

INSPECTION REPORT

Drake Primary School

Keyham, Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113292

Headteacher: Mr Pete Daniels

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jane Morris
18270

Dates of inspection: 31st March to 3rd April 2003

Inspection number: 247342

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Saltash Road
Keyham
Plymouth

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Janet Stewart

Date of previous inspection: 3rd November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18270	Mrs Jane Morris	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Music Foundation Stage English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The schools results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9691	Mr Jon Vincent	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
24805	Mrs Alison Cogher	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3942	Mr Keith Sanderson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Drake Primary School is of average size and is situated close to the dockland area of the city of Plymouth. There are 221 pupils on roll, ranging in age from four to 11. Pupils are taught in eight classes that are housed on three levels. Children come from predominantly white British families. Their backgrounds and circumstances are varied. Generally, attainment on entry to the school is below average and it is well below average in the area of communication, language and literacy. However, different year groups of pupils have identified strengths and others have a range of needs and this is reflected in the fluctuations in results. There are 46 pupils (20.8 per cent) eligible for free school meals. This figure fluctuates, but is currently in line with the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is 41 (18.6 per cent), a broadly average figure. However, of these, eight pupils have statements (3.6 per cent) and this number is above the national average. Pupils' particular needs include speech and communication difficulties, hearing and visual impairment and learning and behavioural needs. There is a very small number of refugee pupils with English as an additional language. Seventeen pupils joined the school and 26 left at times other than those expected. At 19.5 per cent, this figure is above average. The school works very hard to access additional funding so that pupils take part in many and varied additional opportunities such as visits to other countries.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Drake Primary is a very effective school. It provides a particularly safe, caring and yet academically challenging environment where all pupils are highly valued. All pupils work very hard and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Currently, at the end of Year 2, they are achieving average standards having entered school with below average standards. At the end of Year 6 they are reaching above average standards. This is because teaching is good and takes account of the needs of individuals. The leadership and management of the school are of a very high quality and steers the school forward, focusing on a shared commitment to improve. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 are high in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), art, music and design and technology (DT) because the quality of teaching is good and all pupils learn successfully and achieve well.
- Very positive attitudes to school are fostered and personal development and relationships are especially strong. This is supported by the provision for social and cultural education which is of a very high quality.
- The range of learning opportunities, both in and out of school time, is very good. It acknowledges the school's determination to be fully inclusive and it does this very well. The community makes a very valuable contribution.
- Pupils are cared for very well. This is appreciated by parents who have very high opinions of the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by the co-ordinator and very effective teaching assistants.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good as is the commitment of the governing body.

What could be improved

- The consistency of approach to the development of;
 - speaking and listening skills;
 - handwriting and presentation;
 - marking, so that it informs pupils of their successes and what they need to do to improve;
 - the use of literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum.

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 November 1997. Since then the school has successfully addressed all the points raised as issues. Improvement has been good in many aspects and there have been significant developments in the overall quality of teaching and assessment. This has led to raised standards, especially in English. This is to the school's credit because the vast majority of children join the school with well below average attainment in this area. Information and communication technology is now a very strong feature of the school's work and the provision for physical education (PE) has improved significantly. Whole-school development planning is secure. Recent appointments to the senior management team and the good knowledge of the governing body have ensured that the school continues to move forward under the dedicated and skilful expertise of the headteacher. It is in a very strong position to sustain its caring ethos whilst striving for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	D	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	A	D	D	
science	A*	A	C	C	

The results achieved by Year 6 pupils in 2002 were average in English and science but below average in mathematics. Results were also below those achieved by similar schools for English and mathematics but in line with them for science. The 'dip' in results for mathematics and science were against an improving trend and can be explained using the school's wealth of information about these pupils' special needs. This group of pupils had made good progress since the end of Year 2. Assessment systems are thorough and show how the school does its utmost to fulfil the potential of all its pupils with praiseworthy tracking systems ensuring all are challenged effectively. During the inspection, standards seen in Year 6 were above average in English, mathematics and science and suggest that results for 2003 are likely to reflect a high standard. The school's determination to raise standards has twice been recognised by its inclusion in the governments's 'School Achievement Award Scheme.'

The results achieved by Year 2 pupils in 2002 were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the results for reading and mathematics were well above average and above average for writing. Results in 2002 also showed that a small number of pupils far exceeded the expected level in reading, a notable achievement. Teacher assessments of science were in the top five per cent nationally. Inspection findings indicate that standards, although satisfactory, are unlikely to be as good as the results achieved in 2002 reflecting once more how year groups of pupils at this school can change dramatically.

Throughout the school pupils achieve above the national expectations, in ICT, art, DT and music. Work in geography and history is satisfactory. In religious education (RE), standards broadly reflect the demands of the locally agreed syllabus.

