

INSPECTION REPORT

HYDE PARK INFANT SCHOOL

Mutley, Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113275

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Hill

Reporting inspector: Gail McLean
12650

Dates of inspection: 23 - 27 September 2002

Inspection number: 247339

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hyde Park Road Mutley Plymouth
Postcode:	PL3 4RF
Telephone number:	01752 225493
Fax number:	01752 252294
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Scott
Date of previous inspection:	20 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21650	Gail McLean	Registered inspector	English Music Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve?
9446	Helen Griffiths	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18116	Christopher Taylor	Team inspector	Educational Inclusion Geography History	How high are standards? b) Pupils attitudes, values and personal development
12764	Wendy Thomas	Team inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage Physical education Science	
23054	Graham Johnson	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs Art Design and technology Information and communication technology Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school was built in 1904 and has been serving a largely residential area of Plymouth, to the north of the city centre, for almost a century. The school shares its site with Hyde Park Junior school. There are 266 pupils on roll between the ages of four and seven years and the school is about the same size as other primary schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average and one pupil has a statement. Fourteen pupils (8.5 per cent) have English as an additional language. This is a high proportion and Hyde Park Infant school has the widest range of minority ethnic groups of any Plymouth school. There are 22 pupils (8.2 per cent) eligible for free school meals (broadly average). Pupils' attainment on entry is good and the vast majority of pupils exceed the levels expected of them at the end of their reception year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hyde Park Infant school is a very effective school. The headteacher and senior management team offer excellent leadership. Standards are improving because all staff, governors and parents are working in close harmony and share a strong commitment to succeed. This has resulted in very good improvements to the school's provision, especially in the Foundation Stage, literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and opportunities for learning at playtime. Teaching is very good and pupils achieve well in a secure and caring environment for learning. The school reviews its performance rigorously and takes appropriate action so that it is well placed to improve further. Given pupils' attainment on entry, and total income, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are never less than sound and are very high in English, and high in mathematics, science, music, information and communication technology, and art.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and learning because there is a good balance between caring and setting clear expectations for behaviour and achievement.
- Teaching is very good: teachers use assessment very well to inform planning, which is of a very high standard; they manage pupils very well and the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is very successful.
- The time, skills and expertise of teaching assistants, midday supervisors and volunteer helpers are used very effectively to promote learning.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage, pupils with English as an additional language and those identified as having special educational needs is very good, so that they achieve well.
- The headteacher and senior management team offer excellent leadership so that all staff feel valued, able to contribute to school improvement and are focused on raising standards.
- Partnerships with parents are very effective and this contributes to the high standards achieved.

What could be improved

- Although standards are high in English, mathematics and science, strategies used to bring about recent improvements need to be consolidated and embedded in the school's practice.
- Standards in art, music, and information and communication technology are above average, but standards in other foundation subjects could be higher.
- Learning during the lunch break could be improved to reduce restlessness in the first session after lunch.
- Accommodation for pupils in Year 1 could be extended.

These priorities feature in the school's current development plan.

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 last inspected in January 1997. Since then, staff and governors have worked effectively together. As a result, very good progress has been made. The school rigorously monitors its standards and takes appropriate action on priorities through its school development plan. Strategies implemented so far to raise standards of teaching and learning have been successful and are becoming increasingly

embedded in the school's culture. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has improved. Access to a new computer suite, which is a shared resource with the junior school, and better provision for learning at playtime has had a positive impact on standards. National, local and school initiatives have been embraced successfully and tackled with an air of positive enthusiasm. Measures to ensure that all pupils do well, feel valued and secure at school are highly successful and appreciated by parents and the local community. There is considerable capacity to improve and a strong commitment to provide the best possible educational opportunities for pupils.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A	A	B	C
writing	A	B	B	B
mathematics	A	B	D	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently higher than national averages in recent years, with pupils doing particularly well in reading. In 2001, although the results were not quite as high in reading and writing as in previous years they still exceeded the national average. In mathematics they dipped dramatically and fell to below the national average. When the 2001 results are compared with those of similar schools, standards are seen to be about the same in reading, above in writing but below in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was slightly better than in other similar schools in reading and writing but below in mathematics. Teacher assessments for 2001 in science show standards to be in line with both national and similar schools' figures. There have been no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls over time.

At the time of this inspection, national comparable data for 2002 are not yet available. However, the results show significant improvement on the percentage scores between 2001 and 2002. This indicates that standards are likely to have been maintained or exceeded in reading and writing and the fall in standards in mathematics in 2001 is likely to have been reversed. Furthermore, inspection findings indicate that standards are likely to rise still further in 2003 because a significant number of Year 2 pupils, at this early stage in the school year, are already attaining levels expected of them when they leave school.

Children enter school with a good base for learning and the majority meet or exceed the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning by the end of their reception year. There are no subjects where standards are unsatisfactory. They are very high in English, and above average in mathematics, science, art, information and communication technology, and music. Pupils identified as having special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils like school and take part in lessons and activities enthusiastically.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good: the majority of pupils behave well and respond successfully to the

classrooms	high but not unrealistic expectations placed on them.
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Personal development and relationships	Very good: pupils are co-operative, kind to each other and take responsibility in class and around the school.
Attendance	Good: pupils are punctual and there is very little unauthorised absence.

Pupils like coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to the very good teaching, work hard and do their best. They behave well in and around school, although some pupils demonstrate restlessness in afternoon lessons following the long lunch break. However, the caring ethos of the school is reflected in the lack of oppressive behaviour, very good relationships throughout and the high level of respect and tolerance pupils show for each other.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Not applicable

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

Teaching throughout the school is of a very high standard. All lessons observed were at least satisfactory and a significant proportion was very good or excellent. Teachers' plans are detailed, with clear objectives for learning. Feedback to pupils is of a high standard. Lessons are interesting and teachers make very good use of support from assistants and helpers to promote learning. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very effectively. Basic skills are taught very well across all subjects and this contributes to standards achieved. In a tiny minority of lessons the period is too long, use of time is not sharp enough or there is a lack of extension activities for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers manage pupils very well and relationships are very good throughout. The atmosphere in lessons is harmonious, pupils are supported well and encouraged to improve on their personal best. As a result, pupils of all abilities and aptitudes, especially those with English as an additional language and special needs, learn effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good, overall: the curriculum offered is broad, balanced and enhanced by very good provision of extra-curricular activities. History, geography and design and technology are taught at specific times in the year. This means that some skills are not taught for some months, and are therefore not reinforced frequently enough for pupils to progress as quickly as they might.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: pupils are well supported, included in all activities, and targets set for them are realistic yet challenging.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: pupils are fully integrated, participate in all aspects of school life and are encouraged to take pride in their own family and cultural traditions.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good: pupils gain significantly from the very good opportunities provided. The school's caring and sharing ethos is promoted well, particularly at playtimes, and all staff provide very good role models.
How well the school cares	Very effective procedures enable the school to monitor successfully

for its pupils	academic and personal development. Assessment procedures are particularly good in English, mathematics and science throughout the school and in the Foundation Stage.
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The school works in very close partnership with parents. Information about the curriculum is distributed at regular intervals, evening workshops are organised to help parents gain a better understanding of what their children do in school and consultation sessions are held each term. Most parents feel confident about approaching the school if they have concerns. Parents in full-time employment praise the ways the school helps them feel part of the school community. Written reports are helpful, giving useful feedback on what pupils have achieved and targets for future development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent: the school's aims and values are exceptionally well reflected in all its work. Vision for the future is articulated well and shared by all.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Responsibilities are fulfilled well and governors have responded positively to the challenge of adopting a rigorous approach to shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Highly developed and rigorous. The well-structured school development plan is a substantial tool for guiding the school in its endeavours to remedy shortcomings and bring about improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its budget wisely. It is very effective in securing additional funding and expertise from a variety of sources to enhance the curriculum and achieve its priorities.

All staff are suitably qualified, trained well and have appropriate experience for their roles. Arrangements for performance management of all staff, including teaching assistants and midday supervisors, is excellent. The school has effective arrangements for the induction of staff new to the school. The school site is well maintained, clean and attractive. Considerable improvements have been made to the play area, which enhances opportunities for learning. The standard of accommodation for Year 1 pupils is not as good as in other parts of the school. Two classrooms in the annex are small but adequate. The basement classroom is quite dark and approached by a safe but steep staircase. Overall, resources are sufficient for the needs of the curriculum and number of pupils on roll. They are particularly good for English, mathematics, information and communication technology, science, and physical education. The school has embraced the principles of best value. It compares its performance, competes to achieve good value, challenges what it does and consults widely on important decisions so that there is a shared vision and commitment to bringing about necessary improvements.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like coming to school, work hard and make good progress. Teaching is of a high standard and the school is well led and managed. Behaviour is good, children are kind to each other but parents find all staff approachable if they do have concerns. Information provided by the school is very helpful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents would like the school to provide a wider range of activities outside lessons. Some parents would like more information about their child's progress.

Inspectors fully endorse parents' positive views about the school. While after-school clubs are not a strong feature of the school's work it does offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including visits to places of interest and performances in school by actors, artists and musicians. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument, develop creative skills and learn a foreign language. Information sent to parents is constructive, detailed and regular.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, standards seen during the inspection were good. There are no subjects where standards are unsatisfactory. They are very high in English and above average in mathematics, science, art, information and communication technology, and music.
2. Most children come well prepared for school because they are well supported at home and attend nurseries or playgroup sessions. They are assessed on entry to school using a national baseline assessment scheme. Results of these assessments and inspection evidence show that attainment is above average. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is of a high standard so that they make good progress and most exceed the levels expected of them in all areas of learning at the end of their reception year.
3. The good start made by children in the Foundation Stage is built on effectively in Years 1 and 2, especially in English, mathematics and science. High standards in reading are due to the well-structured reading programme, implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, very good teaching and support from parents. Writing standards are very good because teachers insist on good presentation, encourage imaginative writing and pupils know what is expected of them.
4. In mathematics standards are above those expected for pupils aged seven because pupils' achievements are assessed rigorously, skills are practised frequently in a variety of stimulating ways and teachers place appropriate emphasis on mental arithmetic.
5. Standards in science are above average by Year 2. Pupils are achieving well in most aspects of their science because teachers plan from a supportive scheme of work and focus attention on developing pupils' skills of investigation and enquiry. The comprehensive assessment system for monitoring attainment and progress in science is a significant factor in bringing about recent improvements in standards in science.
6. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection and are above levels expected nationally. The school has invested heavily in new equipment, dedicates specific lesson time to the teaching of information and communication technology skills and incorporates the use of appropriate software successfully into most lessons to enhance learning.
7. Standards in art and music are high. The school uses local facilities and the expertise of practising artists and musicians to enthuse pupils. The curriculum offered develops knowledge, skills and understanding systematically throughout the year. Pupils' achieve at least expected levels in religious education, history, geography, physical education and design and technology. However, standards in these subjects could be higher given the achievements demonstrated in other foundation subjects.
8. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their work, especially in their acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. The school is particularly diligent about meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. The rate of progress of both groups is similar to that made by higher- and average-attaining pupils. They are well supported by both teachers and teaching assistants. They are offered work providing appropriate challenge; the tasks they are set closely mirror those offered to other pupils so that they feel included in all activities. For example, teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs

and those with English as an additional language have sufficient opportunity to contribute to mental mathematics activities and to whole-class discussions. Early in the school year, teaching assistants quickly develop close working relationships with the pupils for whom they are responsible, and this enhances their progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good and contribute effectively to their learning. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they participate fully in all it provides for them. They are happy, well-motivated and enthusiastic. In common with their classmates, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language generally display a good attitude to their work. Most show enthusiasm, listen carefully and persevere. They are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. The school has a number of pupils with identified behavioural difficulties. All staff deal with these pupils firmly but sensitively and minimise occasions when their behaviour could disrupt activities and adversely affect concentration for other pupils.
10. Standards of pupils' behaviour is good or better in the majority of lessons. There is an orderly atmosphere because pupils understand the school's rules and respond very well to the expectations made of them. They respect each other and behave well even when they leave the class unsupervised, such as to return registers or to visit the toilet. The school's good procedures for promoting acceptable behaviour, supervising and managing pupils at all times are fair and consistently applied by all staff. As a result, pupils have clear boundaries, know what is or is not acceptable and co-operate fully.
11. The lunch break is a long period. The school uses this time effectively to enhance learning by providing good opportunities for pupils to develop physical and social skills but there is a degree of restlessness in the afternoon and some pupils take time to settle into lessons. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They show respect for lunch-time supervisors and willingly take responsibility for equipment and each other. For example, they carry out the role of playground monitors and "buddies" for new pupils very responsibly. Although the space available has been organised well to accommodate different play activities there is little space when all the pupils are out together. At these short but key points pupils can sometimes become quarrelsome. However, there is an absence of oppressive behaviour and a high degree of harmony within the school. There have been no exclusions during the past year.
12. Opportunities for personal development are very good across the school, with pupils taking a keen interest in school life and in all the activities provided. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are very good. All members of staff treat pupils with care and respect. They act as positive role models and this is reflected in the very positive way in which pupils relate to them and to each other. The school's aims and values underpin its work and this is very noticeable in assemblies, where achievements are publicly awarded, used effectively to boost self-esteem and celebrate success. As a result, pupils are confident, friendly and happy to talk about what they are doing well and what they want to improve.
13. Attendance is good and pupils are punctual. Registration takes place quickly and efficiently. Unauthorised absence, which was in line with national averages at the time of the last report, is now below average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Taking into account all inspection findings, the quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. This has a positive impact on the good rate of progress and standards achieved by pupils. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed throughout the inspection. Almost half of lessons seen were of a good standard, about a fifth were very good and a substantial figure, about one in ten, were excellent. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection where one in seven lessons seen was unsatisfactory.
15. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and children learn very well. The good start children have is consolidated by the very good teaching in Years 1 and 2. This is reflected in the good progress made by pupils as they move up through the school. Teaching in English and mathematics is of a particularly high standard and accounts for the improved standards at

- the end of Year 2. Teaching in science, music, physical education and information and communication technology is good. Although few lessons were observed in the other subjects, inspection evidence indicates that the quality of teaching is at least sound.
16. The very good standard in teaching has many notable features that contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Teachers plan and prepare lessons very carefully. They clearly understand how pupils learn, choose appropriate activities and resources which appeal to pupils' ages, interests and levels of maturity. This is supported by the very effective use of assessment. Learning objectives are used consistently to guide planning but are also used very successfully to help the teacher focus on what it is pupils have learned and what they need to do next. These evaluations are reflected in the constructive comments written on pupils' work at the time of marking. Pupils are supported and challenged to do their best but have clear indications of what they have done well and what their targets are for future development.
 17. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together. Teaching assistants are well briefed before lessons take place. Under the very good guidance of teachers, they know how to support pupils, how to motivate them to do their best and what signs to look for to ensure that pupils have made progress in their learning. In all lessons seen, the time, skills and expertise of teaching assistants was used very effectively to support individual pupils or groups of pupils and this contributes very effectively to the progress made and standards achieved.
 18. In the vast majority of lessons, there is a very business-like approach to lessons. The pace is varied to suit the task but is sufficiently brisk to ensure that pupils maintain interest and enthusiasm. Very occasionally, time spent on introducing a lesson is too long for pupils but teachers quickly recognise the signs of restlessness, especially in the afternoon after the long lunch break, and move the lesson on successfully.
 19. Teachers and teaching assistants are friendly, approachable, firm but fair. This ensures that pupils contribute confidently to discussions and work well individually, in pairs or groups. During all lessons, but particularly during literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils understand their tasks, know how long they have to do it and work quietly. When teachers and teaching assistants are working with groups or individuals they are not disturbed because all pupils sustain concentration and work hard. The insistence on good behaviour and the very good management of pupils, including those who have the potential for disruptive behaviour, ensures that all teaching and learning time is used very well.
 20. The emphasis placed on respect for the individual contributes very well to the progress made by all pupils, especially those with English as an additional language, special educational needs and the more able. Pupils are encouraged to participate and their views are valued. As a result pupils willingly offer ideas and answer questions without the fear of ridicule or embarrassment. In the vast majority of lessons pupils of all abilities and aptitudes are well provided for. Tasks are suitably challenging and support is provided where necessary. This is particularly evident in English and mathematics but the scrutiny of work and lesson observations showed that in some subjects, such as history and geography, pupils were given the same work to do. As a result learning was limited for some pupils, for example, higher- and lower- attaining pupils.
 21. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is very good throughout the school. There is a high standard taught in lessons but good use is made of basic skills in other subjects. For example, different forms and functions of writing are used well in religious education lessons, history and geography while mathematical knowledge is used well to promote learning in science. A particularly notable feature of the teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons is the use of a wide range of interactive learning strategies. Teachers skilfully utilise strategies such as 'talking partners', flashback cards, 'thumbs up/down' and team games to actively engage pupils in their learning. By helping pupils to 'see, hear and do' and by effectively linking the key skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, teachers promote learning very effectively.
 22. The teaching of information and communication technology is good throughout the school. Specific skills are taught very well in lessons, which take place in the information and communication technology suite. Pupils then have the opportunity to practise these skills using

computers which have been installed in their classrooms. As a result, information and communication technology is becoming increasingly integrated into lessons and is enhancing learning in other subjects, particularly English and mathematics.

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

23. The school teaches every aspect of all subjects of the National Curriculum. The proportion of time set aside for each subject is generally appropriate, although for some subjects, such as geography, history and design and technology, it is a little lower than that seen in many schools across the country. Nevertheless, this slight imbalance is more than compensated for by the quality and range of learning opportunities, which are very good. A minority of subjects, such as design and technology, receive concentrated teaching in some months of the school year, but little attention in others. This helps to rationalise the use of limited teaching time, but means that there are periods of the school year when pupils do not have opportunity to practise particular skills. A strong feature of the curriculum is that care is taken to set pupils' learning in a context that is relevant and understandable; for example, mathematical problems are often set in a story or situation where pupils have to find real solutions to real problems, such as working out the number of pupils for dinner. Similarly, much of pupils' artwork is based on representing real objects, although there are plenty of opportunities, too, for imaginative work.
24. Teachers often create good opportunities for pupils to learn from two subjects at once. For example, those in Year 2 practise writing skills while they are learning about religious education, or use computers to consolidate their understanding in mathematics or to generate pictures in the style of modern artists. The teaching of particular knowledge or skills is often successfully achieved through a thematic approach that may combine learning in science with art, or English with design and technology, and teachers work together effectively in planning the detail of the curriculum they offer to ensure that there are no gaps.
25. The school's curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. For example, pupils benefit from the visits of artists, performers and representatives of civic services, as well as from members of the local community and secondary school who assist in work related to citizenship and design and technology. Very good use is made of the local environment -teachers regularly use visits to the local shops or the park to raise pupils' awareness of the area in which they live or to add relevance to their science studies or English work. Visits further afield are used well to enrich the curriculum for environmental studies; these help to ensure that learning is interesting and meaningful for the pupils.
26. The school employs very good strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers have gained sufficient confidence in their use of the national guidance for these two areas to interpret it imaginatively and with regard to the particular needs of pupils they are teaching. For example, pupils are sometimes offered relatively short, concentrated periods for whole-class discussion but are given a relatively longer time for independent working or discussions in pairs. Ample time is then allowed at the end of the lesson for pupils to discuss the outcome of their work with others so that learning objectives are firmly reinforced. Teachers make efforts to set new learning into contexts that pupils can readily understand, especially for numeracy. Some are quick to intervene with supplementary explanations or changes in teaching method if they perceive that the pace of learning has slackened.
27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. These pupils are offered a curriculum providing appropriate challenge and the tasks set closely mirror those offered to other pupils so that they feel included in all activities of the class. For example, teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs have sufficient opportunity to contribute to mental mathematics activities and to whole-class discussions, and are well supported by both teachers and teaching assistants. The school has very good screening procedures for the early identification of pupils' needs. Early in the school year, teaching assistants quickly develop close working relationships with the pupils for whom they are responsible, working closely with teachers to ensure that they are offering the right degree of curricular support, and this enhances the pupils' rate of progress. The school liaises closely with the external agencies offering specialised help for pupils with special needs, and generally receives prompt advice and support.

28. The school makes good curricular provision for its gifted and talented pupils, not only through the high expectations it promotes in the day-to-day work it offers them, but more specifically through activities organised by the co-ordinator as a weekly club. It is clear that the school is committed to meeting the particular needs of every pupil, and the measures it has implemented are making a very positive contribution towards meeting this aim.
29. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, including citizenship, is good. This was the position at the time of the last inspection and indicates that provision has been maintained at a high standard. A comprehensive programme emphasises a healthy lifestyle. It is taught well through assemblies, discussion time known as 'circle time' and timetabled lessons. There is good input from the school nurse and local police officer on keeping safe. As part of its application for the Healthy Schools Award, the school consulted pupils on ideas for healthier snacks and meals and for the redesign of the playground to promote healthy activities. In a Year 2 lesson pupils discussed ways of making playtimes happier occasions and were able to talk sensibly and maturely about their ideas.
30. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school makes effective use of time in assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons to cultivate spiritual development. Opportunities are offered for quiet prayer and great sensitivity is shown in respect of the different religions represented in the school's intake. Pupils are helped to explore the values of others, reflect on who we are, why we are here and our place in the world. Stories and role-play are used effectively to enable pupils to reflect on their everyday experiences. A good example of this was when the headteacher made a cup of tea in assembly and helped pupils understand how many people are involved in the growing and production of tea sold in our shops. She very skilfully posed questions which helped and encouraged pupils to consider issues related to inter-dependence and the need for people to work co-operatively together. On this occasion the period offered for quiet reflection was used well and the hymn celebrated successfully the concepts associated with working together. Opportunities occur for spiritual development in lessons and are frequently used well, for example, when pupils are encouraged to share special moments in their own lives. However, some opportunities are missed, such as in history or music lessons, when pupils could be encouraged to reflect briefly on the wonder of the world and mankind's achievements.
31. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' moral development. Teachers and other staff provide positive role models for their pupils and everyone is treated courteously, fairly, with care and respect. As a result, pupils are helped to understand right from wrong and are provided with a good moral code as a basis for behaviour. Opportunities to discuss moral issues, such as trust and keeping promises, are provided in religious education lessons while special discussion time known as 'circle time' is used well to help pupils address problems and anxieties. As a result, behaviour is generally good and there are few examples of bad behaviour.
32. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn how to relate to each other and the quality of social development is very good across the school. Pupils show caring attitudes towards each other and are happy to take responsibility. There is a small amount of restlessness and irritability in afternoon lessons following the long lunch break, but on the whole pupils work and play together well. A good example of this is when pupils are asked to work together in pairs or groups in lessons. They do so well, talking together amicably, sharing ideas confidently and organising materials fairly. The school has invested heavily in playground equipment so that break times can be used to enhance learning. Strategies used for helping pupils to look after each other, take responsibility for property and co-operate within a community are very effective. Lunch-time assistants lead by example and actively promote good behaviour. They look after pupils well, and deal with them in a positive manner. The school has correctly identified the need to improve provision at lunch-time even more in order to enhance learning and social development.
33. Provision for cultural development is very good. The multicultural and multi-ethnic nature of the local area is celebrated and used well to give pupils insights into the traditions and cultures of other groups of people. Local places of interest, including the local park, a castle at Totnes and the beach at Wembury are visited to help pupils understand the traditions and customs of Devon.

The school seeks opportunities to invite artists and performers into the school to give a broader perspective of our world and the influences on our lives. This was demonstrated clearly during the inspection when visiting musicians demonstrated a range of percussion instruments from around the world and got pupils to participate in making music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school is a caring community with a warm and friendly atmosphere. There are very effective procedures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils. This is a similar position to that found at the last inspection.
35. Child protection procedures are very good. The headteacher has been trained recently. Local authority guidelines have been adopted and training shared with all staff. The school's "Eye" system enables all teaching and non-teaching staff to be aware of any pupils with problems. Links with the junior school are very good and those with social services are satisfactory.
36. The school has clear policies for ensuring health and safety. A significant number of staff have received first aid training and arrangements for dealing with pupils' medical conditions and with accidents are very effective. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly and staff are aware of possible causes of accidents. There is good health and safety practice in lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology. Supervision at playtime is of a high standard and playtime supervisors are fully involved in children's games and activities. The school actively promotes health and safety within its community, for example, a Travel Plan has recently been undertaken to improve the safety of pupils as they move between home and school. A safety concern has been communicated to the governors. Security is very good and parents feel confident that their children are safe and well looked after while at school.
37. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good. This is guided by a clear and comprehensive policy. School rules are displayed prominently about the building and each class compiles its own rules with the class teacher so that pupils understand the need for them. Certificates and stickers are awarded for good work and acts of kindness by both teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils are encouraged to show their work, share their achievements and value the efforts of others.
38. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very effective. Class teachers keep very good records of pupils' personal and social development and achievements are included in annual reports. All pupils have personal targets and these are displayed in books and on their desks. The school carefully tracks all incidents and accidents and parents are notified either in writing or verbally depending on the circumstances. The new system of coloured bibs at playtime has given pupils very good opportunities for looking after each other and taking care of play equipment.
39. Procedures for promoting good attendance and punctuality are very good. Registers are properly kept and monitored very regularly. The senior administrative officer and the headteacher look for patterns of lateness and absence and take appropriate action. Links with the educational welfare officer are very good.
40. Assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well established and comprehensive. The school's assessment planner is a working document and used very effectively to support pupils' progress. The school undertakes a detailed analysis of assessments of pupils' progress in the core subjects. The results of this are fed back to colleagues so that they can use them in their forward planning. The analysis of assessment data is used to set targets for classes, groups and individuals. This results in effective action plans for teachers and subject leaders. The school makes very good use of assessment data. They compare results with those of other schools and use the results to set challenging targets. Assessment is used very effectively to guide teachers' planning. Pupils' targets are shared with parents and contribute to the school's very comprehensive records for each pupil. At the end of Year 2, pupils' records are sent on to the junior school and the useful and accurate information is much appreciated.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents who responded to the questionnaire or attended the meeting are very supportive of the school and all that it does for their children. A very high proportion feel that their children like school, work hard and made good progress. They consider standards of behaviour to be good and that the school has high expectations of their children. They are strongly supportive of all staff and are of the view that the school is well managed. They feel that homework is appropriate and that the school works closely with parents. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
42. The school has very good links with parents. The information it supplies to them is of a high standard. The prospectus and governors' annual report are comprehensive, easy to use and comply with requirements. Parents feel involved in the life of the school and able to engage in the education of their children, particularly in relation to developing their child's reading skills. They appreciate the advance information sent to them on the curriculum to be covered each term and welcome the newsletters, which are frequent, friendly in tone and informative. Annual reports to parents give good coverage of work done by pupils as well as a good picture of personal achievements, targets for improvement and personal development. Parents like the fact that there is an opportunity for them and their children to add their own comments to the reports. The home/school agreement has been signed by the majority of parents, which demonstrates commitment to the school and support for their children. The home/school liaison books are regarded as a very useful means of dialogue between home and school. Parents in full-time employment are particularly pleased with the use of these books as it helps them to feel involved in their child's schooling.
43. Arrangements for admitting pupils to school are very good. Just before children start school they are visited at home to help them feel comfortable and then invited to spend at least two afternoon sessions in school. Induction sessions are held regularly for parents. In addition, teachers are available for informal consultation at any time. Attendance at other consultation meetings and workshops is very good. Parents appreciate the flexibility the school has shown in the timing of these meetings to accommodate work patterns. Communication with the parents of pupils with special educational needs is good.
44. Communication with parents of children with English as an additional language is good. The teacher with specific responsibility for this aspect of the school's work has been instrumental in setting up workshops so that parents with English as an additional language can be involved more closely in the life of the school. The workshops are well attended.
45. A very good number of parents and other members of the community help in the school on a regular basis. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association runs a very good range of social and fund-raising events and raises good sums to help the school buy equipment to support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership of the school is outstanding, and has improved even on the good standards described at the time of the last inspection. Since her appointment four terms before this inspection, the headteacher has taken decisive action to raise standards. She has a clear view of what she needs to do to improve them further and how to do it, in order to ensure that recent gains are sustained. For example, the school's expectations for pupils' achievement has been raised significantly in English, mathematics and science, and more challenging work has been offered to higher-attaining pupils as a result of the introduction of thorough procedures to assess their knowledge, skills and understanding. Not only has the school high expectations for pupils' work; it has succeeded in creating a learning environment in which pupils are very enthusiastic about school, feel positive about their achievements and value the contributions of others. In implementing these policies for improvement, the headteacher has been offered excellent support by her deputy, and each complements the other in the skills and perceptions that they bring to

the management of the school.

47. All staff are well qualified for the post they hold and there is a good spread of expertise covering the curriculum and other aspects of the school's work such as first aid. Training needs are carefully considered and addressed through judicious use of the school's professional development budget. The school's senior administration officer is skilled in her work and provides an efficient and welcoming point of first contact for visitors and parents. She manages the school's financial procedures very well and uses office information technology effectively in a variety of ways to enhance aspects of management, for example, in maintaining and analysing records of pupil progress and managing the school's finances.
48. The headteacher has judiciously created a strong senior management team and devolved more wide-ranging responsibilities for subject management to other members of staff, some of whom have been appointed for their particular expertise. As a result, all feel that they have a commitment to moving the school forward. This collegiate approach to management extends also to non-teaching staff, who regularly offer suggestions for improvements or draw to the attention of the senior management team matters for their consideration. The effect is that each has a positive role to play in evaluating the work of the school and in implementing improvement, and all members of staff feel valued for the contribution they make. The achievement of the school in creating this inclusive approach to management has been recognised through its gaining 'Investor in People' status.
49. The senior management team focuses its attention appropriately on the implementation of the school improvement plan, drawn up after wide and thorough consultation with the staff and governors. Its regular meetings provide a further dimension to communication between all members of staff. In turn, the headteacher, and senior management team work closely with the governing body so that all share a strong sense of common purpose. The emphasis placed on raising standards further in English, mathematics and science is appropriate. The senior management team have rightly identified the need to ensure that strategies used successfully to bring about recent improvements are built upon and employed even more widely throughout the school.
50. This recognition that staff work best when united by a shared common purpose is evident through the arrangements made for the induction of new staff. National and local agreements are followed but the principles of the 'Investor in People' status, together with the headteacher's own personal approach to welcoming new staff, result in a programme that immediately draws newcomers into the school's philosophy, policies and practice. This means that pupils continue to receive the highest levels of consistency in relation to expectations of behaviour and attainment and progress is maintained.
51. All requirements of performance management are in place. The school has embraced this new government initiative very effectively and used it to develop its own work on improving standards of teaching and learning. A noteworthy feature is that objectives set for individual staff demonstrate a shared understanding of the school's priorities and a willingness to work together for the good of the pupils and the school as a whole. Overall, the degree of co-operation and teamwork has improved since the last inspection.
52. The aims of the school are reflected in its work as closely as they could be. The reason for this is that they are unambiguous and predicated simply on raising educational, social and moral standards and on creating a climate in which these aims might be achieved. The result is that all understand the rationale for moving the school forward and are mutually supportive in bringing these objectives to fruition. In this way, there is a determined commitment to succeed that is shared by all.
53. The headteacher offers particularly good leadership in relation to equality of opportunity and social inclusion. All pupils have equal access to the school's curriculum regardless of age, gender or race. There is a great sense of harmony within the school. Inspection findings support the views

of teachers, parents and pupils that there is no oppressive behaviour including bullying, sexism and racism. Parents who attended the parents' meeting commented very favourably on the progress made by their children and the way in which the school helps to develop their child's talents and interests.

54. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. Pupils are set precise targets that are realistic yet challenging, and are based on a thorough knowledge of the pupils' past achievements. Pupils' progress is under constant scrutiny, and their targets are reviewed each term by their teacher in consultation with their parents and, if appropriate, the special needs co-ordinator. The plans and Statements of Special Educational Need are well maintained, and are sufficiently detailed in their recommendations to be helpful to those offering support. There is a close link between the needs identified in the education plans and the course of action recommended to meet them. Teaching assistants continuously monitor the progress of all pupils for whom they are responsible, and the constant flow of information between staff and parents ensure that all have a good understanding of pupils' particular learning difficulties and are thus well placed to address them.
55. The governing body, drawing on a wide range of experience, fulfils its responsibilities well and provides good support for the headteacher and staff. Its members have responded well to the challenge of adopting a rigorous approach to shaping the direction of the school. The governors, well led by the chairperson, are both well-informed of day-to day developments and share the headteacher's vision of longer-term aims for the school; one consequence of this is that governors as a whole are taking an ever-growing responsibility and interest in the role they play, and are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for further development. The headteacher consults widely on the priorities for development identified in the school's improvement plan, and brings these before the relevant committees of the governing body. These are then thoroughly tested against financial and long-term strategic imperatives before approval. Because the school improvement plan is consensual and sufficiently detailed, the school makes very good progress towards the targets it sets. The governing body meets all of its statutory obligations because it is well briefed by the headteacher and chairperson on the decisions it needs to take.
56. The finance committee monitors the school's budget closely. Procedures for day-to-day financial management and control are good. Specific grants are used for their designated purposes and the last auditor's report described effective financial systems. There were only a few minor recommendations in this report and they have been addressed. Planned budget surpluses in recent years have sound justification linked to the school development plan priorities and current projections are for a small surplus. The governing body is increasingly following up spending decisions to evaluate their impact on pupils' learning.
57. Overall, the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is good. The school analyses fully the pupils' test results, and this helps it to develop a very close understanding of their needs and how these might best be met. Teachers use this information well in preparing their longer- and medium-term teaching plans, and to evaluate the approaches that work well with particular pupils. Subject managers not only monitor teachers' planning, but use their expertise to offer advice on how to develop particular subjects or themes and on the teaching of skills. The headteacher and senior management team have a good understanding of the work teachers do through informal discussions, monitoring of plans and analysis of outcomes of work. Some monitoring of teaching takes place but this aspect of the school's work is capable of further development, especially in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. This has been identified in the school improvement plan and appropriate action has been identified. Staff are very well supported when they seek advice, and there is much informal discussion and planning together, ensuring that staff are mutually supportive in their work.
58. All staff, including teaching assistants, cleaners, catering staff and the site manager demonstrate a high degree of willingness to make the best of what is a difficult site. The building is old but sound and decorated carefully. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are high both inside and out. As a result, the school is welcoming, inviting and a pleasant environment for teaching and learning. The school is particularly successful in creating an attractive playground and providing

purposeful activities for pupils at break times, although there is little in the way of shaded areas. Foundation Stage pupils do not have access to a separate area for outside learning but good use is made of the playground and the enclosed area known as 'The Orchard Playground', which is shared with the junior school. Classrooms currently used by Year 1 pupils are smaller than other rooms and the basement classroom is very dark and approached by a steep staircase. The school has ensured that the standard of decoration and general atmosphere in these rooms is equal to that of other parts of the school but the plans to extend and improve these spaces are entirely appropriate. The school has recently joined forces with the junior school and contributed to the setting-up costs of an information and communication technology suite. This good liaison and effective use of money has contributed significantly to the opportunities for learning offered to pupils.

59. The school takes good care of durable and consumable resources. Cupboards are tidy and the teaching assistants responsible for their upkeep ensure that wastage is kept to a minimum. Curricular resources are stored carefully and are easily found. Artefacts, tapes, posters, reference books and specialist equipment are carefully catalogued and kept in good condition. Resources are good for English, the Foundation Stage, mathematics, science, physical education, and music (although the only piano is old and barely adequate). The library is newly decorated, inviting and very accessible to children. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. The number of computers is good for the size of the school, although some software is lacking.
60. Overall, the school is implementing the principles of best value very well. Taking into account the school's context, pupils' attainment on entry, good standards and quality of education, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. Although there are no key issues, in order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
(Paragraphs in the report referring to these issues are provided in brackets)
- (1) Ensure that strategies used to bring about improvements in English, mathematics and science are further consolidated and embedded in the school's normal practice.
(Paragraphs 46, 49, 91, 98, 107)
 - (2) Ensure that standards in all foundation subjects are equally high.
(Paragraphs 7, 20, 23, 114, 120, 123, 128)
 - (3) Extend existing learning opportunities at lunch-time to reduce the small amounts of pupil restlessness in the afternoon even further.
(Paragraphs 11, 18, 32)
 - (4) Improve and extend the accommodation for pupils currently in Year 1 and the Foundation Stage.
(Paragraphs 58, 76)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	9	20	9	0	0	0
Percentage	12	21	46	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	266
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	21

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	41	49	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	34	35
	Girls	45	46	46
	Total	79	80	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	89 (97)	90 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	35	37
	Girls	46	46	46
	Total	80	81	83
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (94)	90 (92)	92 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
163	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0

No ethnic group recorded

0

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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.2
Average class size	29.6

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	571,175
Total expenditure	586,650
Expenditure per pupil	3,278
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,042
Balance carried forward to next year	9,567

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	266
Number of questionnaires returned	178

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	34	3	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	52	44	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	47	7	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	45	13	1	2
The teaching is good.	51	38	4	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	38	15	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	32	4	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	41	2	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	41	38	16	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	46	41	3	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	42	4	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	38	24	10	12

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

- Parents are very satisfied with the standard of education provided by the school. They are of the view that their children make good progress and are helped to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding. They grow into confident youngsters and have positive attitudes to school and learning. Parents feel comfortable about approaching any member of staff should they have concerns and they know that their children are happy, safe and well looked after while at school.

Other issues raised by parents

- A small number of parents would like more after-school activities to be offered
- Some parents would like more information about their child's progress

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

62. At the time of the previous inspection, provision for the youngest children was inspected according to the desirable outcomes of learning for children under five. Provision for five-year-olds was inspected according to National Curriculum requirements. Since that time the Foundation Stage of children's learning has been introduced. This means that in the current inspection, provision for children in Reception was inspected according to the standards outlined in the national Early Learning Goals (ELG) for children in the Foundation Stage. Despite these changes it is clear that standards were high at the time of the last inspection and they have been maintained successfully in the intervening years.
63. Most children have attended a nursery school or playgroup before starting school and come well prepared for learning. Those whose fifth birthday falls before the 28 February start school in September and there are enough children to form two classes. A third Reception class opens in January for children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 March and 31 August. The school has consulted widely with parents on how best to introduce children to school. As a result, arrangements are flexible so that some children started on a part-time basis. At the time of the inspection all children were attending full time. Parents are very appreciative of the care taken by the school to help their children adjust to the demands of school life. Home visits, which take place before children start school, are regarded as a particularly good way for children to be introduced to their teacher and for parents to share information with the school.
64. The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned carefully to address all areas of learning and is a strength of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants share expertise very effectively and encourage parents to be actively involved in the education of their children. For example, medium-term plans, showing the topics for the term, are displayed on notice boards and copies are sent home to parents. The team meet weekly and prepare lessons effectively so that children are provided with a rich range of learning opportunities. Each of the three rooms available to them is set up as an attractive and stimulating learning environment. While children are registered in their class bases, they then use all three rooms for different activities. This enables staff to make the best use of resources.
65. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good, and on occasion excellent. Teachers have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the learning needs of young children. They are knowledgeable as to how the ELGs link to the early National Curriculum levels and are skilled in teaching early mathematical and language skills. In the excellent lessons observed, the teacher used time very effectively. In the music lesson, he introduced children to musical vocabulary. He was imaginative in the use of resources, for example, using a xylophone as a clock to accompany the nursery rhyme "Hickory, dickory dock". This absorbed and enthused children. Both teachers use a range of strategies to involve children in activities. They manage children very well and have already formed very good relationships with their classes. The children respond very well to their teachers' high expectations as to how they should behave and most are settled and happy in school. The teaching assistants are skilled and make a very effective contribution to children's learning. They work very well in teams with teachers and provide very good role models for children, which helps their social development.

Personal, social and emotional development.

66. Most of the children start school with above average skills in personal and social development. They have settled well into school routines. The majority happily leave their parents or carers and join confidently in the activities set out for them. By the end of the Reception Year, most children will meet the ELGs for this aspect of learning and a significant proportion will exceed them. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching in the Reception classes, where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. Most of the children already play and work together well. They take turns with equipment and are learning to

share resources. At this early stage of the year, a small number of children still find this difficult but the sensitive support of adults is helping them to develop their skills. Adults play with the children in the role-play area, helping them to relate to each other. Adults promote children's personal development effectively by ensuring that the equipment and resources used are easily accessible to them and helping them to become independent.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with each other and with adults. A few children already recognise some words. One child greatly enjoyed looking at the book "Each, peach, pear, plum", the class shared book for the week. She "read" the pictures and enjoyed telling the story as she remembered it from her teacher's reading. Children followed the story with interest as their teacher read the story and are learning that books in English are read from left to right as a result of the teacher's clear demonstration. They enjoyed joining in with the familiar rhymes at the end of each line.
68. All the adults use talk well with children and are good, active, listeners. They provide a good range of activities to encourage talk using, for example, the role-play area and the story tent. Children are learning to negotiate with others, for example, in asking to take turns at the computers, or the water tray. The majority of children are likely to attain the ELGs for this area of learning by the end of the Reception Year and many will meet them well before this.
69. Children are already good at using sounds and learning the meaning of new words. Most can already identify the initial sounds of words and are able to offer a range of words beginning with a specific sound when asked. At this early stage of the year, children are learning many new words about their classroom environment. Most are happy to talk to visitors about their activities. They are also curious and ask many questions.
70. Most children recognise their written names and several children can write them independently. Some left-handed children are not yet sure of the direction of writing but this is very common in children of this age.
71. Staff encourage children to think of themselves as readers and writers. Supplies of paper, pens, pencils and crayons are readily available and children enjoy using them. Children enjoyed taking telephone messages and sending faxes in the "office".

Mathematical development

72. This area of learning is well taught and by the end of the Reception Year most children are likely to exceed the ELG's for mathematics. Many children can already count to ten and several can count reliably beyond this. A small number are already meeting the ELG at this early stage of the year. In an excellent lesson, the teacher used resources imaginatively to engage children's interest. A puppet was used to miscount objects and the children enthusiastically corrected the puppet's mistakes. Children already use mathematical language with confidence; for example, they count the numbers of children having school or packed lunches and can say how many more there are today than yesterday.
73. Adults treat children as mathematicians. They help children to see mathematics all around them and encourage them to use their growing understanding to be problem-solvers and thinkers. They include key mathematical vocabulary in their planning and help children to learn this. They use various ways of helping children to recognise and write numbers, such as using sandpaper shapes and sand trays.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Children start school with a basic general knowledge. They build well on this to help them understand more about the places where they live and what has happened to them since they were babies. They can recognise and name a range of different fruits and vegetables. This was

demonstrated in their language activity when they decided which foods beginning with the letter 'p' could be put on the party plate. Children are confident in using the computer. They can create pictures using a paint program and complete mathematical puzzles confidently using the mouse to move objects on the screen.

75. Adults support children well in investigating their surroundings and encouraging them to find out things for themselves. Children show a good awareness of where they live. They talk confidently about the things they like or do not like about their surroundings.

Physical development.

76. At present, the Reception classes do not have access to their own secure outdoor learning environment. The school building and play areas present difficulties in this area. Staff make the best use they can of the facilities available and the development of outdoor play activities is a high priority in the school improvement plan. However, children have well-developed physical skills. They can run, jump, balance and climb using a good range of equipment and show a awareness of other children in the space around them.
77. In lessons, children use a range of pencils, brushes and other small tools with increasing confidence and skill. Several pupils can already use scissors with competence. Most are likely to attain the ELGs for physical development by the end of the Reception Year and a significant number will exceed them.

Creative development

78. The school makes very good provision for this area of learning and, as a result, children make very good progress and the majority are likely to attain the ELGs before the end of the Reception Year. In a music session, children made excellent progress. They can already identify changes in pitch and are able to say whether a given rhythm is faster or slower than the previous one. They made good choices of instruments to represent different sounds in the nursery rhyme "Hickory, dickory dock".
79. Children very much enjoy using the role-play area and dressing up to act out different nursery rhymes. They enjoy mixing paints to create different patterns.
80. The children are already developing good skills in role-play because of the very good opportunities that adults provide for them. Adults play with children in the role-play area and encourage them to dress up and act out different nursery rhymes. This also contributes well to children's language and social development.

ENGLISH

81. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in English show that standards have been consistently higher than the national average over the past four years, with pupils doing particularly well in reading.
82. These test results reflect the inspection findings. Throughout the school, standards in reading and writing are high but especially at the end of Year 2. Although attainment on entry is above average the school systematically builds on what pupils know, understand and can do year by year so that progress in lessons and over time is good. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school's policy and practice in relation to equality of opportunity is well-developed. As a result, all pupils, but especially those with English as an additional language, are fully involved and integrated into lessons and the life of the school.
83. Teachers value the contributions made by all pupils in lessons and encourage them to offer their

own ideas. A noteworthy feature is the skilful way in which teachers balance contributions from all groups of pupils. Pupils who are shy or those with English as an additional language are supported effectively, take part in all activities and are encouraged to ask or answer questions. Contributions from high attaining pupils are encouraged but they are not allowed to dominate in lessons. Teachers give equal amounts of praise to pupils of different abilities and the emphasis on rewarding good behaviour ensures that pupils' self-esteem is high. Consequently, pupils are

confident, co-operative and enthusiastic. The vast majority of pupils listen attentively to their teachers, concentrate well when working independently and sustain interest for considerable lengths of time. This has a positive effect on the quality of learning and the standards achieved.

84. Pupils have very positive attitudes to books and reading. This is due entirely to the well-structured approach used to teach reading, teachers' enthusiasm for reading, which is successfully conveyed to pupils, and the very good support from parents. Consequently, pupils quickly develop the skills necessary to become independent readers and by the age of seven the vast majority are reading fluently and accurately.
85. In writing, pupils demonstrate considerable pride in their work and even first drafts are neat and legible. The school's objective of encouraging pupils to write with confidence, fluency, imagination and accuracy is met well. Classrooms and communal areas of the school are 'text rich' so that even the youngest children learn that print has meaning and they respond well to it.
86. Handwriting is of a high standard. Pupils are taught to form letters correctly and space words evenly. Teachers model writing skilfully and the emphasis on clear, neat presentation is a key factor in enabling pupils to organise their thinking and communicate ideas successfully. While planning a story about a fairytale supermarket, one very able Year 2 pupil wrote '*The big bad wolf, jaw dripping, six feet fierce, put honey under Mrs and Mr Bear's feet.*'
87. The use of information and communication technology is a noticeable factor in all literacy lessons. Pupils are increasingly able to use their computer skills to communicate ideas. For example, Year 1 pupils can recognise and type names of familiar objects locating letter keys with reasonable speed. In Year 2, pupils quickly write sentences, using the shift key to insert capital letters and the space bar to differentiate between words. They recognise mistakes, can use the cursor to locate the error, then delete and insert letters appropriately.
88. Standards of speaking and listening are good. The vast majority of pupils have a good command of spoken English. Teachers and teaching assistants consistently use correct terms such as 'powerful connectives' and promote the use of a wide range of rich vocabulary. As a result, Year 1 pupils are able to offer sentences such as '*The teddy is very delicate*' when describing an old toy and Year 2 pupils offer adjectives such as *sulky, gentle, cheerful, grateful, cheeky, loving* when describing characters in a story. The use of a teaching strategy known as 'talking partners' is incorporated very effectively into many lessons to actively engage all pupils in learning and to develop their speaking and listening skills. The links between the key skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are made very well in all lessons and this contributes significantly to the progress made by pupils as they move up through the school.
89. The quality of teaching in English is very good and is a strength of the school. It contributes significantly to the good rate of learning and the well above average results achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen and teaching in Year 2 is of a very high standard with excellent features. Teachers have embraced the National Literacy Strategy, implemented it well, and have used the techniques suggested for teaching all aspects of English to very good effect. The most striking features of the lessons are that teachers know precisely what it is they want pupils to learn and choose activities that are relevant to the ages and interests of their pupils. Learning objectives are used throughout the lesson to guide learning and this is evident again in the marking of pupils' work. Constructive helpful comments are written for pupils so that they know what they have done well and how they can improve further. This compliments the oral feedback offered to pupils in lessons and ensures that pupils are supported

and challenged to do their best.

90. Teachers have high but not unrealistic expectations of what pupils can achieve in an hour and set a brisk, lively pace to lessons. The expertise, skills and time of teaching assistants are used particularly well to enhance learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed, know how to motivate pupils to learn and contribute effectively to the assessments made in relation to pupils' achievements.
91. The English co-ordinator provides strong leadership. She is very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses. She very effectively leads by example, sets high standards in relation to teaching and learning and supports colleagues well so that they can improve their own performance. Under the co-ordinator's guidance the school is able to monitor and analyse all data collected on pupils' achievements, evaluate the outcomes, set targets and implement appropriate actions to bring about desired improvements. This has a significant impact on standards achieved and is contributing to the school's success in raising standards further. Given that the National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 could be better in relation to similar schools, the co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to consolidate improvements made recently and firmly establish effective methods of teaching and learning in the school's normal practices.
92. Resources for learning are very good for English. There is a well-stocked, attractive library. Books are in good condition, up to date and avoid stereotypical images. Pupils enjoy library sessions, know how to change their books and are beginning to understand the need to catalogue non-fiction books for easy return and retrieval.

MATHEMATICS

93. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 are firmly above the national average, and have improved overall since the last inspection in 1997. The findings of this inspection largely confirm national test results. Because the school has significantly raised its expectations for pupils' achievement in mathematics over the past year, results in national tests in 2002 have recovered from their 2001 level, when they were just below national averages. As a result, pupils' results for 2002 are likely to be at least above average when national comparisons become available. Furthermore, there are indications that standards are likely to rise still further because a number of Year 2 pupils early in the school are already attaining the levels expected by the time they leave the school.
94. Building on the good start pupils make before they are five, pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to make good progress as they move through the school because they are taught well, because their strengths and weaknesses are thoroughly assessed and because teachers expect pupils to achieve highly. An example of this is that pupils in Year 2 are grouped twice weekly for mathematics according to their aptitude and ability. This enables the teacher to plan work that extends pupils' understanding in ways that specifically meet their particular learning needs, and ensures that they gain the additional perspective of different colleagues on the progress of some of the pupils in their class. As the result of careful assessment, teachers develop a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils early in the school year, ensuring that they get off to a good start in their new classes and boosting their confidence in handling the work they are set. Teachers are careful to foster close working relationships with their pupils, setting interesting and relevant tasks that make a very positive contribution to their enjoyment of mathematics. Teaching assistants support pupils very well, especially those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. As a result, pupils of different aptitudes and ability make equally good progress, and all are included in every learning activity.
95. Pupils become increasingly adept at mental arithmetic as they move through the school. Most in Year 1, for example, can subtract competently to 10, while a few are able to work out the number requiring a school dinner by deducting the number of those eating a packed lunch from the total number of pupils in the class. In Year 2, many pupils can deduct accurately different amounts

from two-digit figures, and begin to understand the inverse relationship between addition and subtraction. Pupils make equally good progress in setting out calculations; when they enter Year 1, for example, they are already confident in writing simple sums, and are not deterred when they make mistakes, because they are so enthusiastic to succeed. A strong feature of pupils' work is that they regularly practise the use of mathematics in everyday situations because the teacher sets their learning in a relevant context. For example, more able pupils are invited to solve simple mathematical problems, while all have thorough practice in measuring, weighing, counting money and giving change. As they move through the school, pupils are introduced to an increasingly wide range of ways of sorting and recording information; for example, they use Venn diagrams and make simple written interpretations of that found on block graphs.

96. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is very good. The lessons observed in each of the classrooms were all of good quality or better, and one excellent lesson was seen. The good standard of teaching is also evident in the work that pupils complete in the course of the school year, where there is clear progression in learning. Teachers consistently display a good knowledge of the subject because they plan lessons carefully and generally match the level of difficulty of the work well to the aptitude of their pupils. Teachers have high expectations for their pupils; these are manifest not only in the challenging but realistic tasks that they set for their pupils but also in the way in which pupils are actively involved in their learning. Pupils are expected to remain focused on the task in hand and to achieve the objectives set. Lessons generally almost always proceed at a brisk pace, and only in a small minority do teachers offer explanations that are too protracted. In one excellent lesson, for example, the teaching was clearly focused on ensuring that the pupils thoroughly understood what was being taught. To this end, the teacher employed a range of strategies - including humour, discussion in pairs, challenging question and answer sessions and wide range of visual resources - to ensure that the pupils' attention was held throughout the course of the lesson. Across the school, teachers use imaginatively the national guidance for the teaching of numeracy, ensuring that those able to cope with more challenging work are offered activities that extend their learning at a higher level. Teachers are well supported by assistants who are well trained, almost always offering the right level of intervention to clarify the understanding of the pupils for whom they are responsible. Their work makes a very positive contribution to the progress of those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
97. The quality of pupils' learning over time is good. For example, pupils often produce much written work in the course of a term, and their efforts are encouraged by judicious and helpful marking. Teachers offer the right balance of opportunities for pupils to work independently, in small groups and as a whole class, and both through their approach to lessons and in their relationships with pupils, teachers foster a climate for learning that engenders enthusiasm and focuses their interest. These in turn promote concentration and mean that there are relatively few occasions when pupils are not purposefully engaged in their work. Pupils settle quickly when there is a change in activity, applying themselves well and discussing sensibly any difficulties they encounter with their partners. Teachers and teaching assistants generally monitor progress well, offering help promptly when it is required. This ensures that the needs of all pupils are met, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs or those needing help with concentration and maintaining good behaviour.
98. All of the elements of the mathematics curriculum are taught in appropriate measure, and teachers are often careful to set pupils' learning into real contexts so that it is relevant and interesting. As a result, pupils build well on previously acquired mental and written skills as they move through the school. The curriculum co-ordinator, in post for a year, has worked hard with colleagues to effect improvements in standards and displays a very good understanding of how they may be raised further. An important feature of this improvement is the rigorous assessment of pupils' achievements, not just in national tests but in their classwork, and a regular and thorough analysis of their mathematical skills. This ensures that teachers not only develop an excellent understanding of their pupils' learning patterns, but are very clear about what they need to learn next, using assessment information to set termly targets that they share with their pupils. The school has recognised the need to continue to develop teacher expertise in this area in order to ensure that standards continue to rise. The school's ethos of high expectations for pupils' achievement pervades the mathematics curriculum, ensuring that pupils of all levels of attainment are encouraged to extend their knowledge and understanding. There is some monitoring of the teaching of mathematics, but while the co-ordinator offers colleagues advice based on their detailed planning she does not yet have the opportunity to monitor their work regularly in the classroom. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning; the school is alert to its potential for handling and representing data, but this aspect of its use is capable of further development. Resources for the subject are generally good, and are well used and accessible.

SCIENCE

99. Teacher assessments in science for the year 2000/2001 were in line with national expectations and standards achieved by pupils in similar schools. The teacher assessments for the summer term 2002 show an improvement, although only a small proportion of pupils were assessed as attaining the higher Level 3. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. Over the past four years the trend of the school's results in science is similar to the national trend.
100. Pupils' attainment in science is above average. However, in the scrutiny of pupils' work for the previous year, much of pupils' recorded work was merely satisfactory and it appears as if the work set was the same for all groups of pupils. The lower-attaining pupils lack the writing skills to record what they have done.
101. Teachers have worked hard to develop opportunities for pupils to explore and experiment in science. In Year 1, pupils are learning about the senses. After discussion, they were able to say which parts of the body are associated with which senses. They enjoyed looking at natural objects through magnifiers and then drawing what they saw. They tested their sense of smell by sniffing covered substances such as coffee, oranges and onions. To test their sense of taste, pupils sampled a range of crisps to identify the flavours.
102. In the Year 2 classes pupils learned how to complete an electrical circuit. They understand that some appliances need batteries to make them work and that some can be plugged into a socket to make them work. They know that they need to be very careful in handling electricity. Pupils enjoyed trying to complete an electrical circuit and light up a bulb. They tried different methods of combining the components they had been given and were delighted when they found how to complete a circuit.
103. Pupils throughout the school have very positive attitudes to science. They are curious, keen to learn and enjoy working on science experiments. This is due in large part to the emphasis placed on meeting the needs of each pupil, building on their previous experiences and ensuring that all pupils are fully included in all lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants promote the learning of pupils with English as an additional language effectively by ensuring that the meaning of new words is clear and that instructions are fully understood. Pupils of all abilities, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, are encouraged to record their work in words and pictures, compare their results and explain their observations. Girls and boys are expected to work together and show respect for the ideas or suggestions of others. They respond well to the expectations made of them, are generally courteous and behave well. Teachers use praise effectively to motivate all pupils. This helps those who have difficulty sustaining concentration or whose behaviour could disrupt lessons. As a result, the atmosphere in lessons is conducive to learning, there is a sense of harmony and all groups of pupils make good progress.
104. The quality of teaching in science is good and there are a number of strengths that contribute to this positive picture. Teachers plan together in year group teams so they share expertise and ideas about what works well in lessons. Teaching assistants are well briefed and support pupils skilfully during lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use correct scientific vocabulary and explain this well for pupils. They discuss with pupils what they are to learn and are good at clarifying tasks. They ensure that pupils know what they are expected to do and how they are to behave. As a result, pupils make good progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop successfully their skills of investigation and scientific enquiry. For example, in Year 2, pupils were given the components of an electrical circuit and then challenged to work out for themselves how to make a bulb light up. Pupils were very excited at learning how to do this. They sustained interest and gained significant scientific knowledge and understanding.
105. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are used well to enhance learning in science. Tasks set and recorded work show that a range of forms and functions of writing are used, such as

descriptions, instructions and diagrams. Work covered in numeracy lessons is incorporated

successfully, for example, to consolidate learning about graphs, and tables. The school's range of computer software for promoting learning in science is limited but the school is increasingly using information and communication technology to good effect.

106. The school has a comprehensive system for assessing pupils' progress in science. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress in each of the four attainment targets. The assessments are used to set individual targets for pupils. Teachers' assessments are analysed and these are used to help the subject leader with planning further developments in science.
107. Science is identified in the school's development plan as a priority for improvement in 2002/03. This is entirely appropriate given the small numbers of pupils attaining Level 3 in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2. The co-ordinator has begun to build up a portfolio of pupils' work to show examples of what can be achieved at each level. She has used her audit of attainment, progress and resources to form the basis of an effective action plan for developing science in the school. This should be followed in order to bring about desired improvements in standards in science.
108. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in science were judged to be above average. The school has maintained good standards and progress is satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

109. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in art and design that are above those expected nationally. The good standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained because teachers have a clear understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum and are guided by a detailed policy and scheme of work. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school because they are taught specific skills systematically and because their efforts are valued and their work is carefully presented.
110. Good foundations for work in art and design are laid at the Foundation Stage, so that by the time they enter Year 1, pupils have already experimented with various techniques and media, and are beginning to appreciate their possibilities and limitations. In Year 1, pupils use different materials to achieve a range of effects. They practise mixing different colours, or compose pictures using grass and seed to create an impression of autumn. Pupils use collage techniques to represent their ideas, learning to use scissors carefully and to be economical in the use of glue; for example, in the design of birthday cards. Art is used well to support other curricular areas such as history or personal education: pupils make careful drawings of toys of the past and present and begin in their observational drawings to pay attention to shade and texture. A strong feature of art in Year 1 is the high standard of observational work. This is developed further in Year 2, where pupils are more closely taught specific skills that enhance the quality of their drawing. For example, they know only to draw that part of an object which can be seen from a particular viewpoint, and are taught how to use sketch-marks to indicate a particular intensity of shading or texture. Although pupils of different artistic ability are generally set similar tasks, most make good progress because they are well taught and strongly supported when they try new techniques for themselves. By the time they leave the school, many pupils, including those with special educational needs, have developed a confident approach to artistic expression, drawing, painting and using sculpture techniques boldly. They acquire a good grounding in basic skills and are beginning to appreciate those of acclaimed artists such as Monet and Renoir.
111. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning because only one lesson was observed in the course of the inspection, but sufficient evidence was obtained from analysing and discussing pupils' work to draw some conclusions about them. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. Pupils not only practise using a range of media, but are taught very specific skills associated with their use. Furthermore, teachers have high expectation for the

achievement of their pupils. Pupils are expected to give of their best, and the staff respond to their achievements in the way in which they value and care for the finished product. For example, the work of all pupils is carefully displayed, and pupils in turn value their own efforts and those of others. These are the principal reasons for the good standards of work seen. Pupils display enthusiasm for their work, and exhibit good powers of concentration when they are drawing or painting. In the very good lesson seen, for example, Year 2 pupils discussed their observational drawings sensibly with each other, their conversations contributing to their better understanding of the effects of shading and how to create a particular texture. At the end of the lesson, pupils were expected to evaluate their own efforts by comparing them with a photograph. This was a very good strategy, encouraging objectivity and leading pupils towards developing an appreciation of art.

112. All aspects of the art and design curriculum are taught, and pupils are offered the right balance of opportunities to practise skills, to experiment with materials, design and colour and to learn from the artistic skill of others. The subject is used well across the school to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology, history, religious education and science. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory, overall, and some aspects are good. For example, a very good scheme of work is available to which staff can refer for guidance in teaching, but there is no collection of levelled work that they can consult on standards. Assessment procedures are informal. The subject co-ordinator possesses a good understanding of strengths in the subject and of those areas requiring further development. He monitors teachers' planning and offers colleagues' advice and support where appropriate; however, there is currently little monitoring of the teaching of art and design. Resources for the subject are generally good, and are augmented to meet the demands of particular themes or projects. Artists and others with specialised knowledge are regularly invited to share their expertise with the pupils. Information and communication technology capabilities are used effectively to help pupils understand the work of well-known artists and also explore shape and colour, for example, when studying the work of Mondrian.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards in design and technology are firmly in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve well in some aspects of the curriculum, especially in the design of the expected appearance of finished work; however, sufficient attention is not always paid to how different elements of the design will be joined or fixed. While pupils sometimes produce plans of greater detail than that expected for their age, there is limited evidence that they regularly suggest future improvements to their work, or how they might have tackled it differently.
114. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils have practised weaving techniques, comparing their work with that observed in professionally woven fabric. They describe their favourite materials, sometimes giving thoughtful reasons for their choice. For example, one child wrote: *'my use of pipe cleaners really made the picture stand out'*. The planning stage of their work is often good; for example, they create a design for a hand puppet, labelling the different materials to be used and writing a synopsis of how the model is to be made. They examine toys to discover how they work, sometimes writing careful descriptions of their discoveries. Across the school, the standards pupils achieve in making a finished product are similar to those seen nationally, and some work is of a good standard. Standards could be higher still if pupils practised more regularly the skills they acquire. For example, the subject was not scheduled to be taught during the first half of the autumn term in 2002. This means that some skills may not be practised for some months, and are therefore not reinforced frequently enough for pupils to progress in the subject as quickly as they might. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of simple food technology because they receive good support in their efforts from staff and parent helpers. On the limited evidence available, pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, appear to make progress similar to that of other pupils. A strong feature of the school's inclusion policy is that the design and technology work of all pupils is valued and displayed to its best advantage, and this encourages pupils to take care with their work.

115. No lessons in the subject were observed in the course of the inspection, and therefore no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning. However, sufficient evidence was gathered to enable some conclusions about their quality to be drawn. Basic skills are taught at least satisfactorily, and although there is sometimes scope for more attention to be paid to some aspects of making and evaluation, teachers display sound knowledge and understanding of the subject. From informal discussions and an examination of their work, it is evident that pupils display an enthusiasm for the subject, and teachers prepare work that is both relevant and interesting. Planning is sufficiently detailed, describing closely the objectives for each lesson and how teachers hope to achieve them.
116. The school teaches all areas of the design and technology curriculum, although, as already indicated, there is scope for the school to strengthen its provision in some of its aspects. These and other areas of development have already been identified by the subject manager, and the school is planning a thorough review of the subject during the current year. At present, assessment is limited to informal procedures, and there is little systematic monitoring of teaching in the subject. In its current improvement plan, the school has rightly recognised the need to raise the profile of design and technology through increased opportunities for staff training, and the subject co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths of the subject, and its areas for development. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory, and there are plans to extend these during the coming year.

GEOGRAPHY

117. During the inspection no lessons were seen as geography is not taught in the first part of the autumn term. Teachers' plans were looked at, pupils' work in books scrutinised and work on display analysed. From this evidence it is clear that standards of attainment in geography are close to those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. At the time of the last inspection, standards were also around national expectations. This represents satisfactory maintenance of standards within geography over time.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made comparisons between other places and their home town. The visit to a local beach, and comparisons made with the city of Plymouth demonstrate that pupils are developing an appropriate awareness of different places and features that give them their character. In Year 1, a trip to Totnes enabled pupils to write successfully about a town different from Plymouth and draw simple maps of their trip. Work done when making comparisons of lifestyles on a Scottish island with life in Plymouth helps pupils further develop an awareness of places beyond their own locality. In contrast to this generally positive picture there is little evidence that pupils regularly look at globes or other large scale maps to develop skills in describing where places are or how places are linked.
119. No teaching was seen, so no overall judgement can be made of teaching. From teachers' planning it is clear that lessons are thought through carefully and all pupils are included in lessons, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The school uses the local area effectively to teach about geography, with a number of interesting visits having taken place. From an examination of pupils' work, attitudes to geography are at least satisfactory. Pupils express what they have learned during lessons in writing or pictures and teachers' marking shows that learning objectives have been met. Pupils' work is generally neat, tidy and well presented, indicating that they take pride in their writing and drawing.
120. In order to maximise the use of teaching time, geography is taught in half-term blocks. However, this means that some skills may not be practised for some months and can lead to pupils forgetting work they have previously learned. As a result, standards are not as good as they might be.
121. The geography co-ordinator has only been at the school for a short time and has not had time to

influence the way in which the subject is taught. However, in line with the school's policy, she monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work in order to ensure that satisfactory standards are maintained. Plans to monitor teaching systematically in order to raise standards are entirely appropriate.

122. Resources for geography are satisfactory, but in need of further development in some areas. For example, there is a limited number of maps available to show children where they live in Britain or the world. Pupils have used information and communications technology effectively for presenting work and programmable toys are used successfully to help develop understanding of routes and the type of instructions needed for navigating a way around a route. There is a good range of reference books in the library to support work in geography, and the wide range of interesting fiction books provide opportunities for pupils to be inspired to learn about other places and the people who live there.

HISTORY

123. Standards of attainment in history are those expected nationally by the end of Year 2, with some aspects being above this level. For example, pupils are able to talk confidently and enthusiastically about aspects of history they have learned recently. Scrutiny of work showed that pupils of all abilities and aptitudes were given the same tasks so that higher-attaining pupils were not extended in their learning and tasks were not altered sufficiently to meet the needs of lower-attaining pupils. At the time of the last inspection, standards were close to national expectations. Therefore, the school has made satisfactorily maintained levels of teaching and learning in the subject.
124. All pupils make satisfactory progress across the school. By the end of Year 2, they have learned about the life of Florence Nightingale and made comparisons of her work with that of a modern day nurse. They have also compared seaside holidays of the present with those of the past. Pupils in Year 1 have looked at the different generations of their families, showing a sequencing of events, and learned about the life of Captain Cook. The whole school celebrated the Golden Jubilee, with a comparison of life at the time of the Coronation.
125. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are included effectively into lessons and make appropriate progress. In the lessons observed, pupils' learning was at least satisfactory. They were able to talk about the year The Great Fire of London started, where it started, and could name the owner of the shop in which it started. In another class, they were learning to tell the difference between old and new toys, by looking at a range made over the past century.
126. The teaching seen was satisfactory, with good features. Teachers plan their lessons well with clear objectives for learning. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils, with relationships being particularly good. Work is set to cater for the different level of abilities in the classes. Basic skills are taught effectively. In the better lessons, the pace is good and pupils are involved effectively, by discussing eyewitness accounts of experiences. In the satisfactory lessons, the pace is slower and the introductions can be over-long, so that pupils become restless and lose concentration by the time they are expected to undertake activities. Teachers have created some stimulating and visually exciting displays in connection with history. One particular work of note was a display of The Great Fire of London.
127. Pupils' attitudes to the subject in the lessons seen vary from satisfactory to very good, depending on the pace of the lesson. They participate well in discussions and can talk confidently about the subject. In the better lessons, they were keen to explain their own experiences and to listen to those of others. Good behaviour was maintained despite an over-long introduction to one lesson. In the satisfactory lesson, the activities lacked challenge for the higher-attaining pupils.
128. The school has an appropriate policy for history and scheme of work, which is used well to ensure that relevant aspects of the subject are taught to each year group. The school makes good use

of the locality for teaching history, including Plymouth Museum. However, there is limited teaching time available, and in order to maximise this time history is taught in half-term blocks. This can lead to pupils forgetting work they have previously learned. These factors restrict the progress pupils can make over time.

129. The subject co-ordinator has benefited from the middle management training received on taking up the post as history co-ordinator and carries out her role effectively. She supports colleagues successfully and evaluates the school's performance by monitoring teachers' planning and looking regularly at pupils' work. The school has rightly identified the need for the co-ordinator to be able to monitor teaching in order to bring about further improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. At present, assessment is limited to informal procedures. Resources, overall, are satisfactory and there is a reasonable budget to purchase such further materials as are needed. The use of information and communications technology is incorporated into lessons to help pupils to find about the subject and to present work. The resources in the school's library are used effectively to extend their knowledge.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. Standards in information and communication technology are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2, and are better than those seen at the time of the last inspection. The subject has moved on considerably in the last five years, and the school has kept up with these changes. It now has access to a good range of equipment, with two or three machines in every classroom, and the shared use of a new computer suite that allows the individual practice of skills. These, together with improved staff training opportunities, mean that the school is well placed to raise standards in the subject still further.
131. Pupils make good progress in acquiring knowledge and skills as they move through the school. In Year 1, pupils practise control of the mouse, and begin to understand that certain tool buttons have specific functions; for example, they use draw, paint and fill tools to create pictures successfully in the style of Mondrian. They know how to store information and close a program. Pupils begin to use word-processing skills and understand the functions of some of particular keys to enhance the presentation of their work. They know, for example, how to use the shift key and space bar, and begin to understand how to correct mistakes. By Year 2, pupils can program a floor turtle so that it will complete a series of movements and turn in a desired order. They also learn to program a turtle on a screen using simple, direct instructions, but sometimes encounter difficulty in adjusting its movement when it reaches the edge of a screen. The computer is used with increasing frequency to support learning in literacy and numeracy, employing programs for both that can be used at different levels according to the aptitude and ability of the pupil. This is a good strategy, which ensures that work can be set to match the level of pupils' understanding. Because of the use of these programs and the setting of other suitably differentiated work, pupils of different aptitudes and ability make progress at a similar rate.
132. From lessons seen in the course of the inspection, examination of work and discussion with pupils, it is clear that the quality of learning is good. In those lessons observed for other subjects where the computer was in use, all the pupils seen in Year 2 were able to use the mouse and cursor accurately, competently manipulating the keys for mathematics and literacy work and using the machines productively as an adjunct to their learning.
133. Pupils display enthusiasm for the subject, talking with interest about the work they have covered and possessing a very clear understanding of what they have learned. In lessons observed, teaching was of good quality. Different work was set for pupils of differing ability, and the lessons proceeded at a good pace. Teachers were imaginative and flexible in their approach, calling pupils together for additional explanations and breaking down the task into more easily understandable steps when they encountered difficulty. As a result, pupils generally made good progress in their learning.
134. The information and communication technology curriculum is sufficiently broad, but there is scope

for further development in some areas. For example, while the school uses computers often enough to support learning in literacy and numeracy, it rightly recognises that the use of information and communication technology in other curricular areas is capable of being extended. The subject co-ordinator, in post for three years, has worked hard to improve facilities in the subject, and is well aware of its strengths and shortcomings. Confidence in teaching the subject, a weakness identified at the last inspection, has been improved both through training led by the co-ordinator and through that offered externally. A portfolio of work to which staff may refer to gain a better understanding of standards is being compiled; however, there are currently no systematic procedures for analysing and recording what pupils can do. The subject co-ordinator reviews teachers' planning, sometimes using this as a basis for advice or training, but as yet there is no regular monitoring of teaching in the subject. The school makes good use of the services of a computer technician to ensure that machines remain in use. Pupils do not yet use the Internet to communicate information or acquire knowledge, although plans are in hand for its use.

MUSIC

135. During the week of the inspection a successful musical event took place. This was organised by the school but was led by music specialists from a local organisation called The Music Zone. The whole school gathered together for one twenty-minute session so that all pupils were involved in and benefited from the music event. Then, each of the Year 2 classes had a separate lesson, led by the visiting performers. These four sessions were observed together with one other lesson in Year 1 and one other in Year 2. Furthermore, three assemblies, scrutiny of schemes of work, and discussions with the music co-ordinator were taken into account.
136. Overall, standards of teaching and learning are of a high standard. This is an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection. The success of the school is underpinned by three factors. First, the scheme of work is sufficiently detailed to enable non-specialists to teach music to a good standard. Second, the music co-ordinator is a skilled musician who is able to lead by example. Third, the school, in partnership with parents, enables a large number of pupils to learn to play a musical instrument and participate in a wide range of extra-curricular music activities, such as one that took place during the inspection week. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are fully involved in lessons and the good relationships between teachers and pupils ensures that progress is good.
137. In lessons and assemblies pupils sing confidently in harmony together. In the Year 2 lesson pupils were taught how to use their voices expressively when singing. As a result, they sang a song successfully as a round, relating their contribution to that of other performers. In Year 1, pupils were taught how to create musical patterns using different hand and finger sounds. They competently and enthusiastically produced sounds ranging from clapping, tapping, rubbing, scratching, plopping and flicking. The sounds were explored fully and organised well so that by the end of the lesson, music from a number of 'hand orchestras' was successfully rehearsed and performed.
138. During the sessions led by the visiting specialists pupils demonstrated high levels of skill in keeping a beat, working in unison and controlling instruments. Simple tasks, such as playing their percussion instruments very softly and gradually increasing the volume, were carried out to a high musical standard.
139. Attitudes to learning in music are good. Pupils show a real sense of purpose when exploring musical ideas and using musical instruments. There is a great willingness to be involved in lessons, and pupils demonstrate genuine enjoyment and interest. They behave well, particularly in large group activities and they respond sensitively to classical music when, for example, it is played as they come in and go out from the assembly hall.
140. The quality of teaching seen was good. Lessons are planned carefully and link well to the current scheme of work. Learning objectives are clearly specified in lesson plans and used well to focus attention on key learning points. Pupils are managed firmly but kindly. Resources are sufficient in quantity and are organised well to support lessons. This ensures that pupils behave well, listen carefully and are alert. In all musical activities observed a good balance was achieved between

explanation, demonstration and practical application. Teachers and teaching assistants work harmoniously together and through careful liaison ensure that pupils are motivated to learn, are fully engaged in their tasks and make good progress.

141. The music co-ordinator supports and challenges colleagues successfully through monitoring of lesson plans and by working with all Year 1 and 2 pupils throughout the week. Key topics or units of work are taught over blocks of time but skills are kept sharp through the co-ordinator's work in year group singing and whole-school assembly sessions. She has rightly identified the need to encourage more work to be done on developing pupils' appraising skills, especially through the use of recording equipment to recall sounds, identify what sounds work well together and make modifications to musical sequences.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

142. Standards in physical education are average for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The school has maintained satisfactory standards in this area since the last inspection. Pupils attain standards in line with national expectations in gymnastics and games. No lessons in dance were observed in the current inspection.
143. The effort and achievement of all pupils is valued and celebrated. As a result, pupils with special needs and English as an additional language are fully integrated and, if necessary, supported by teaching assistants. Pupils in Year 1 know that they need to warm up before exercise. They know that exercise makes them breathe more quickly. Pupils are developing good skills in throwing and catching. In a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, pupils worked hard and recognised the effect of exercise on their heart rate. They responded very well to the teacher's energetic warm up and worked with effort. Most pupils are able to devise and perform a sequence of different actions and then repeat it. They experiment with different ways of travelling across the hall, jumping, sliding, running and rolling. Pupils show good awareness of others in using the space and they work safely. When pupils have devised a sequence of movements they are asked to repeat it in reverse order. The vast majority do so well, demonstrating good body control and ability to link movements with contrasting direction, level and speed.
144. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and work with effort. They respond well to their teachers' high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils work well individually or in pairs and groups. They are learning to plan and evaluate their work and are making good progress.
145. In both the lessons observed teaching was good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan their lessons well and structure activities carefully to develop pupils' skills. They take care to ensure that pupils work safely and build well on pupils' previous experiences so that continuity and progression is maintained at a good level. In lessons, they set challenging tasks and assess pupils' progress regularly. They give good feedback to pupils about their progress and encourage them to evaluate their own and others' performances.
146. The subject leader for physical education left the school at the end of the last academic year. In her time at the school she established a good programme of work and provided good advice and support for colleagues. She has established a comprehensive portfolio of pictorial ideas for gymnastics, which is a good support for teachers. The policy for physical education is thorough and addresses progression in gymnastics, games, dance and athletics.
147. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had taken responsibility for the subject but there are plans to appoint a new subject leader. The school has established links with a nearby independent school and is able to use some of their facilities for physical education. These links include working with older students who are working towards the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and who support and teach younger pupils to achieve the award. There are also good links with a local secondary school. In the summer term of the previous year, the secondary school hosted a 'family fun day' where pupils and their families were able to explore the excellent sports facilities. The school also took part in a dance festival hosted by the secondary school. The physical education programme is enriched by visits from professional dancers who provide workshops.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. During the inspection it was possible to observe only two lessons, one in Year 1 and one in Year 2. Pupils' work, the school's scheme of work, lesson plans and discussion with the co-ordinator were taken into account.
149. Religious education at Hyde Park Infant school is taught to all registered pupils at the school, except those withdrawn by their parents. The school's curriculum, which is carefully implemented, is based firmly on the locally Agreed Syllabus. A good balance is achieved so that

the curriculum offered reflects the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian but takes into account the richness and diversity of other world faiths represented in Great Britain today.

150. The time allowed for religious education is sufficient for the Agreed Syllabus to be taught effectively. The Programmes of Study rely on the use of artefacts, videos, books and posters. These have been collected and are stored in well-marked containers in the school's resource room. They are in good condition and appropriate for four to seven-year-old pupils. The school has access to the local education authority's Religious and Cultural Centre in Plymouth. Resources can be borrowed for specific topics and staff have the expertise to liaise with representatives of the major faiths. The school uses this facility and its own resources to good effect to ensure that the needs of pupils and the curriculum are met well.
151. Standards achieved at the end of the key stage are at least in line with the expectations expressed in the locally Agreed Syllabus. This was the position at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level.
152. As pupils move up through the school they are increasingly able to recognise the influence and significance of religion. For example, they are able to indicate what is special to them, explain why certain things are special and recognise that different things are special to different people. This was demonstrated well in the Year 1 lesson on beauty and then again in the Year 2 work on special occasions such as Diwali, Easter and Hanukkah. Pupils are developing appropriate understanding for their age of religious belief and practices. For example, through their work on baptism pupils are beginning to know that different groups have their own identifying characteristics and some practices are based on religious belief. Evaluation of moral issues is approached well by the school and Year 2 pupils offered good ideas when discussing issues such as trust, obedience and promises inspired by the story of Noah.
153. The quality of teaching and learning is at least sound throughout the school. Teachers use the school's very detailed and helpful scheme of work to teach all aspects of work covered in the agreed syllabus. Lessons are planned so that pupils consolidate and build on prior learning and gain new knowledge at a systematic and realistic rate. All pupils are encouraged to participate in lessons and their views are valued. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to promote understanding and help pupils learn about and learn from religious education, including drama and role-play. A notable feature is the good use made of literacy skills in religious education lessons. Reading, writing, speaking and listening are linked effectively. Furthermore, activities are presented that put emphasis on variety in writing such as narrating, describing and explaining and using a range of forms including stories, posters, lists and labels. Marking of work is of a high standard. Constructive comments linked to learning objectives are a prominent feature of pupils' written work and this helps them to understand what they have done well and what their future targets are for improvement.
154. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with English as an additional language are fully involved in religious education lessons. There is a growing diversity of religions and cultures represented in the school's intake. The Programmes of Study reflect these changes and the school is successful in promoting understanding of others and helping pupils to take pride in their own family, traditions and beliefs.
155. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good role models for pupils. As a result, pupils' attitude to learning in religious education is good. In lessons, pupils engage with their teacher and each other, discussing ideas and offering views confidently. They are well-behaved and co-operative. Pupils take pride in their written work, which is legible, tidy and well presented. Pictures are neatly drawn and coloured.
156. The co-ordinator offers strong leadership and the targets identified for development are ambitious

in, for example, improving the school's work in relation to spiritual development. The school's work in religious education is evaluated by the co-ordinator, who monitors lesson plans and scrutinizes samples of pupils' work regularly. This enables the school to agree priorities for improvement and to take appropriate action.