

INSPECTION REPORT

**WESTON MILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Plymouth

LEA area: City of Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113269

Headteacher: Mrs L Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr C Rhodes
16408

Dates of inspection: 23 – 26 June 2003

Inspection number: 247338

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ferndale Road
Camel's Head
Plymouth
Devon

Postcode: PL2 2EL

Telephone number: 01752 365250

Fax number: 01752 351013

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs G Vosper

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16408	Mr C Rhodes	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music Religious education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
11072	Ms S Elomari	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22572	Mrs M Windsor	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Educational inclusion Special educational needs	
20495	Mrs L Devey	Team inspector	Science Physical education Foundation Stage	How well is the school led and managed?

21816	Mrs B Thomas	Team inspector	English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
-------	--------------	----------------	---------------------------------	--

The inspection contractor was:

Staffordshire and Midlands Consortium

The Kingston Centre
Fairway
Stafford
ST16 3TW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	13
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	18
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	23
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	25
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	26
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	29
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	30

**PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN
AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Weston Mill Community Primary School is in the inner-city area of Camel's Head in Plymouth. There are 274 pupils aged between four and 11 on roll, which is larger than most primary schools. An additional 52 children attend the nursery part-time. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Most are of white British origins. A very small number speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free meals is higher than the national average. The school is part of an Education Action Zone. Approximately one in every three pupils has special educational needs, usually moderate learning difficulties. This is above the national average. Nine pupils, whose educational needs are severe, complex or persistent, are given the protection of a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on entry is well below nationally expected levels, with many children starting school with even lower abilities in communication, language and literacy.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Standards are rising and are in line with the national average for English, mathematics and science in Year 6. The overall quality of leadership and management, and of teaching, is very good. The school is very good at making sure all pupils are equally involved in all its activities. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school has an outstanding headteacher.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Pupils learn very effectively and make very good progress as they move through the school.
- The whole staff team makes a significant contribution to the successful life of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. Relationships are excellent.
- The care and welfare of the pupils is central to the thinking of every adult in the school community.

What could be improved

- Teachers' judgements about pupils' attainment and progress are recorded in a variety of different ways and some assessments are based on a comparison between very different areas of work. These two factors make it harder for teachers to have a clear picture of pupils' overall progress.
- Pupils' skills in information and communication technology [ICT] are not used enough in other areas of the curriculum.
- Standards are below expected levels in art and design in Year 6, and in design and technology in Year 2 and Year 6.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in 1997. The rate of improvement has been very good. The key issues have been addressed very successfully. Leadership and management have been strengthened but more work needs to be done to extend the role of some subject co-ordinators. The quality of teaching is very much higher and the school now meets the National Curriculum requirements for ICT. The lack of classroom computers is limiting the use made of pupils' ICT skills in other subjects. Standards are higher in mathematics in Year 2 and Year 6, and in science in Year 2. There have been significant improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour, in the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and in the range of extra-curricular activities. The school gives far greater value for money.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	C	A
mathematics	C	C	C	A
science	C	C	C	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Attainment in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 was in line with the national averages for English, mathematics and science. They had made very good progress since their tests in Year 2, and standards were well above average in English and mathematics in comparison with schools containing pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards had risen in all three subjects since 1998, with the greatest improvement in mathematics. The school achieved the challenging target it had set itself for English and exceeded it in mathematics. Attainment in reading and writing in the Year 2 tests was below the national average, but was in line with that attained in similar schools. Attainment in mathematics was in line with the average, and above average in comparison with similar schools. Year 2 teachers estimated that standards in science were well below average.

Current standards. Children in the **reception classes** have made good progress but most are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. Standards in Year 2 are below average in English and science, but are average in mathematics. Standards in art and design, ICT, history, music and physical education are in line with expected levels. Standards in geography are above those usually seen. Standards in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science, are in line with expected levels in ICT, history, geography and music, and above in physical education. Standards in design and technology are below expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6, and in art and design in Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 reach the levels expected for their age in the local agreed syllabus for religious education and exceed

them in Year 6. The range of pupils' spoken vocabulary is below expected levels in all year groups, which limits their progress in most subjects.

Pupils' achievement in all classes is very good. Most books show good or better progress since the beginning of the school year. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language also make very good progress in response to the very good teaching, the high quality of individual support they receive from the skilled teaching assistants, and the school's very good arrangements for ensuring that all pupils take a full part in all its activities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and join enthusiastically in lessons and other activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in classrooms. Pupils listen carefully to one another and work very well together in pairs and small groups. Behaviour outside the classroom is outstanding because it is consistently sensible, caring and responsible.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are outstanding with very high levels of mutual respect. Staff are excellent role models.
Attendance	Good, and has improved significantly. Levels of unauthorised absence are low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of **teaching** is very good. Approximately nine out of every ten lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. Two in every five lessons were very good or better, which is four times greater than at the time of the previous inspection. One lesson was outstanding. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, again an improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching in English is very good. It is good in mathematics and science, with several examples of very good teaching. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught very thoroughly, and are used effectively in all areas of the curriculum.

Teachers are extremely skilled in the firm but sensitive management of their pupils. Outstanding strengths in the nursery and reception classes are teachers' very high expectations of what children can achieve, their teaching methods and the ways staff record how well children are doing.

Significant strengths in older classes are the pace in lessons and the excellent use of skilled teaching assistants. Teachers know their subjects very thoroughly. Lessons are very well planned and teachers set explicit standards of high achievement. The quality of marking is variable in Years 3-6 and pupils do not always know exactly how to improve. Pupils are such good listeners that some oral sections of lessons go on too long. Some pupils are not told what happened in the main lesson when they return from a session of specialist support outside the classroom.

The quality of **learning** is very good overall. Pupils acquire new skills and knowledge quickly because they are taught basic skills effectively. They make considerable efforts with their work and show high levels of interest and concentration over extended periods of time. Pupils with special educational needs learn very effectively because of the high quality support from specialist staff and because their work is set at the correct level of difficulty. The very few pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress and receive extra support when appropriate. Appropriate support is given to any pupil who has a particular gift or talent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum. Provision for extra-curricular activities in and out of school is excellent. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their ICT skills in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school has very good arrangements that ensure all pupils are fully involved in all its activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The excellent provision for pupils' spiritual and social development enables all pupils to become mature, responsible and thoughtful young people. The very good provision for moral and cultural development contributes very effectively to pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The provision for pupils' welfare is outstanding. Pupils feel very safe in the school. The provision for eliminating racism and other forms of unacceptable behaviour is excellent. Some procedures for assessing, monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are too complicated and make it harder for teachers to have a clear picture of pupils' overall progress.

The school meets the full requirements for the National Curriculum and for religious education, as indicated in the local agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 benefit from the opportunity to learn French with a skilled linguist. The school works very closely with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is an outstanding leader and manager. The overall quality of leadership demonstrated by her and senior staff is very good. The school has a very clear sense of direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors are fully involved in setting the school's future development and evaluating its improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff are skilled in identifying the school's strengths and areas for development. There are established and effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, especially in English and mathematics. These have not yet been extended to all subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Spending decisions are based very firmly on the needs of pupils and raising standards. The school applies the principles of best value effectively.

There is a good match between the staff and the demands of the curriculum. The deployment of support staff is effective, especially in support of pupils with special educational needs. The standard of accommodation is good. The building has been developed imaginatively although more work is required on internal decoration and in extending the outdoor provision for the younger children. The overall quality of resources is good and grants are used very effectively, but the number of classroom computers is far too small.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The very easy way they can talk to staff or to the headteacher. • Their children's happiness in school. • The high standard of teaching. • Teachers' expectations that children will work hard. • The good progress their children make. • Their children's increasing maturity and acceptance of responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The information given out by the school. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views of the school and can reassure them about their concerns. Inspectors consider that the arrangements for homework are appropriate and similar to those found in many schools. They think that the school is very good at giving information to parents and feel very confident that any individual queries would be dealt with quickly. The range of before-school, lunchtime, after-school and holiday activities is far greater than is found in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Most children enter the nursery at levels that are well below the national expectation for their age. Many have very poor communication, language and literacy skills, speak only in one or two words, and do not initiate conversation either with adults or other children. Many lack confidence and imagination, and have very little experience of the world around them and have poor physical skills. They make very good progress in response to the high quality teaching, but most children in the reception classes are unlikely to reach the levels expected for their age in any area of learning by the end of the year. Their communication, language and literacy skills are improving rapidly, but standards remain generally well below expected levels.
- 2 **Standards** in the rest of the school are judged in Year 2 and Year 6 because these are the ends of the two key stages in primary education. The school has a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, which has an inevitable impact on the overall standards it achieves.
- 3 Pupils in Year 2 achieved average standards in mathematics in the **2002 National Curriculum tests**. Standards were below average in reading and writing, but pupils had made good progress from a very low start point on entry to the nursery. Their results were in line with those reached in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds and were higher in mathematics. Standards were higher in mathematics than in reading and writing because many pupils had limited vocabularies. Attainment in all three subject areas had been rising steadily for a number of years but dipped in 2002 when a higher proportion of pupils had special educational needs. Teachers assessed attainment in science as well below average, especially in investigational work, which requires pupils to draw heavily on their oral skills. Standards in Year 6 were in line with the national average for English, mathematics and science. Standards, in comparison to similar schools, were well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The pupils concerned had made very good progress since they were tested four years earlier at the end of Year 2. Boys did slightly better than girls, especially in mathematics. The school has investigated the reasons but found nothing significant. Inspection evidence confirms this. The school reached its target for English and exceeded it in mathematics. Standards had been rising steadily since 1998, with the greatest improvement in mathematics. Pupils' very good progress has been recognised in three achievement awards from the Department of Education and Skills.
- 4 **Current standards in Year 2** are below average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Pupils have made very good progress in direct response to the very good standard of teaching and their own commitment to learning. Standards of speaking are below expected levels. Their listening skills are far more secure. Standards in reading are in line with national averages. A strong focus on teaching basic reading skills, and an emphasis on reading texts together as a group or class, has improved fluency and expression.

Standards in writing are generally below expected levels. Pupils have enquiring minds and are keen to learn, but most have difficulty articulating their thoughts and committing their ideas to paper. Many pupils in Year 2 still spell words exactly as they sound. The standard of handwriting is just below expected standards. Pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of numbers and their application, including the place value of digits up to 100. They are confident in addition and subtraction and are familiar with a variety of strategies for solving number problems. They recognise the basic two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties accurately. Pupils are building a mathematical vocabulary but are not yet confident in using mathematical terms to explain their work.

- 5 **Standards are average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.** Listening skills are very well developed by the end of Year 6 but speaking skills remain below expected levels. Standards in reading are in line with national averages. Higher attaining pupils show a deeper understanding of a range of texts, can select essential points and use inference and deduction appropriately. Standards in writing are generally below expected levels but Year 6 pupils write effectively in a variety of written forms. The weekly spelling lists are starting to raise standards. Grammar is taught effectively, and is helping to raise standards in reading and speech as well as in writing. Punctuation is understood and used well. There is a wide variety of attainment in handwriting. Year 6 pupils are confident in solving number problems using all four number operations. They understand short and long multiplication and can complete written calculations extending to two decimal places. Pupils can identify and classify regular and irregular polygons using mathematical properties. They can recognise reflective symmetry in regular polygons and can translate shapes both horizontally and vertically. While pupils have a good knowledge of mathematical terms, which they can use appropriately when prompted by the teacher, they do not automatically use a mathematical vocabulary. Pupils learn effectively about scientific processes in Year 6. They develop their understanding of a fair test when investigating air resistance and its effect on a moving object by discussing it in small groups. Many are able to use scientific language such as 'surface area' and 'gravity' but find detailed explanations difficult.
- 6 **Achievement** is measured by comparing how much pupils improve as they move from class to class. The school keeps detailed records, identifying the levels pupils reach at the end of each school year or block of work, and measures the progress they make over the following twelve months. Pupils are given individual targets and can check their own improvement. Pupils' records and books show very good overall progress in all classes. Pupils make better individual progress because different work is set to match the various abilities found within the classes. A very good example was seen in Year 6 mathematics teaching about the size of the angles in a triangle when all pupils made very good progress because each group was set a challenging and interesting task that stretched them at the correct level of difficulty. Boys and girls are making similar progress in all classes. Higher attaining pupils are challenged at a more intellectual level, as can be seen in the above average proportion of pupils who reached Level 5 in the 2002 English and mathematics National Curriculum tests in Year 6. The school is aware of which pupils have a particular gift or talent and makes appropriate arrangements for them to develop their potential.

- 7 **Standards** in art and design, ICT, history, music and physical education are in line with expected levels in Year 2. Standards in geography are above nationally expected levels. Standards in Year 6 are in line with expected levels in ICT, history, geography and music, and above in physical education. Standards in design and technology are below expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6 because pupils do not have the skills in designing, modifying, making and evaluating a range of products expected for pupils of these ages. Standards in art and design are below expected levels in Year 6 because pupils have not had a wide enough range of art experiences. Pupils in Year 2 reach the levels expected for their age in the local agreed syllabus for religious education and exceed them in Year 6. Current standards in English and science in Year 2 are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection and have improved in mathematics from below average to average. Standards in mathematics and science have also improved from below average to average in Year 6, and have been maintained at average levels in English. Standards in ICT and religious education have improved throughout the school. Standards in physical education have risen in Year 6 and geography has improved in Year 2. Standards in design and technology are not as good as they were in Year 2 but have improved in art and design. Satisfactory levels of attainment have been maintained in history and music in all classes.
- 8 Teachers make good use of **literacy and numeracy** in other aspects of the broader curriculum. They make many opportunities to develop pupils' oral skills by including brief discussions in pairs in their lessons so that pupils can be more skilled in putting their ideas into words. The school is full of interesting 'books' and collections of writing that pay tribute to their efforts in English, science, history, religious education and geography. Note taking skills help pupils to prepare for later work, as when Year 6 prepared presentations to describe the work of different charities. Pupils used their understanding of mathematics to calculate the angles of turn needed in an ICT lesson to draw repeating geometrical patterns on screen and to set out the results of their science experiments in graphs. ICT skills are taught effectively, but pupils' very limited opportunities to use computers means that they do not apply their ICT skills enough in other areas of the curriculum. The very good Year 6 lesson about the angles of a triangle, referred to above, relied totally on pencil and paper skills and no pupils had access to appropriate computer programs. This reduced their overall potential for progress.
- 9 Pupils with **special educational needs** achieve good standards for their age and abilities because the school provides a good range of strategies to help them to gain confidence in themselves and make progress. These include one-to-one teaching, group teaching and in-class support. Importantly, they are fully involved in all class activities, are given work that matches their ability, and form close and trusting relationships with their teachers and the teaching assistants. The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language also make very good progress as a result of the very good teaching that they receive.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 The majority of children are often unsure of themselves when they start school in the nursery and have few social skills. They quickly develop the very positive attitudes to learning seen throughout the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good overall.

The pupils know what is expected of them and respond positively to the very high expectations of staff. There has been a very significant improvement in the standards of behaviour since the previous inspection.

- 11 Pupils are very keen to come to school because they look forward to the lessons and other activities. They almost always enjoy their work and join in activities enthusiastically. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire reported that their child liked school. Pupils arrive at school prepared to work. They settle quickly in the classroom, listening attentively to their teacher and to one another. Pupils especially enjoy the opportunities they have for discussion and contribute their ideas confidently because they know that they will be taken seriously. Occasionally there are times when some pupils lose concentration, but they do not disrupt others. Pupils work with a will and try hard to complete their work. Pupils with special educational needs share these positive attitudes to work and are fully included in every aspect of school life. Those who find it difficult to behave appropriately are helped by well targeted individual behaviour plans, very good support in the classroom and the patient understanding of other pupils. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning throughout the school contribute to the very good progress they make in lessons and are evident in the very high numbers who choose to join in the summer school activities.
- 12 No unsatisfactory behaviour was seen in lessons during the inspection. Overall, behaviour was very good. Behaviour was satisfactory in seven of the 55 lessons observed. It was good in a further 19, very good in 25 and exemplary in four. This is a very positive picture and represents a significant improvement over the satisfactory standards noted in the previous inspection. Pupils respond very positively to the high expectations of staff. They are well motivated by the merit system. The best behaviour was seen when the teacher had high expectations of what pupils could achieve. This led to pupils responding enthusiastically to the challenge of the lessons and their eagerness to demonstrate their ability. There were a few lessons when the teacher spent too long talking and some pupils lost interest. The very good behaviour means that teachers do not spend time dealing with unacceptable behaviour and lessons proceed at a good pace. Pupils show very high levels of respect for the feelings of others, learning to value opinions that may differ from their own. They look after the school's resources very well. They take very good care of their own and other people's property. There is no sign of vandalism or graffiti and pupils take considerable pride in their school.
- 13 Behaviour at playtimes and lunchtime is almost always exemplary. Pupils play together in the playground in a very harmonious way. They are careful to include others in their games and conversations so that it is rare for anyone to be alone, except by choice. Pupils are careful to avoid others when running around and, when collisions do occur, they take care of one another, providing comfort and seeking help. Pupils are kind and helpful to others, for example, by sharing the play equipment sensibly. Lunchtime is very orderly. Pupils queue for their food very politely and help to clear up. A notable feature is that pupils in Years 3-6 eat their packed lunches in their classrooms. They do this extremely sensibly, making sure that the room is tidy and clean afterwards. Everywhere pupils eat is full of pleasant chatter. Movement around the building is extremely quiet and sensible. The atmosphere in the school is calm, quiet and purposeful. There were two fixed term exclusions in 2001 to 2002

but there have been none in the current year. Parents are confident that the school achieves a good standard of behaviour.

- 14 The school provides a very good range of opportunities for pupils' personal development. Parents are confident that school helps their children to mature into responsible youngsters. All pupils are expected to help keep their classroom tidy and do so willingly. Pupils in each class have a rota of tasks and enjoy carrying them out. They benefit from the many opportunities they have to work together in pairs or small groups, for example in literacy and numeracy lessons. They are able to work independently in a small group, staying focused on their tasks so that the teacher's work with other pupils is not interrupted. They work very well together, sharing equipment sensibly and often helping one another. For example, in one Year 5/6 science lesson, a group of more able pupils collaborated to design a fair test for their work on forces.
- 15 Pupils respond extremely well to the many opportunities they have to take an active part in the school community and to help others. Some Year 6 pupils are trained to act as mediators to resolve playground disagreements. They recognise with some pride that their success can be measured by the fact that the job is now "Boring, because people have learned how to sort their own problems out". The school council gives pupils a real voice in the school and members point to a number of changes they have achieved. Pupils raise considerable sums of money for a wide range of local, national and international charities. One boy summed up this aspect of the school's work when he commented that "It's good 'cos it makes you feel kind of responsible".
- 16 Relationships throughout the school are outstanding, fostered by the respect pupils are shown by all adults in the school community. The excellent attention paid to pupils' spiritual and social development helps them to develop a growing understanding of the impact of their actions on others as they grow older. Teachers and other staff support pupils in a consistent, very well focused and sensitive way. Pupils realise that they are highly valued and this leads to the development of very high levels of mutual respect. Pupils co-operate together to a high degree, enjoying the many chances they have to work together. Even the youngest children understand about taking turns and arguments are very rare. Pupils are confident that there is very little bullying and what does occur is very minor. They are able to work in an environment that is completely free of oppressive behaviour such as racism and sexism. Pupils know that if bullying does occur, it will be dealt with quickly and effectively. The girl who pointed out that the headteacher "Would not allow anyone to say anything unkind to one of us" put the school situation into words. The excellence of the relationships makes a very significant contribution to the very high standards of behaviour achieved.
- 17 Attendance is good. It was slightly below the national average between 2001 and 2002 but the school has achieved a significant improvement during the current school year. Levels of unauthorised absence are low. Almost all pupils routinely attend on time in the morning. The good level of attendance means that pupils' learning is rarely interrupted.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 18 **The overall quality of teaching** is very good as seen in lessons throughout the school, the teachers' preparation and records, and in their assessments and knowledge of their subjects and the pupils. Approximately nine out every ten lessons seen during the inspection were judged good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when one in every ten lessons was unsatisfactory. 22 of the 55 lessons seen in the current inspection were very good or better, which is four times as many than at the time of the previous inspection. One lesson was outstanding. The overall quality of teaching in the reception class is very good because the teacher and the support staff have a very good understanding of young children's needs, and have planned and teach a high quality curriculum that interests and challenges the children.
- 19 The quality of teaching in English is very good in Years 1-6. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively, and plan lessons that are well structured and often exciting. Teachers have very high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good, with several examples of very good teaching. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and teach confidently. They are particularly skilled in setting a brisk pace in the mental warm-ups that start each lesson, and in designing tasks that match the needs of pupils of different abilities. This is leading to higher levels of attainment. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught very thoroughly in all classes, and pupils use them successfully in other subjects. A good example was seen in a Year 1 physical education lesson when pupils were learning to put together a series of movements in a dance routine. Every pair had a set of flash cards for each of the different gymnastic movements they were to use. The pupils were aware of the mathematical pulse in the music and reflected it in their dance, and used their reading skills to rearrange the order of the cards on the floor as they developed their ideas.
- 20 Many individual lessons in each curriculum area are of high quality. The quality of teaching in Years 1-6 is good in science, in religious education in Years 3-6, and in ICT, with particular strengths in individual lessons. The quality of teaching in physical education in Years 3-6 is good and often very good. Although several good or better taught lessons were seen in history, geography and music, there was not enough inspection evidence to make an overall judgement about standards of teaching in those subjects. No lessons were observed in design and technology. The quality of art and design teaching was good in Years 1-2 and satisfactory in Years 3-6.
- 21 The overall standard of teaching is high because teachers are extremely skilled in the firm but sensitive management of their pupils. Pupils feel respected and respect those with whom they work. They get on quickly with their work because they know what they have to do and try hard to meet the teachers' clear expectation that they will do well. The pace is brisk but pupils have sufficient time for each task. Materials are very well prepared and ready, so that changes of activity keep pupils alert and interested, and no time is wasted. Teachers are skilled in helping pupils learn through their own errors, as was seen in several ICT lessons when pupils were helped to learn more for themselves rather than just being told the answer to a problem. "Why do you think that happened?" asked a teacher in Year 2, and the pupil worked hard to find the answer. Lesson planning is detailed and pupils understand

clearly how what they have learned on one day will enable them to tackle the next stage of work on the next. The purpose of each lesson is explained clearly at the beginning so that pupils know *why* they will be completing the various tasks. The particular needs of individual pupils who have a specific gift or talent, or who uses English as an additional language, are met skilfully.

- 22 Examples of particularly successful teaching were seen in all parts of the school. Staff in the nursery and reception classes are very skilled in providing a stimulating series of activities to engage the children's interest. Counting the buttons on Mrs Pirate's coat, for example, was seen by the nursery children as a fun activity but helped them to make good progress with their early mathematical skills. Children in a reception class were not just given coins to count and total, but had to dig for them first in sand trays because they were a pirate's treasure. A religious education lesson in Year 3/4 was outstanding because the teacher created a sense of reverence and respect as the class learned about a Shabbat meal, and reflected thoughtfully how each part of the ceremony linked to their own lives, families and experiences. Pupils gained considerable factual knowledge but, more than that, had a positive educational experience that they would remember in adult life.
- 23 No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection but there were a few occasions when the whole-class oral parts of lessons were too long and some pupils found it hard to maintain concentration. Very occasionally, as in an art and design lesson, pupils were not given enough opportunities to ask questions or to be independent in developing techniques or choosing materials. Although teachers work hard to make sure that pupils who leave the class to work in a group outside the classroom do not miss key teaching, there were a few occasions when they had to rely on friends rather than the teacher to tell them about what they had missed when they returned. Teachers mark work conscientiously. Comments in the books of older pupils praise good work but some do not give enough guidance on what could be improved and are too general. Not enough planned use is made of ICT in lessons.
- 24 The quality of **learning** is very good overall. Pupils acquire new skills and knowledge quickly because they are taught basic skills effectively and the teachers give them every encouragement to improve. Teachers are skilled in setting tasks at different levels of difficulty as was seen in the Year 1/2 quick-fire mental arithmetic lesson when tasks and questions were aimed briskly at four different groups of pupils, all of whom concentrated hard and made good progress in the session. Pupils make considerable efforts with their work and show high levels of interest and concentration over extended periods of time. They always respond positively to good teaching because they enjoy being intellectually or creatively challenged. Their very good progress is proof of their hard work and high levels of motivation. There are appropriate arrangements for pupils to extend their learning in school through a variety of homework tasks.
- 25 Pupils with **special educational needs** are taught very well and receive very good quality support from the teaching assistants. They make very good progress toward the targets in their individual education plans. They are fully involved in all lessons and are set tasks that are challenging but appropriate to their level of ability. Lessons are delivered within a

sympathetic and supportive environment, yet teachers have high expectations that the pupils will be as successful as the other pupils in the class. The teaching assistants are well briefed and prepared, and have a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils. They support them very effectively in whole class sessions by helping them to listen attentively, asking supplementary questions to ensure understanding and providing positive feedback and encouragement. This means that the pupils are fully involved in all class activities, feel valued and learn effectively alongside more able pupils. The assistants get as much pleasure from the pupils' success as they do themselves.

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

- 26 The school provides a very good curriculum, offering a rewardingly rich range of learning opportunities for all its pupils. It is very broad, balanced and relevant and meets the statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection when there were concerns about curriculum balance and the work in ICT did not meet statutory requirements. The school complies fully with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus for religious education. The total weekly teaching time is in line with national recommendations.
- 27 The curriculum offered in the nursery and reception classes is very good and is a strength of the school. It is well planned to include the early learning goals and covers the full range of play, enabling children to learn from teachers and from their own exploration and discovery. Classrooms are a stimulating and secure environment where children can access the full range of learning experiences and thrive. The curriculum is well matched to their learning needs.
- 28 The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully into Years 1-6, especially in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted purposefully and has been valuable in maintaining the progress pupils make. The Early Literacy Support [ELS], Additional Literacy Support [ALS], Further Literacy support [FLS], Booster classes and Springboard mathematics have all been introduced effectively and helped pupils to make greater progress. The schemes of work of all other subjects of the curriculum have been improved, with the help of the guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority [QCA] and Plymouth Education Authority. This has in turn resulted in better long and medium term plans with improved lesson planning across the school. This had been an area of concern during the previous inspection. However, as yet this improvement has not impacted on the attainment and progress in design and technology and art and design in Years 3-6. Links between literacy and other subjects, such as religious education, history and geography, are good. The lack of classroom computers limits the number of occasions when pupils can use their ICT skills in other subjects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from regular short sessions of oral French. Health education, including sex and relationships education, and guidance about the dangers of misusing drugs, is planned and well taught as part of the whole school autumn 'Health week' and the summer term visit of the Life Education caravan. Family life and a healthy

- lifestyle is planned and taught within the geography and history curriculum as well as through the very good personal, social and health education programme.
- 29 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. This is a good improvement from the previous inspection. The pupils are supported very well by specific learning programmes, and benefit from a balance of whole class teaching, small group work and individual attention to their areas of difficulty. The teaching assistants play a significant part in this support. This has a positive impact on their learning and enables them to make very good progress. Overall progress is reviewed twice a year, involving teachers, the teaching assistants and parents. The school has used the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies intervention programmes effectively with special educational needs pupils, again, largely with the very good support of the teaching assistants. The school works hard with the minority of challenging pupils to ensure that they can take part in lessons without having a detrimental impact of the rest of the pupils in the class. Provision for the few pupils who speak English as an additional language, and for those who have particular gifts and talents, is also very good.
- 30 The school provides an excellent range of after-school clubs and activities that are well supported by pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. These include Breakfast Club, volleyball, drama, netball, football, tag rugby, textiles, rocket science, food technology, art, dinghy sailing, recorders, sculpture, mathematics, and a hand made paper club. The many visitors to the school also enrich and add breadth to the whole curriculum. Day and residential visits are an important part of school life and the best use is made of local places of scientific, geographical and historical interest when these match the pupils' areas of study. All of these activities help to broaden pupils' experiences, strengthen their self-confidence, encourage leadership and increase their maturity.
- 31 The school uses its very good links with the local community to add depth and breadth to pupils' learning through very good liaison with the local emergency services, schools and colleges. Outside sport agencies provide clubs for tennis, cricket and football coaching to raise pupils' motivation, self-esteem and achievement. It offers very good opportunities for parents to get involved in the life and work of the school. Excellent links exist with the Education Action Zone. The summer school run by them is very well attended. Very good links exist with pre-school settings and all the schools in the local cluster group. There are very good links with the partner secondary schools. A leading French teacher from one works regularly in the school, and staff from all schools work together to ensure that pupils transfer confidently to Year 7. Links with the College of St Mark and St John are very good. The school is one of the two City schools selected as a 'partner' and college staff feel that their students benefit greatly from their experiences in the school.
- 32 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. This is a very significant improvement on the satisfactory levels of provision for spiritual and cultural development, and good moral and social provision, noted in the previous report.
- 33 The provision for spiritual development is outstanding, and is built into every aspect of the school's work. Pupils are consistently encouraged to reflect, and to explore their personal values and beliefs, and to appreciate the beauty and mystery of the world around them.

Assemblies, religious education and ‘circle time’, when pupils think about things quietly together, provide many opportunities for reflection and pupils are encouraged to consider their own feelings and beliefs. They also reflect on the similarities and differences between religious faiths. They think hard about what they learn and reflect on it in a mature way, as was evident in a display of work when pupils had been asked to draw and write about the temptations of Jesus. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 write reflective diaries in which they explore their feelings and reactions to the events in their lives, often with great sensitivity.

- 34 Provision for moral development is very good. The school is very successful in developing a clear understanding of right and wrong in all its pupils. All members of the staff team set a very good example and consistently remind pupils of the importance of making the right choices. This is particularly effective when pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour through considering the views and feelings of others. They are expected to take very good care of their own, the school’s and others’ belongings and almost always do so. They take a pride in their school, encouraged by the very high standards of cleanliness and display in every part of the building. Pupils are encouraged to develop a code of behaviour and a set of values that will equip them for the responsibilities of adult life. They are involved in setting the class rules at the beginning of every year so that they learn about the importance of following a moral and social code. The very prominent displays of ‘merits’ in the classrooms foster pupils’ pride in behaving well and working hard.
- 35 Provision for social development is outstanding. Teachers and other staff are excellent role models and demonstrate how best to treat others through their own actions. The levels of respect shown by all staff to one another and to pupils are very high indeed and pupils learn by example to show respect to others. Staff work consistently to raise pupils’ self esteem. Pupils’ achievements are recognised positively in lessons and assemblies. The school provides a very wide range of meaningful opportunities for pupils to take responsibility within its community. For example, the school council has improved life for all pupils by lobbying successfully for playground markings and play equipment. Pupils are encouraged to hold money raising events for a wide range of local, national and international charities, gaining an understanding of how best to work together as well as appreciating that others face difficulties in life. Pupils in Year 6 are trained to act as mediators, dealing with squabbles and bullying behaviour in the playground. Assemblies, personal and health education lessons, and ‘circle time’, are used extremely effectively to promote positive moral and social attitudes. The wide range of extra-curricular opportunities enables pupils to develop their social skills and teamwork very effectively. They understand the importance of helping others and teachers are careful to ensure that they respect different opinions and beliefs to their own.
- 36 Provision for pupils’ cultural development is very good. The curriculum in English, art, religious education and music provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to learn about the beliefs, cultural and faith traditions of other people. For example, pupils have undertaken art work based on the work of artists from Australia and Africa. The finished work on display shows an excellent understanding of the importance of pictures to Aborigine artists in recording their life experiences. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were finding out about Jewish religious traditions and their central place in everyday life. In English, history,

geography and other lessons pupils learn about their own cultural background and traditions in a meaningful context. In art, they study the work of William Morris, for example, and in geography they make close studies of the local area. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to visit places of interest and to become involved in projects out of school, such as the Arts Week held annually by the National Trust in collaboration with the Education Action Zone. Visitors to the school include artists and theatre groups. Year 6 pupils have an opportunity to visit France.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 37 The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are excellent. Teachers and other staff know the pupils very well. This promotes a high standard of individual care for all, fostered by the outstandingly good quality of relationships throughout the school. The procedures for child protection are very clear. The headteacher is the designated person responsible and is both knowledgeable and experienced. Thorough policies and procedures are in place to monitor and address health and safety issues. Very good attention is paid to health and safety in lessons, particularly in practical sessions. There are some safety issues within the building, which is old and costly to maintain and improve, but staff and pupils exercise due care. The governing body has taken all the necessary measures to ensure that pupils are unable to access inappropriate websites when using the Internet. Arrangements for first aid are very good. The school has an appropriate policy for the administration of medicines in school and ensures that all parents comply with them. The procedures for dealing with illness or accidents work very well in practice. Parents are always informed if their child has needed first aid care. Aspects of the school's care for pupils have grown from a perceived need, for example the popular and well attended Breakfast Club began when staff realised how many pupils arrived at school without having eaten.
- 38 The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All statutory requirements are met. Individual needs, whether learning or emotional and behavioural, are identified at an early stage. Individual education and behaviour plans are clearly on the specific needs of each pupil. Teaching assistants are very well informed and involved so that they are very effective in working with pupils. They keep good, lesson by lesson notes so that all staff are aware of the progress each pupil makes. The school has very good links with outside agencies, including the health services, occupational health, the speech and language therapist, services for the visually impaired, educational psychologists, and behavioural support teams.
- 39 The school promotes the importance of prompt, regular attendance very effectively. The success of the strategies is evident in the significant improvement in attendance during the current school year. Absence is monitored thoroughly and any unexplained absence is followed up on the first day so that unauthorised absence is low. Lateness is not a significant problem but is monitored closely. The prospectus gives parents detailed information about the school's expectations and procedures. Most parents routinely inform the school of the reasons for any absence. The school involves the education welfare officer at an early stage when concerns arise.

- 40 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are outstanding. The consistently very high expectations teachers have of pupils' behaviour, and the emphasis throughout the school on positive discipline, ensure that very high standards are achieved and maintained. Teachers and other adults provide excellent role models for pupils. The respect that exists between all members of the staff team is consistently there for pupils to see and emulate. The supportive, family atmosphere of the school is also a significant factor in achieving high standards of behaviour. Pupils who find it difficult to regulate their own behaviour are very skilfully managed so that their behaviour rarely disturbs others. Their individual behaviour plans help them to learn self-control. Pupils help to write the rules for their class each year and, by doing so, clearly understand how they are expected to behave. Pupils of all ages value the merits they earn by behaving well and working hard. Almost all parents agree that the school achieves high standards of good behaviour.
- 41 Procedures for eliminating bullying, sexism and racism, and for raising racial awareness, are outstanding and are securely based on the respect pupils are encouraged to show to their peers, both through explicit teaching and by following the example of staff. Pupils and their parents state that, on the rare occasion when bullying does occur, it is dealt with promptly and effectively. However, the incidence is low and pupils could not remember any serious incidents. 'Circle time', when pupils sit and talk together in an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality, is used very effectively to discuss issues such as personal safety, including the importance of reporting bullying and other forms of harassment. The family atmosphere fostered by the school develops strong relationships between pupils from different year groups, which also helps to reduce the incidence of bullying. Trained pupil mediators help to resolve conflicts when they do occur. Pupils have total confidence in the knowledge that every adult in school would help them when any problems arose. They feel very safe in school. The outstandingly good relationships and mutual respect evident throughout the school play a significant part in ensuring that pupils consider the feelings of others so that they are less likely to behave in unpleasant ways.
- 42 An assessment of children's attainment is made on entry to the nursery is made by using a local home-school record of achievement. It does not include a judgement that relates to the national 'stepping stones' assessment scheme. Children's progress is currently identified through assessments made at the beginning and end of the reception year. This is used for setting individual targets for learning and for predicting possible outcomes at the end of Year 2. Observations of children's learning are carried out by all staff, and are used effectively to plan work and set targets for children to achieve.
- 43 The school has a systematic approach for assessing and recording pupils' attainment in Years 1-6. This, along with local authority data, provides the school with a wealth of assessment information. However, termly teacher assessments in mathematics and English are based on the assessments of different areas of learning. In one example, pupils' attainment in *writing* a play script was compared with a later judgement about *reading* texts. This does not help teachers to have a clear picture of a pupil's overall attainment. Teachers use end of year assessments effectively to group pupils for class teaching and ability 'sets'. Good use is made of assessment data. Teachers use their analysis of pupils' performance in optional and National Curriculum tests to adjust their planned schemes of

work for the following year. Additional time is allocated for those areas where pupils are underachieving. The school's present assessment system does not give teachers easy access to individual pupils' year on year progress because, although all the information is collected carefully, it is recorded in a variety of ways, making the retrieval of information complex. The assessment co-ordinator is aware of this difficulty and the school has identified funding to purchase computer software which will assess and record pupil progress. There is a lack of assessment data on pupils' progress in science.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 44 The responses to the parents' questionnaire and discussion at the parents' meeting indicate that parents are very supportive of the school. Virtually all parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems and state that their child likes school. They report that it is a "listening school". They are confident that children are expected to work hard and make good progress in response to the good teaching. Parents appreciate the high standards of behaviour and that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible individuals. They believe that the school is well led and managed. Inspection evidence bears out all these positive views. Parental views of the school are more positive than they were at the previous inspection.
- 45 Although some parents who returned the questionnaire stated that their child did not receive the right amount of homework, those who spoke at the meeting felt that homework prepared children well for secondary school and said that the school had achieved the right balance. Inspection evidence supports this view. A small number of parents stated that they were not kept well informed about the progress their child was making. Inspectors found that there are many opportunities, both formal and informal, for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers, who are willing to see any parent on request at any reasonable time. Some parents felt that there could be a greater range of activities outside the formal school day. The inspectors can reassure parents that the range of before-school, lunchtime, after-school and holiday activities is far greater than is found in most schools.
- 46 The school has established a number of very effective links with parents. The prospectus is a very comprehensive document and contains a wealth of useful information so that parents are very well informed about school procedures and expectations from the outset. Teachers and other staff build good relationships with parents from the time their children first enter the school. A particular feature is the way staff and parents mingle in the playground at the end of the day. This enables achievements or concerns to be shared informally, questions to be asked and relationships to be strengthened. Parents have three formal opportunities each year to consult with their child's teacher and attendance at consultation meetings is consistently very high. Parents value the fact that they are welcome to discuss their child at other times and are confident that the school informs them of any concerns about progress, behaviour or attendance at an early stage. The Parent, Teacher and Friends Association is a successful group that holds social and fund raising events throughout the year.
- 47 The school provides a very good range of information for parents, a significant improvement from the satisfactory judgement in the previous inspection report. The school prospectus

and governors' annual report to parents are well presented and useful. The prospectus is particularly detailed. Regular newsletters keep parents very well informed about school events and achievements. They include useful reminders about procedures as well as celebrating pupils' achievements. All the written information for parents is written in clear English and avoids the use of jargon. Parents are informed and involved at an early stage if concerns arise so that they can work with staff to address the issue. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well informed and involved at all stages. They appreciate the many opportunities they have to discuss their child's progress with staff, both formally and informally. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly and shared with parents so that parents are aware of their child's targets and the ways they are being helped to achieve them.

- 48 The quality of the annual progress reports on pupils to their parents is very good overall. The 'Welcome' reports, sent at the end of first term, are a particular strength. They take the form of a letter to the child and indicate in a very positive way how confidently he or she has settled into school and what they like best. Throughout the school, reports follow a clear format and provide information about every subject as well as giving attendance data and targets for improvement. Each report has a self-portrait by the child on the front and space for pupils to write their own comments on the year. Teachers' comments provide a clear picture of the pupil's attitude to the subject, his or her strengths and areas for development. Targets are specific and useful, for example "To count forwards and backwards in tens from any two digit number, at speed" so that parents know what to do to help. The quality of reporting of progress is variable. Some teachers give a clear picture of the specific progress made, especially in English, mathematics and science, but too often the comments are general. However, the very good opportunities parents have to consult with teachers means that they are well informed about progress.
- 49 Parents are welcome to help in a variety of ways, for example by hearing pupils read and helping with extra-curricular activities. A number provide regular help but support for special events is very good. Parents listen to their child read at home and help with other homework tasks, such as learning spellings and times tables. They support the school by routinely informing staff of the reason when their child is absent and by ensuring that children arrive on time in the mornings. The school, through the Education Action Zone, is part of the "Share" project, in which parents work with their children. This is accredited by a local college and is popular with parents. The school is committed to fostering positive relationships with all its parents by keeping them very well informed about school procedures and events, and by ensuring that all staff are accessible so that parents are encouraged to visit school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 50 The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and provides outstanding leadership and management. There is a very clear commitment from the headteacher, senior staff and the governing body to raising standards.

- 51 The headteacher has an effective senior management team. Roles are clearly defined and understood, leading to good communication and co-operative working throughout the school. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction and her exceptional skills in the delegation of responsibility to staff are highly successful. This plays a significant role in the professional development of all staff by allowing them to grow and flourish, and is reflected in the very high standard of commitment and energy by everyone throughout the school.
- 52 The headteacher and senior managers review the strengths of the school effectively and have identified further areas to develop, including the extended provision of ICT and a continued focus on raising standards. Consequently pupils make very good progress from the often very low attainment on entry. The school improvement plan reflects the school's aims and objectives, and promotes high standards. The senior management team, governors and co-ordinators work together closely to review the plan annually and revise as necessary. The school's explicit aims are evident in all aspects of its work and, particularly, in the pupils' behaviour and attitudes. High quality displays of pupils' work and achievements reflect the positive philosophy of the school. Excellent relationships and a commitment to equality for all are seen in all its work.
- 53 Subject co-ordinators are actively involved in monitoring planning and books, observing teaching and leading teachers' professional development. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have a regular opportunity to monitor and evaluate standards through direct observation of lessons, but others are not yet using their release time for this purpose. Co-ordinators are skilled in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. There is a rolling programme for review and development that ensures that all subjects are reviewed every three years. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and efficient and has developed very good monitoring and assessment systems. Much of this work is carried out by teaching assistants, who embrace their responsibility to ensure that the pupils with special educational needs achieve success. The co-ordinator gives pupils individual education plans, which provide a good mix between intervention programmes and in-class support, and has written a very comprehensive special educational needs policy. There is strong and purposeful leadership and management of the nursery and reception classes where all the staff demonstrate a clear sense of direction. The team is very strong and works closely together. They have identified the outdoor area as a priority for continued development, including an outdoor store and areas for planting and digging.
- 54 The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well and is appropriately involved in setting the school's strategic direction and oversees plans for improvement. The governors' improvement committee focuses on standards and attainment, and actively supports the headteacher and the staff in their drive for higher pupil attainment. The governors monitor teaching alongside the headteacher and co-ordinators, which gives them a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. All statutory requirements are fulfilled. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.
- 55 The headteacher is firmly committed to raising the quality of teaching and learning. There are established systems for the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching.

Teachers' performance management is now embedded in the school programme with staff targets linked to overall school improvement. The governing body sets annual targets for the headteacher. There are established arrangements for the induction of new staff, which involve the appropriate year leaders as mentors. Similarly, newly qualified teachers have a systematic programme of support and training. The school is a principal provider for initial teacher training. The College of St Mark and St John provided clear evidence that the school is held in very high regard by this major training institution. This is of considerable benefit for all concerned, including the pupils, and is a strength of the school.

- 56 Financial planning is good and has improved since the last inspection. The headteacher and governing body have established a well-researched three-year strategic plan. Budget allocations are driven by national initiatives and strategies, the local authority education development plan, and the needs of the school. Spending is monitored carefully and all governors are kept informed through the provision of regular budget statements. Office routines are effective and well established. The administration team work closely with senior staff and provide an efficient and reliable service. The school has benefited from the Education Action Zone finance for out-of-school clubs, which has further enriched the curriculum opportunities for pupils. Similarly 'Sure Start', a government initiative which supports families and pre-school children in disadvantaged areas, has provided funding for the initial development of the out-door area for the younger children. The headteacher and governing body apply the principles of 'best value' carefully. For example, the allocation of funding to meet the best needs of the pupils and the school through the provision of well trained support assistants.
- 57 The number and match of teachers to support the curriculum is good. The support staff responsible for special educational needs, and other teaching assistants, are very effective and play a major part in the success of the school. They support pupils very well in lessons and enable pupils to progress and succeed. At the time of the inspection the deputy headteacher was absent on maternity leave. The acting deputy headteacher has provided loyal and efficient support for the headteacher and staff in her absence, and has made very good use of an important opportunity for his own professional development.
- 58 The accommodation is spacious with an appropriate sports field and environmental area. The efficient caretaker and her staff keep the school very clean. The recent building of the new hall has considerably extended the facilities for pupils' physical development. Similarly the new building has enabled the Foundation Stage classes for nursery and reception to come together, including a shared out-door play area. This is currently satisfactory, and there are plans to develop it further. The governing body recognises that parts of the building require further work to bring it up to a good standard of repair. Resources for all areas of the curriculum are generally good, with the exception of ICT where there are not enough computers in classrooms to enable pupils to use their ICT skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- 59 Taking pupils' well below average attainment on entry into account, the broadly average expenditure per pupil, the high quality of leadership and management, the good behaviour

and very good standard of teaching, and pupils' generally very good progress, the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60 The headteacher, staff and governing body should continue to work closely together and, as identified in their school improvement plan:

- (1) Improve the ways in which the information about pupils' attainment is organised so that teachers have a clearer picture of their pupils' progress;
(see paragraphs 43, 99 and 118)
- (2) Increase the number of planned opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in all areas of the curriculum;
(see paragraphs 8, 23, 90, 100, 102, 105, 112, 127 and 136)
- (3) Raise standards in art and design in Year 6, and in design and technology in Year 2 and Year 6.
(see paragraphs 7, 23, 101 and 104)

The headteacher, staff and governors should also address the following minor issue:

- Make increased use of the opportunities for all co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.
(see paragraphs 53, 106, 123 and 127)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	21	26	7	0	0	0
Percentage	2	38	47	13	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 approximately two 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)	23	274
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	76

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	86

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	25	14	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	20
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	32	33	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (86)	85 (86)	82 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	21
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	32	32	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (81)	82 (90)	85 (83)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	26	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	21
	Girls	20	19	23
	Total	38	37	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (72)	77 (69)	92 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	17	17
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	33	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (59)	77 (53)	77 (84)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	268	3	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.24
Average class size	26.45

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	291.37

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78.12
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.0

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	813690
Total expenditure	762326
Expenditure per pupil	2405
Balance brought forward from previous year	37043
Balance carried forward to next year	51364

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	320
Number of questionnaires returned	176

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	50	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	49	15	2	1
The teaching is good.	51	46	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	43	11	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	34	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	39	50	9	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	47	47	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	53	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	36	9	1	10

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

- 61 The evidence is based on discussions with the nursery and reception classes' staff, and through looking at books and displays, teachers' planning and observation records, and from lesson observations. The full range of curriculum was observed during twelve visits to the three Foundation Stage classes. Fifty-two children attend either a morning or afternoon session.
- 62 Provision for three, four and five year old children across the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved since the previous inspection. The nursery and reception classes are now in the same building with access to an outdoor area. The nursery and reception classrooms are of an adequate size, and good use is made of the adjoining hall and the wild life garden area. The Foundation Stage outdoor area is in the process of being developed and has recently acquired a safety surface and climbing frame financed from the local 'Sure Start' scheme. This is a government led initiative to support families and young children in poor areas. Children who have special needs related to behaviour and social difficulties are particularly well supported and included in the activities. There are very good relationships with parents throughout the Foundation Stage. There is a 'Welcome to Nursery' programme, which provides a good start to school, and home visits are organised for new parents. This very good partnership with parents/carers continues through into reception classes.
- 63 The leadership and management of the nursery and reception classes is strong and purposeful, and all the staff share the same clear sense of direction. The team is very strong and works closely together. They have identified the outdoor area as a priority for continued development, including an outdoor store and areas for planting and digging.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 64 The majority of children are often unsure of themselves when they start school and have few social skills. They are interested but need encouragement to try new activities. They are often allowed to develop their concentration through activities chosen by themselves, as was seen when a child in the nursery concentrated for a long time making a suitcase out of boxes to take to the 'beach'.
- 65 The quality of teaching is very good. Children are taught basic social skills through the sensitive support and guidance of the staff. Children who were arguing over a train, for example, were helped to resolve their conflict themselves through the highly skilled intervention of the teacher. Children become more confident, are able to share and take turns, and understand the standard of behaviour expected of them. The consistent high expectation of good behaviour and positive attitudes enables children to make good progress. Those in the nursery visit the café at the 'garden centre' and order chips politely, and children play co-operatively in the 'pirate's ship'. They learn to select their own

materials independently and this continues to a certain extent in the reception classes. They learn to dress and undress themselves, although many children in the reception classes still need help when changing into shorts and tee shirts to go outside for 'races'. The vast majority of children have made considerable progress by the time they leave their reception class but are unlikely to have achieved nationally expected levels. Those with special educational needs are well integrated into the learning environment. They are very well supported by the staff who ensure that they make good progress.

Communication, language and literacy

- 66 Nearly all the children's attainment on entry to the nursery in communication, language and literacy skills is very significantly below expected levels. Very good teaching in both nursery and reception classes, enables the children to make good progress but standards are still well below expected levels by the time they move to Year 1. Children have a wide range of opportunities to speak and listen to adults and other children. The successful development of the children's speaking and listening skills is a clear focus for learning in both nursery and reception. Teachers ask questions, initiate conversation and challenge children's thinking. "How many trains have you got? What colour are they? Where are they going?" By the end of the reception year, many children can retell their experiences in simple terms but do not yet have a wide vocabulary. Many give limited answers and do not readily initiate conversation.
- 67 Staff work very hard to help children develop their skills in using language for thinking. The children do not willingly communicate their ideas and need support to describe what they see, to create roles and interact imaginatively. Teachers provide a wide range of exciting stimuli for conversation, as when children opened a 'treasure chest' as part of the week's pirate theme to see what was inside.
- 68 Children are actively encouraged to enjoy books. Most have had little experience of books before they start nursery, but by the end of the reception year many know how to handle books and that print carries meaning. Children use information books. They learn words like 'float', 'mast' and 'sail' when 'reading' about boats. They enjoy rhyming words as when children in a reception class experimented and found rhymes based on the story about Mrs Pirate who likes carrots and has a parrot. Children learn to identify the initial sound of a word, as when the nursery teacher used the treasure chest as a stimulus for children to find things beginning with 'p'.
- 69 The children are actively encouraged from an early stage to make their own attempts at writing. All their mark making is valued and develops their confidence and willingness to have a go. There are many examples of writing on display in the classrooms, which enables the children to see its value and importance. Children 'wrote' their own sentences about a pirate story, the teacher acting as scribe and writing underneath what they had said. This contributes greatly to children's understanding that print carries meaning. Most children can hold a pencil effectively by the end of the reception year, and are beginning to form recognisable letters as the result of very good teaching.

- 70 There are a small number of children in the nursery and reception classes who have been identified as having specific special educational needs in relation to speech and language. They are fully involved in all the class activities and supported by very effective support assistants.

Mathematical development

- 71 Children's attainment on entry to nursery is well below the average and, despite hard work and good progress by the time they leave their reception classes, the majority are unlikely to fully reach expected levels by the time they go into Year 1. The quality of teaching is very good. Learning is good because children are highly motivated, teachers ask probing questions skilfully, and the good basic skills teaching is rigorous and enjoyable. There is evidence of number activities in all the classes, with areas dedicated to numeracy. Children in the nursery count the six buttons on Mrs Pirate's coat. Many reception children, supported and led by the teacher, can count to twenty backwards and forwards, matching one to one along a number line. Children in reception are able to combine two groups of objects together and count the total. They are beginning to understand the language of 'more than' and 'less than'. They enjoy using coins as part of a treasure dig within the pirates theme. They can identify the different coins, count the correct number and place coins in sets of similar coins. Some can count reliably to seven, some to ten and many recognise numerals one to nine independently. A more able child could find numbers on a hundred square.
- 72 Play activities that involve the use of sand and water are used very skilfully to develop children's learning about space and measure. Many children in nursery do not have the mathematical language associated with measurement. Children in reception have an awareness of size and shape and can use language such as 'big' and 'little'. They can make observations and talk about how some shapes are the same and some are different. They look carefully at two-dimensional shapes and identify small circles for the crab's eyes. Overall learning is good because the teaching follows a very well considered pattern based on the clear understanding of how children learn. This also ensures that children with special educational needs make good progress alongside the rest of the class.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 73 Many activities and opportunities are planned which encourage children's exploration and observation of the world, and make them aware of cultures and beliefs that lie outside their current experiences. They are encouraged to use all their senses to find out about things around them. They use magnifying glasses to focus their attention on the detail of things in the classroom and outside. Some know that it makes things 'look bigger'. Similarly children use a telescope to look out from the pirate ship. Staff provide a stimulating and exciting learning environment to motivate children to learn, as is evident in the pirate theme. Children in the nursery class show curiosity, observe and handle objects from the pirate's treasure chest, and teachers help them to talk about the objects they find. A child digs in the sand 'looking for treasure' and finds a shiny ring. Her face lights up with surprise and pleasure.

- 74 Children have opportunities to join materials together using sticky tape and glue, and how to handle tools appropriately. They use brushes to 'paint' the wall outside and scissors to cut tape to join two boxes together. They use plastic bricks that join together to build a boat. Children have some opportunities to use and find out about ICT. They use the computer and play with a program about the sea. They match shapes and know what a lighthouse is for. Some children in the nursery know the term 'mouse' but are not confident in using it to click on the screen symbols.
- 75 Children are taught about the passage of time on a daily basis. They find the date on the weather card and talk about 'today', 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow'. They observe and find out about where they live. They make treasure maps and understand that the map pictures give information about an island, which they then take them outside to the garden and 'pretend' to look for treasure. They try to match their pictures to the wild life garden, identifying features in this imaginary place that they like and don't like. The children know that the 'x' is a symbol for buried treasure.
- 76 Overall, the children make good progress, including those with special educational needs, in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world, but having come into nursery with such limited language skills, only a few will achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Physical development

- 77 The overall quality of teaching is very good. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their physical development but are unlikely to achieve the levels expected for their age by the time they move into Year 1. Children in the nursery have good access to a secure outside play area. This provides space for them to walk freely, run, ride wheeled toys and climb. Children in reception can use this area but not as readily. They do, however, have good access to the hall. They use the playground and the field to run races and use small apparatus such as bean bags, balls and ropes. Reception children go on to the field to practise races. When doing the warm up ready for team games the teacher puts her hand on her chest and says "Can you feel your heart bumping?" The children respond positively.
- 78 Children have many opportunities to develop the delicate skills needed for holding a paintbrush or pencil, joining plastic bricks together and manipulating scissors. Teachers plan carefully to support such development and children make good progress. Children in the reception classes pour their own milk or water from a jug into a beaker at snack time with care and precision.

Creative development

- 79 Many children find it difficult to use their imagination when they enter the nursery. All adults who work with the children encourage them to express their ideas and stimulate thought through questions and possible suggestions. This, combined with a rich, exciting

environment and well planned resources, helps the children to develop their own ideas. The climbing frame in the nursery is a 'Pirates' ship', children role play pirates with a telescope, a treasure chest and eye patch. The 'garden centre' provides further opportunities for role-play.

- 80 Children have opportunities to paint and they begin to learn about colour. They paint using paint blocks and brushes on paper in the reception classes. They explore malleable materials and attempt to manipulate the material to achieve a planned effect, as when a child in nursery explained to the adult near him that he was going to make a model of her head. Staff give very good support and get children to talk about their pictures and models. Children make good overall progress in creative development but many are still working within the early learning goals at the end of the reception year. This good progress is due to the very good teaching, promoting children's language, confidence and ideas.
- 81 Children use musical instruments and explore making sounds. A child spontaneously sings a song while making a model, encouraged by a nearby adult. A reception teacher used rhythm and clapping hands at registration time. When the child's name was called, they made a rhythmic pattern and the others copied it. Creative development notably runs across all areas of learning with staff finding imaginative and creative ways to inspire enthusiasm and excitement in children's learning.

ENGLISH

- 82 Overall standards are below average in Year 2 and are in line in Year 6. When the children start school in the nursery their communication, language and literacy skills are poor. This affects their writing, understanding of texts and ability to discuss their ideas in any depth, throughout the school. The samples of pupils' work in English, analysed and seen during the week of the inspection, indicated that each year group has a wide range of ability. Pupils make very good progress to reach average standards by the time they complete Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs, or who use English as an additional language, also make very good progress in response to very good teaching, and the high quality of individual support they receive from the skilled teaching assistants.
- 83 Standards of speaking are below expected levels, but pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour mean that they listen very attentively and concentrate hard. The school takes an effective and carefully planned cross-curricular approach to developing their skills. As a consequence, listening skills are very well developed by the end of Year 6 in English and in all other subjects. However, although pupils in all years are given many very good opportunities to contribute their own ideas and respond positively to the very good questioning by teachers, many still find it difficult to articulate their ideas or ask questions in whole class and group discussions.
- 84 Standards in reading are in line with national averages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has helped considerably to ensure a consistent approach to planning and teaching reading skills. Good progress is seen throughout the school. A strong focus on teaching basic reading skills, and an effective use

of the same text for group or whole class work, has improved fluency and expression. The skills needed to read with deeper understanding are taught well. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts has been considerably extended through the Strategy and the teachers' own explicit love of books. Pupils enjoy reading and some are tackling demanding texts. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy the books written by Jill Murphy, particularly *The Worst Witch*. Pupils in Year 6 generally preferred poetry and non-fiction books to fiction. A few boys, after reading the Horrible History series, were keen to find out more about the past from history books. Higher attaining pupils show a deeper understanding of a range of texts, can select essential points and use inference and deduction appropriately. Some pupils were reading the latest J K Rowling book and were predicting what might happen next. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra support with their reading, individually or in groups, and achieve well.

- 85 The two libraries have been developed very well since the previous inspection when there were insufficient books to support the National Curriculum and some were very old and outdated. The libraries are very welcoming, contain colourful displays and attractive carpets and furniture. Pupils make very good use of the well-stocked shelves that now contain many high quality and attractive books. Many pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 attend the Library Lunch sessions to enjoy books, or sit and read to their reading 'buddy' from Year 6, or a parent or teaching assistant. Pupils in Year 5 act as librarians, and look after and run the libraries to develop their independent skills, with the help of parents, teaching assistants and a governor. The use of the libraries contributes effectively to meeting the National Literacy Strategy objectives and is used purposefully in other subjects for research.
- 86 Standards in writing are generally below expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have enquiring minds and are keen to learn, but most have difficulty articulating their thoughts and committing their ideas to paper. When pupils enter Year 1 their writing skills are below expected levels. Their books indicate that very few are able to write a simple sentence and some are still putting marks on paper. Standards rise steadily as pupils become older because they are very well taught. Year 2 pupils have progressed from writing simple sentences, using a sequence of pictures to develop a story, to the composition of lengthy and imaginative narratives. Some higher attaining pupils use inverted commas correctly to indicate speech. Pupils in Year 6 write effectively in a variety of written forms and cover all aspects of the English curriculum. Much of their writing is 'for a purpose' and is collected together in topics and made into books. These include historical accounts, letters to the British Museum about their history project, and to the Council protesting about plans to build a supermarket on the football field. They have written booklets about life in Ancient Greece and for their study of mountains. Good use is made of the full range of literacy skills in other subjects, in religious education, for example, where pupils write and read prayers, and look for key words, skim, and take notes before presenting their work orally to the rest of the class.
- 87 Spelling was not taught systematically at the time of the last inspection and standards were low. The school has started to raise standards, but many pupils in Year 2 still spell words exactly as they sound. However, the investigations into letter sounds in the younger classes and the weekly spelling lists given to the older pupils are starting to take effect. Grammar is

taught systematically across the school, and is helping to raise standards in reading and speech as well as in writing. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauri to improve their work and widen their vocabularies. Punctuation is understood and used well. Individual targets help pupils to focus on their individual areas for improvement. The analysis of pupils' work and lesson observations indicate that the teaching of handwriting is improving and meeting the curricular target set by the school. The handwriting in some books in Year 2 is just beginning to reach the expected standard, which continues to improve up to Year 5. There is still a wide variety of attainment in Year 6.

- 88 The quality of teaching and learning is very good and is much improved since the previous inspection. Teachers' enthusiasm, and very secure knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy, have helped to give lessons a firmer structure and pace, and to include strategies that make sure that each group is set a challenging task set at the correct level of difficulty. Teachers have high expectations. Their lessons are well planned, with clear learning outcomes that are shared with the pupils so that they know what they will have achieved by the end of the lesson. Recent work to improve the plenary or final part of the lesson has given teachers a better understanding of how much pupils have learned and understood. Teaching is challenging and interesting, and relationships are very good. Imaginative writing in Year 3/4, for example, was stimulated during the inspection week when teachers conjured up excitement before writing a mystery story by taking pupils to the environmental area where they found treasure. "Where had it come from? Who had left it? What should we do with it? What does this written clue mean?"
- 89 The quality of marking of pupils' work varies. The best marking identifies how a pupil can improve. Younger pupils have set targets which they check every day before and after work. This is good practice. Consequently, the pupils have very good attitudes to their work, appreciate the teacher's efforts, take notice, evaluate their work and correct it. There were other examples of marking which did not provide comments for improvement and in some cases the targets set for older pupils were too general and did not take into account the small steps required for improvement in writing.
- 90 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinators are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. They are fully aware of the standards required to achieve the highest grades and seek to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. Pupils' progress in reading, writing and in spelling is monitored effectively by using annual tests. The quality of the co-ordinators' monitoring and evaluation of lessons, including feedback to each individual teacher, is good. There is an incisive action plan in place to maintain and raise attainment in English. The targets within this plan are achievable as a number of pupils in Year 4 and 5 are already working above the national expectations for their age. Resources required to promote the introduction of the literacy hour are of a very good quality and have been chosen well. The school is aware that pupils are not given enough opportunities to use ICT in literacy lessons, for example to draft work directly on screen using the word processing skills they have learned in ICT lessons.

MATHEMATICS

- 91 Standards are in line with national averages in Year 2 and Year 6, and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. This is due to the school's effective introduction and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the high expectations teachers have of what their pupils can achieve. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs enabling them to experience all parts of the curriculum and to make very good progress.
- 92 Pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of numbers and their application. They know the place value of digits up to 100. Higher attaining pupils are able to sort numbers to 1000 in the correct order. All pupils recognise number patterns easily, for example, counting forwards and backwards to 100 in tens. They are confident in addition and subtraction and know how the inverse can be used to solve problems. Higher attaining pupils are also able to use this process with multiplication and division. Pupils are familiar with a variety of strategies for solving number problems including doubling, halving, and partitioning. The more able pupils are able to solve word problems that require two separate calculations. Pupils have a secure understanding of other aspects of mathematics. They recognise the basic two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties accurately. They can identify and draw lines of symmetry. Pupils are building a mathematical vocabulary but are not yet confident in using mathematical terms to explain their work.
- 93 Year 6 pupils are beginning to manipulate numbers well, looking for short methods of calculation. They are confident in solving number problems using all four number operations. Pupils use mental operations to help them solve problems. They understand short and long multiplication and can complete written calculations extending to two decimal places. All pupils, including the less able, are confident in the use of co-ordinates. Pupils can identify and classify regular and irregular polygons using mathematical properties. They can recognise reflective symmetry in regular polygons and can translate shapes both horizontally and vertically. While pupils have a good knowledge of mathematical terms, which they can use appropriately when prompted by the teacher, they do not automatically use a mathematical vocabulary. Pupils use their understanding of numeracy effectively in other areas of the curriculum, including accurate measurements in science and an understanding of basic geometry in programming a screen 'robot' in an ICT lesson.
- 94 While the overall quality of teaching is good, very good mathematical teaching is evident throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and base them securely on the National Numeracy Strategy. They have high expectations for their pupils and find many interesting and stimulating ways to deliver the subject. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils were asked to correct work and provide strategies to show how the calculations could be worked out. This enabled them to demonstrate their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Pupils made very good progress in a Year 6 lesson because the teacher was extremely clear about what she expected every pupil to achieve with effort and kept checking that they understood each stage of the work. She encouraged pupils to learn from their own mistakes and asked questions of pupils of all abilities encouraging them to think mathematically. Pupils enjoy numeracy lessons because their teachers do as well. They are

keen to answer questions in the mental arithmetic and during whole class sessions. Limited use is made of ICT.

- 95 The school has worked hard to improve standards in mathematics. The appointment of a leading mathematics teacher has provided staff with extra support. All teachers, but particularly the co-ordinator, have been supported effectively by the local authority's numeracy consultants. The co-ordinator is developing her monitoring role effectively, including the observation of lessons. This enables her to see standards at first hand, to spread good practice and support colleagues in any areas of uncertainty. Resources are good and well used. The library contains an appropriate range of mathematical books. The school provides good opportunities for pupils with all abilities to achieve well.

SCIENCE

- 96 Standards are below expected levels in Year 2, but are in line with national averages in Year 6. Pupils make very good progress against their prior attainment. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection when attainment was judged to be below average in both age groups and progress was satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the very good support provided in lessons and the very good standard of planning and match of work to pupils' ability.
- 97 There is a clear focus on speaking and listening, aimed to develop pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding throughout the school. The majority of pupils in Year 2 understand how to investigate living things, and have planted and watched a bean grow. They know what happened when the bean had no light or water, but many found it difficult to attempt an explanation because they do not have the necessary speaking and listening skills. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to explore and investigate for themselves, to ask questions and develop their own ideas for how and why things happen. A few pupils can use scientific language such as 'cell' but many find this difficult. Pupils in Year 3/4 learn about friction by experimenting with ramps and wheeled toys. They discuss the investigation in groups and plan a fair test, knowing that to be fair they need to change one variable. These pupils are developing a good scientific vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 develop their understanding of a fair test when investigating air resistance and its effect on a moving object by discussing physical processes in small groups. Many are able to use scientific language such as surface area and gravity but find detailed explanations difficult.
- 98 The standard of teaching is good, with several strong features. Teachers plan effectively. They use a variety of effective teaching methods so that they can include a range of learning styles, as when Year 1/2 played a series of active games to learn about and identify the characteristics of certain habitats in relation to rock pools. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which enables them to give clear explanations and demonstrations, and to ask questions to get pupils to think for themselves. All pupils' responses are respected and challenged appropriately. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils learn quickly because they are interested and involved, and their behaviour and attitudes are very good. They develop their scientific vocabulary and are aware that they

will use this knowledge and understanding in 'real life' when, for example, they visit the beach. These good lessons are taught at a brisk pace.

- 99 Leadership and management of the subject are both good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a good subject knowledge. He has monitored teaching in Year 1 and 2, looked at pupils' books in Years 3-6, and has correctly identified scientific enquiry as an area for development. The marking in books is inconsistent and often not helpful in developing learning. This is an area for improvement. The school has started to collect assessment data about pupils in all year groups, but more work is needed to help teachers plan more accurately from a basis of knowing more about what pupils can do and understand.
- 100 The school is well resourced and the equipment is well organised and managed. The two libraries contain an appropriate range of scientific books. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to increase ICT resources and their use in all aspects of the science curriculum. The school has access to a well managed wild life area in the school grounds, which provides first hand experiences for pupils of life processes and living things. The school provides a very good range of visits and uses the local learning facilities such as the space station at Callington Community College and Wembury beach. Speakers are invited, notably a representative from NASA, who gave pupils an opportunity to see the moon rocks from the Apollo space mission. The Education Action Zone has promoted this aspect of the curriculum by supporting an out-of-school club called 'Rocket Science'.

ART AND DESIGN

- 101 Attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations in Year 2. This is an improvement from the school's previous inspection when standards were below those expected nationally. Pupils make good progress in Year 1 and Year 2 and given the opportunity to explore a range of media including model making, printing and painting. As in the previous inspection, standards in Years 3-6 are below those expected nationally. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Those with special educational needs make similar progress to the rest of their classes and are fully involved in all art and design activities.
- 102 Good teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 enables pupils to develop their observational skills and the use of tools and techniques. Pupils were observed using drawing pencils effectively, creating tone and texture when sketching shells and other seaside objects. Art and design activities in Year 3-6 are often linked to other curriculum areas. This is good practice, but teachers often spent too much of their teaching time making links with other subject areas and not teaching art and design skills. Although the standard of teaching observed in lessons was satisfactory, the pupils were not encouraged enough to develop independence in terms of the techniques and choice from a range of materials. They do not have enough opportunities to express their opinions about their own work or to give critical explanations of how they might improve. Pupils show a lack of knowledge about artists and designers from different times and cultures and limited use is made of ICT.
- 103 The new art and design co-ordinator has made a good start in improving the use of sketchbooks, which are now used effectively throughout the school. She is aware of the

curriculum development needs for the subject and has written an action plan that begins to address some of the issues. The standard of display around the school is good and pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills in the after-school art club. Each year the school holds a 'Whole School Arts Week', which makes a positive contribution to the subject. Resources are satisfactory and teachers make good use of the art room. The libraries contain an appropriate range of books and materials about famous artists and art history.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 104 Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected for pupils of their age. It was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology during the inspection. Judgements, therefore, have been made on the basis of a scrutiny of pupils' work on displays and in their books, talking to the co-ordinators, photographic evidence and talking to groups of pupils. Standards have not improved since the previous inspection, and are lower in Year 2. There was not enough information to make a secure judgement about pupils' progress. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all design and technology activities.
- 105 The school has a planned rolling programme for themes through which design and technology can be delivered. Evidence was seen of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 making glove puppets, a chassis framework for the body of a car and the design for a wind-up toy. Older pupils have had the opportunity to make a fairground ride, design a shelter, make a money container and book markers. While these are all suitable activities for delivering the programmes of study for design and technology, evidence, particularly from talking to pupils, showed that they had not acquired the required levels of skills needed to meet national expectations. Too much of the work, particularly in Years 3-6, is very teacher directed. Pupils are given limited range of materials with which to decorate their products, and are not given enough opportunities for evaluating and improving their designs. Not enough links are made to ICT.
- 106 The two co-ordinators have made a good start at improving the range of resources available for delivering the curriculum. These are now satisfactory. The co-ordinators have created 'topic boxes' with materials and ideas for activities. They are not yet monitoring systems and procedures, or observing lessons, so that they can assess pupils' understanding and learning. The co-ordinators have made links with a technology centre, to enable them to explore how the connection can extend the pupils' range of experiences. Pupils enjoy the annual school's 'Arts Week' that includes design and technology activities.

GEOGRAPHY

- 107 Standards are above national expectations in Year 2 and in line in Year 6. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons in Year 3-6 during the week of the inspection. Judgement of pupils' attainment is based on evidence that was collected from teachers' plans, pupils' books, displays of work around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils make very good progress from Year 1-2 and satisfactory progress in Years

- 3-6. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress because staff make sure they fully understand any fresh information or new geographical terms.
- 108 There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The school has reviewed the curriculum, developed new policies to inform teachers' planning and updated the schemes of work to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. There has been some progress in the use of assessment, the use of ICT for research, and in the monitoring and evaluation of standards.
- 109 School visits and visitors into school extend many aspects of the curriculum and help to reinforce class-based activities. Pupils in Year 2 have visited the local area and have produced a booklet: 'A Visitors Guide to Weston Mill', in which they describe the geographical features of places in the neighbourhood that are well known to them. This has given them a clearer understanding of what a map is, and how to use maps to draw detailed routes to school. In one good lesson, pupils were preparing for their visit to Wembury the following week to find out how the seaside was different from their own locality. All pupils in Year 1 and 2 have a European Passport to visit places around the world. They have 'visited' The North Pole and a tropical rainforest. The suitcases of clothes show they understand the climatic differences. They enjoyed finding out about places with 'Felix the Rabbit' who had travelled from America to London, Paris to Rome, and from Egypt to Kenya. Consequently, they understand some features of the capital cities, travelling by sea, air and road and that places can be hot or cold.
- 110 The work based on a city, town and village in Year 3/4 helps pupils to distinguish the similar and different characteristics of places. This learning enables pupils in Years 5/6 to draw good comparisons between life in Chembakoli and Bangalore. These skills are developed and used well when pupils sketch plans and use maps on visits, to find their way around the village of Princetown on Dartmoor for example, and compare similarities and differences with Weston Mill. The three-dimensional topographical models hanging on the walls on the staircases are very good because they have helped the older pupils to learn the location of the key mountains and mountainous areas in Europe. Pupils understand why it is colder higher up the mountain and much warmer in the foothills.
- 111 Pupils develop speaking and listening skills through their contact with other people on their visits and when asking questions of visitors to their class. They use the library to research information and have written letters to the authorities complaining about changes in their local environment. Reading and writing skills are planned in literacy lessons when teachers carefully chose suitable books related to the topic of the 'mountain environment'. Pupils develop their numeracy skills through working out the time it takes to reach places, how far away a country is and by using map co-ordinates and grid references.
- 112 The hardworking co-ordinator has raised the status of geography in the school. She has given the staff guidance on the use of ICT and is aware that its use is still in an early stage. She does not currently have an opportunity to assess standards at first hand through direct observation of teaching and learning. The action plan addresses a range of carefully selected issues and, in turn, to raise attainment further by the end of Year 6. The two libraries

contain an appropriate range of books and materials about a range of countries and geographical areas.

HISTORY

- 113 Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Evidence was collected from teachers' plans, books and displays of pupils' work around the school and in discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards are higher in Year 6 than at the previous inspection. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs because care is taken that they understand the texts.
- 114 Pupils in Year 1 have watched videos to help them notice the changes between how people lived in the recent past and how they live today. Year 2 pupils know that Victoria was a Queen and could point out similarities and difference in items in a kitchen between now and then. They know that we now have electricity and plastic. They could recall learning about the Gunpowder Plot and knew that this was why we celebrate Bonfire Night on November 5th.
- 115 The Year 6 displays and use of time lines on Ancient Greece, and the Year 3/4 work on the Tudors, are very impressive. These show how well the teachers value the work of the pupils. The pupils had written to the British Museum to find out more about life in Ancient Greece. They were delighted when they received a reply and used the materials to help with their individual research work based on an aspect of life in Ancient Greece. The work was presented and displayed effectively in open book form around the large maps of this area on the walls of each classroom.
- 116 It was not possible to observe enough lessons during the week of the inspection to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching but both the lessons seen were good. Pupils in Year 6 learned effectively about the Olympic Games because the teacher had prepared the lesson very thoroughly and they were very interested in finding out more about the various events from the materials she had prepared. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress because they listened and watched the video carefully, and their tasks were set at levels of difficulty that matched their ability. The class lesson following a visit to the Barbican by Year 3/4 was equally well prepared. The teacher encouraged pupils to make comparisons with Tudor times that were based on primary evidence and caught their imagination by inviting them to decide how they would 'sell' a Tudor house as Elizabethan 'house agents'.
- 117 Visitors and visits enrich the history curriculum. A performer, writer and musician have helped pupils understand the Ancient Greek and Tudor period more effectively. These visits allow the pupils to take part in role-play and develop their speaking and listening skills. The Year 3/4 visit to the Barbican had not only developed the pupils' understanding of the Tudor period but also of the local area. Pupils know that Sir Francis Drake lived in Looe Street and was married nearby, that he was once Mayor of Plymouth and that his statue is on the Hoe. They had enjoyed exploring the Elizabethan and Merchant House and were able to explain some differences between houses today and those in the Tudor and Victorian times.

One child remarked: "It was cool to stand where real people had stood". They talked about New Street being new then, but old today. Very good photographs taken on the visit helped the pupils to continue to look for clues in the set tasks. The visit brought the pupils nearer to understanding a little of what life was like 500 years ago in an area close to their school.

- 118 The school has reviewed the curriculum, developed new schemes of work to inform teachers' planning, and adapted the recent national guidance very effectively. Although procedures are in place to identify what the pupils have covered in history, there is no effective system for tracking and recording pupils' progress and attainment over time. The school makes very good use of the local museum service. Resources are good for the current units of study but are barely adequate for those to be taught soon. Arrangements for monitoring, observing lessons and using ICT are only just in place. The two libraries contain an appropriate range of books for pupils to use in lessons or for personal research. The newly appointed co-ordinator is aware of these areas of development and has written an action plan to address them.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY [ICT]

- 119 Standards are in line with expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below national expectations and the school did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school now has a dedicated ICT suite and staff are far more confident in using a range of programs and applications in their skills teaching. Pupils are very keen to make progress and respond confidently in lessons. Some get frustrated, and make less progress, when three pupils have to share the same workstation and one becomes an onlooker. This also affects the overall standards reached by the class. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they often have additional adult support, their friends are always willing to help, and the nature of the work itself gives them confidence as they do not have to worry too much about spellings or handwriting. Pupils who have a particular gift for using ICT, often linked to access to a good quality computer at home, are not given enough opportunities to exploit and extend their knowledge and understanding.
- 120 The timetable for the suite is organised so that each class has one lesson a week in which to learn and develop ICT skills and a second in which computers can be used for other parts of the curriculum. There are very few computers in classrooms. This severely limits the opportunities pupils have to develop their ICT skills or to use computers as a learning tool. The teacher in a Year 5/6 religious education lesson, for example, gave pupils printed hard copies of a website about the Salvation Army rather than pupils accessing the site for themselves. Pupils in a numeracy lesson in the same class made less progress than they might because there was no computer to use to extend their understanding of mathematical shapes. The school is aware that the planned use of ICT in all subject areas is an urgent area for improvement. Some of the computers are slow and pupils become frustrated at the time they take to access the Internet.

- 121 Pupils in Year 2 log onto their computers confidently, enter and edit text correctly, and save what they have completed at the end of the lesson. They move through a series of pop-up menus confidently. They are familiar with a number of applications and used a graphics program effectively to draw horizontal and vertical lines, and 'fill' the spaces with colour to produce a picture in the style of Mondrian. Pupils in Year 6 use the Internet confidently, and demonstrated this by finding websites so that they could compare the characteristics of African and Indian elephants, look up that day's weather in Glasgow, and find out the dollar equivalent for a pound sterling. They communicate information effectively through word-processed texts and have used several programs to control events or explore ideas. A good example was seen when Year 5/6 learned how to present images on a rotating 'bill board' that responded to a series of planned instructions. Pupils have a far better understanding of the place and use of ICT in modern society than they did at the time of the previous inspection. Year 6 pupils, for example, knew how a debit card used to buy petrol communicated information about the purchaser to their bank and that the bank authorised the payment electronically. They recognised that the bar code on a book communicated a different message to a shop's computer than that on a packet of cornflakes.
- 122 The quality of teaching is good overall and had greatly improved since the previous inspection because teachers have been properly trained and feel far more confident in teaching ICT skills. Planning is now detailed and thorough. One of the Year 5/6 teachers takes all three classes during the week. This enables him to refine the planning so that the teaching has the greatest impact. Care is taken that the same class is not always 'first' each week. Teachers are confident in their use of the ICT suite and make effective use of the system that allows them to work on one screen and 'send' it to all the other workstations. Pupils follow the teacher's instructions carefully on their own monitors and make good progress because they have a better understanding of the new skill they are being taught. This is reinforced when the teacher 'unlocks' their screens and gets them to practise what they have just seen demonstrated. This system is more effective when the instruction comes in small bites than when too much information is given all at once and pupils forget some of the earlier steps. Teachers make good use of the correct technical vocabulary: 'field', 'navigation button' and 'tab' for example, and encourage pupils to use the proper terminology in their own oral discussions.
- 123 The subject is led by an enthusiastic and keen co-ordinator. He has clear ideas for the further development of the range of ICT opportunities offered to pupils, including setting up individual e-mail accounts. He does not currently monitor or evaluate standards of teaching and learning through direct observation of lessons. The school now meets the National Curriculum requirements. Standards are assessed on an annual and 'end of unit' basis. These indicate that standards are rising steadily year-on-year. The governing body has invested in the part-time employment of an ICT technician. This is proving very beneficial, and allows the co-ordinator to concentrate on teaching ICT skills rather than worrying about why some computers go off line. The governing body has taken all the necessary measures to ensure that pupils are unable to access inappropriate websites when using the Internet. The school has recently taken delivery of a second inter-active white board, but as staff have not yet been trained in its use, it was not used during the inspection.

MUSIC

- 124 Standards are in line with expected levels in both Year 2 and Year 6, and are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. Overall progress remains satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy taking a full part in music lessons and activities, and make similar progress to the rest of their classes.
- 125 Pupils in Year 2 sang tunefully in their assembly. Their books and the teachers' planning indicate that pupils have an appropriate range of musical experiences including composing and recording their own music-making as a series of graphic patterns. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound musical knowledge, enjoy playing a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and sing in tune in two parts.
- 126 Timetable arrangements meant it was only possible to see one class lesson in Year 5/6 and the hymn practice for pupils in Years 3-6. Although no overall judgement about the quality of teaching is possible, these two sessions were well taught. The hymn practice was particularly enjoyable for the teacher and the enthusiastic pupils. The session started with a rigorous warm-up that demonstrated pupils' good understanding of rhythm and basic standard notation. The hymns themselves were sung with joy and animation. The quality of singing was of a higher standard than is usually achieved by pupils of this age and involved all the older pupils including those aware of the changes in their voices. The session was skilfully led and managed by a senior member of staff. The quality of teaching in the class lesson was good because the teacher had prepared carefully and created a positive atmosphere that encouraged pupils to listen to music sensibly and make a genuine effort to improve their own singing performance.
- 127 The school uses a commercial scheme that ensures that pupils have appropriate access to all parts of the music curriculum. Pupils' musical experiences are enriched through funding from the Education Action Zone. This has given them an opportunity to make music as members of a steel band, and to hear a string ensemble and watch a performance by the Glyndebourne Touring Opera. There are three lunchtime recorder groups. They are making good progress and higher attaining pupils are beginning to sight read standard musical notation accurately. The co-ordinator is evaluating an alternative commercial scheme so that class teachers have a greater confidence in teaching music. She is also aware that not enough use is made of ICT for composing, recording and playing music. Apart from the 'pilot' for the new scheme, she has not made any assessment of the quality of teaching and learning in other classes through direct observation of lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 128 Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and exceed them in Year 6. There are a small number of more able and talented pupils who reach higher levels. Opportunities for these and other pupils to excel is promoted through the very wide variety of clubs such as tag rugby, volleyball, netball on offer at lunchtime and after school. Similarly the Education Action Zone has funded the provision of out-of-school gymnastics and sailing. This is now a strength of the school whereas in the previous inspection it was identified as a

weakness. All pupils including those with special educational needs have made very good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

- 129 Year 1 pupils create and perform dance with some degree of precision, control and fluency. They work effectively in pairs and use, for example, the idea of writing a name to create body movements in the shapes of letters. Pupils demonstrated their dance sequence while others offered advice on ways to improve. Pupils develop their understanding of skills and technique, progressing from using mats to incorporating benches in gymnastics, to running between the wickets and then running with a bat in Year 6. They are developing greater control, fluency and precision in their movements. Individual pupils' successes are celebrated by a wall display, which inspires others to learn and progress further. The school meets the National Curriculum requirements for swimming.
- 130 The quality of teaching observed is good and often very good. Pupils and staff are appropriately changed and dressed, and the lessons are very well planned with clear warm up and cool down practices at the start and finish. The majority of lessons proceed at a very good pace, providing a good balance between instruction and pupil activity. Learning is very good when the teacher intervenes, challenges pupils and suggests ways to improve. Class teachers set high expectations for behaviour and attitudes to learning which enable pupils to focus on their tasks. Teachers encourage pupils to talk through their routines and processes. In one good example, pupils explained to the teacher how to hold the cricket bat with the teacher following their instructions. All pupils have good access to learning, because pupils who do not take an active part in the lessons are included by completing an observation sheet explaining what they saw and what the pupils have learnt.
- 131 Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinators have a good knowledge of the subject and have implemented a locally developed scheme of work. They have increased the quality of teaching through staff training and team teaching. The co-ordinators have begun to monitor pupils' attainment and progress. They ensure that physical education has a high profile in the school and has invited successful sports personalities to visit to promote and inspire pupils their particular areas of expertise.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 132 Standards in Year 2 are in line with the levels expected in the local agreed syllabus and exceed them in Year 6. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, especially in Years 3-6. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs, because teachers are very skilled in creating a positive atmosphere in which pupils can learn and reflect on their knowledge.
- 133 Pupils in Year 2 have enjoyed their work this term on the Bible story of the Creation, and have linked it successfully to their art. Pupils of all ability recalled the detail of the story. They had a secure understanding of the main events of the Nativity and Easter, and know why the Resurrection is important to Christians. They have little knowledge of any other major world faiths.

- 134 Pupils in Year 6 achieve high standards because of the very good teaching and the outstanding quality of their work in Year 3 and Year 4. An excellent example was seen in a corridor display that illustrated, through the pupils' own writing and artwork, how carefully they had researched and reflected on the life of Jesus. Good use was made of literacy skills to record their feelings and their portraits were appropriately based on the work of famous artists. There was a genuine sense of spirituality in the reflections on Jesus' fast in the desert and their own thoughts about whether the outer appearance of a person always told you about the person inside. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of Islam and have used their understanding of Christianity to draw positive parallels between the two faiths. Good use was made of their literacy skills when they wrote accounts of the birth of Christ as newspaper reporters. They have thought about the various Gospel writers and considered definitions of 'faith'.
- 135 Further evidence of the school's successful development of opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own lives and those of others can be seen in their 'reflective diaries'. These follow a theme of "I think and I feel" and extend into all areas of the curriculum. A Year 5 pupil's oral account of giving to a City beggar in a lesson on charities was so genuine and modest that his account brought a tear to the teacher's, teaching assistant's [and inspector's] eyes. Year 6 used their diaries very purposefully to record their own responses to the question "Who is my neighbour?"
- 136 No teaching was observed in Years 1-2. The quality of teaching in Years 3-6 was very good, and one lesson about the Shabbat was outstanding. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers are very well prepared and have a very good grasp of the subject. One teacher teaches all the classes in Years 5 and 6, and work seen later in the week showed that she had thought about earlier lessons carefully and had adjusted her planning to improve later sessions. Classes rotate so that the same class is not always the first in the series. A particular strength in the teaching is the emphasis on oral work and the importance of reflection. "Can you build on that?" asked the teacher to encourage a deeper answer. Although pupils' book contain many good examples of their writing, teachers concentrate on the oral parts of sessions so that the focus is on religious education, and the many pupils with special educational needs do not get left behind because of their below average literacy skills. Although a Year 2 pupil used incorrect grammar to report that "They hided Jesus in a rock" the oral content showed that she had a good recall of an earlier lesson. Although occasional use is made of ICT, Year 6 recorded data using an Excel spreadsheet for example, the lack of classroom computers limits pupils' opportunities for personal research. The resources for the Year 5/6 lesson on Christian charities were photocopied website pages rather than the sites themselves.
- 137 The subject is very well led and managed. The school's own scheme of work has been successfully integrated with the locally agreed syllabus and gives lessons a local relevance. The co-ordinator is able to monitor pupils' work and progress by looking at planning and pupils' books but does not observe lessons. She supports new and temporary staff effectively, and has set up an appropriate assessment programme to evaluate how well pupils are doing. She is continually looking for ways to improve the quality of the curriculum and pupils' experiences. The result is the above average levels of attainment and pupils'

positive approach to learning. The two libraries contain an appropriate range of books and materials.