In the Foundation Stage all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. However, by the end of their reception year most children are still unlikely to have achieved the nationally expected levels, especially in the area of communication, language and literacy, because of their low attainment on entry. Their below average skills in speaking and listening are still apparent at the end of Year 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to play a full part in all that the school has to offer them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is good. The vast majority of pupils are very clear about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good and a real strength of the school. Boys and girls co-operate at both work and play.
Attendance	The attendance rate has improved this year and is now satisfactory.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are enthusiastic and interested in their activities. Behaviour is good overall although there are some pupils whose behaviour is challenging. Relationships between all members of staff and pupils are built on mutual respect and are a great strength of the school. Attendance has now reached a satisfactory level as a result of effective and rigorous monitoring.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

During the inspection 49 lessons were observed. Seven lessons were excellent, 13 very good, 12 good and 17 satisfactory.

The quality of teaching is good overall. It is especially and consistently effective in Years 5 and 6. It is good in the Foundation Stage being particularly strong in the reception class and is good throughout Key Stage 1. All lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Very good and excellent lessons are characterised by very well managed and challenging activities. These take into account the needs of all pupils and recognise the variety and range of styles and tasks needed to stimulate and motivate them all. In some less successful lessons introductions are too lengthy. Pupils have to sit for too long before getting started on their activities and there are missed opportunities for pupils to contribute to and share in discussions. Information and communication technology is taught very well and features highly in the school's curriculum. It is a strength of the school's provision.

English and mathematics are both taught well throughout the school. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are integrated and developed in some subjects such as science but other subjects such as geography and history do not always promote writing skills as well as they might because of an over dependence on the use of worksheets. Teachers use the national strategies to good effect. They have adapted their lessons to ensure that pupils are taught the basic skills in a systematic way. Great care is taken to provide teaching assistants with sufficient information to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and they make good progress. Strategies to integrate pupils with English as an additional language are successful and these pupils make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. All pupils experience a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that is greatly enriched by the wide variety of planned extra-curricular activities, very positive links with the community and partner institutions. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is of a high quality.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good throughout the school. The provision is very well led and managed. Pupils' individual education plans provide clear targets. Teachers and very skilled teaching assistants provide pupils with very good support to enable them to achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils respond well to the caring and supportive way they are included in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school fosters these areas very productively especially in relation to social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after its pupils very well. Procedures to support their welfare are very good and enable them all to give of their best.

Parents view the school very positively and the impact of their involvement with the work of the school is productive and their contribution to their children's learning is good.

Curriculum provision is enhanced by visitors, after school clubs, visits to places of interest within the locality, further afield and also, remarkably, pupils have the chance to travel to different countries.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is very well supported by the senior management team, especially in their enthusiasm and exemplary standards of teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are fully committed. They have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and their role in shaping the direction of the school is good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The management team, which includes the special educational needs co-ordinator, evaluates standards. Subject co-ordinators monitor classroom practice so that areas for improvement are clearly identified.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial control is effective and identified educational priorities are targeted clearly.

Accommodation is satisfactory and is well cared for by a very committed caretaker and premises staff. Displays of pupils' work significantly enhance the learning environment.

There is an appropriate level of staffing. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution. Resources are adequate and are used well.

The headteacher, senior management team and the governors together provide very strong leadership and management for the school. The principles of 'best value' are applied very effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy going to school and they are helped to become mature. • They feel their children make good progress. • The behaviour is good. • Teaching is of a high quality and their children are expected to work hard. • Parents are unanimous in that they feel they can approach the school and are supported very well. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like their children to have more homework. • A small minority would like more information about how their children are getting on. • Parents would like the school to provide more clubs and out of school activities, particularly for younger pupils.

The inspection team is very happy to agree with parents' extremely positive views of the school. It feels that parents do receive very good information about the work of the school and their children's progress. It applauds the school for all the work that involves parents. Activities outside lessons include; after school clubs, visits, and a residential trips. A number of visitors come to the school, and overall, this area is considered to be a strength and a very good element of the school's work. Inspection evidence also shows that the amount of homework is appropriate and used well to support pupils' learning in class.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children are assessed as they start school. These assessments and additional inspection evidence show that their attainment on entry varies but it is generally below average. It is very low in the area of communication, language and literacy. This is a similar picture to that of the previous inspection. Prior to starting school most children attend a pre-school setting. By the end of the Foundation Stage about three-quarters of the children are still trying to achieve the expected goals even though they have been working hard since starting school. They do make significant strides forward in their reception year and there is considerable progress evident in all areas of learning. This general picture of low attainment on entry explains why the above average standards in English, mathematics and science seen during the inspection in Year 6 are so commendable.
2. Average results in English were achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2002. Standards in this subject have fluctuated between average and below average over recent years. In mathematics, they were below average in 2002 having shown year on year improvement until then. They were well above average in 2001. Standards in science were average in 2002 having been well above average in 2001. Standards in 2002 for English and mathematics were below those of similar schools but in line with them for science. These results show a decline in mathematics and science but an improvement in English. Higher attaining pupils' results were average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. These results reflect the specific and identified needs of this group of pupils, well documented by the school, and should not be considered as an indicator of a downward trend.
3. Work seen during the inspection suggests that Year 6 pupils are achieving above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Indications are that their results will be good. The school has concentrated on raising boys' attainment, especially in English, and this has paid dividends. Inspection evidence also shows that the school uses effective tracking systems and makes sure that all pupils are challenged to reach the highest standards they can and has led to improvements. This has been recognised by the school's inclusion in the government's 'School Achievement Award Scheme' for the previous two years. It is also worth noting that comparisons made using the current free school meals figures for the school would provide a far more positive picture for 2002, giving the school average or above average grades. Pupils in this group did particularly well when the progress they made, based on the standards achieved at the end of Year 2, is considered. The school's tracking systems and use of data are praiseworthy and even though the school did not meet the targets it set itself for 2002, the process is used effectively to strive for success and proves the school did its utmost to achieve its own challenging targets.
4. Standards achieved by Year 2 pupils in 2002 were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the results for reading and mathematics were well above average and above average for writing. These results point out that a well above average number of pupils achieved very high standards in reading and mathematics and they also show that in reading a small number of pupils achieved standards that far exceeded the expected level. Teacher assessments of science identify very high standards overall, indeed they are

in the top five per cent nationally. This illustrates clearly how different year groups of pupils have varying needs and abilities and that the school recognises the learning potential of all its pupils and does its utmost to enable each one to fulfil their potential.

5. The school has made significant efforts to raise standards in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that presently standards in English, mathematics and science are average in Year 2, except in speaking and listening which are lower because pupils take longer to catch up on this aspect of their work. Literacy and numeracy have been the foci for the school's development and these are having a very favourable impact on pupils' achievements. Teachers try to ensure that pupils endeavour to use their literacy and numeracy skills in different areas of the curriculum but there is still work to be done particularly in geography and history where lessons are often based on undemanding worksheet material that inhibits language development and the standard of handwriting and presentation is inconsistent and unsatisfactory in some areas of pupils' work, particularly in the younger classes.
6. At the end of Year 2 standards are in line with national expectations in history, geography, RE, PE and art. They are higher than expected in ICT, music, art and DT. Standards have improved in ICT, art and music. As pupils work hard and make good progress through the school by the end of Year 6 standards are above the national expectations in ICT, art, DT, and music. They are at least satisfactory in all other foundation subjects. Standards in ICT are so good because teachers routinely incorporate the use of computers into their lessons both in the suite and in classrooms. They use a variety of applications very productively. The school is totally committed to raising standards in this and every subject.
7. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have Statements of Special Educational Need make good progress and reach appropriate standards. Pupils achieve well because assessments and regular progress reviews are used to inform their individual education plans. These plans clearly indicate pupils' next steps in learning, and teachers plan lessons to support them. The guidance and practical help pupils receive from both teachers and teaching assistants, are crucial to the good progress that pupils make.
8. Pupils with English as an additional language make similarly good progress. The school actively seeks out additional support for these pupils from external agencies, whilst teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support in lessons. The school identifies pupils who are particularly gifted or talented. Effective provision is made for these pupils in lessons and by accessing special activities provided by local institutions and businesses.
9. The school has recently appointed new members of staff to the senior management team. This team includes the Year 2 and Year 6 teachers plus the special educational needs co-ordinator. They are having a significant and very positive impact on the work of the school and the standards it achieves. Their skills and enthusiasm are not only enabling pupils to build on their prior experiences, but they are also leading English, mathematics and science productively. Inspection evidence suggests that the school is in a very strong position to continue moving forward building on the impressive work in evidence. This was clearly shown when Year 6 pupils presented an assembly about the rights of children around the world to parents and the whole school. They spoke clearly, confidently and in well constructed sentences. They supported their outstanding assembly with a presentation using the computer and projector linked together.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good and these high standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school. They settle quickly and enjoy their lessons, respond well to their teachers, concentrate and work hard. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and built on mutual respect and are a strength of the school. This strength is continually maintained by the caring, family atmosphere promoted by every member of the school staff. Pupils show respect for each other and school property, collaborate and co-operate willingly with their teachers and each other. Their interest and involvement in activities is very good. They have a good understanding of how their actions can affect others.
11. Behaviour in and around the school is good and parents appreciate the high standards promoted by the school. At a whole-school assembly attended by both parents and members of the inspection team, pupils demonstrated exemplary behaviour. Although some pupils present particularly challenging behaviour patterns the majority are courteous, thoughtful and polite both to one another and adults. A pleasant, quiet and friendly atmosphere is present throughout the whole school and voices are only raised when it becomes a necessary part of a lesson. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and there have been no exclusions in this school year.
12. Pupils' personal development is now very good and is constantly fostered by the school. Opportunities for pupils to develop personal responsibilities in and around the school have been greatly improved since the last inspection. Apart from the regular normal minor tasks which occur daily the recently created school council illustrates the school's determination to further pupils' personal development.
13. In group tasks, pupils help and encourage each other when necessary without prompting and are keen to acknowledge each other's successes. All members of staff take every advantage of furthering pupils' personal development. Routine tasks are carried out with quiet efficiency and self-discipline and contribute very well to the smooth running of the school.
14. Pupils' attendance rate is satisfactory. Lessons start promptly, registers are completed correctly and the incidence of unauthorised absences is falling and it is currently in line with the national average. This reinforces the parents' view that their children like school.
15. