could be taken to avoid this.
104. Religious education is well taught. Teachers are skilled in helping pupils throughout the school to, not only gain good knowledge, but to be able to relate this to their own lives. Through a quiet and sensitive approach, pupils are taught to think about their own beliefs and values and to value and respect those of others. In a Year 1/2 lesson, for example, pupils heard the story of Buddha and the Bodhi Tree and then spent time in considering how this related to their own feelings of peace. This they did with maturity beyond their years. The strength of the relationships between adults and pupils allows pupils to become confident, thoughtful young people.
105. Religious education has, until the current term, been taught by one teacher. There has, therefore been little reason for co-ordination in the subject. This situation is now under review. The curriculum provided meets fully the requirements of the agreed syllabus and pupils have been given good opportunities to extend their literacy skills by work in religious education. The subject has also made very good contributions to the way pupils are able to express themselves verbally.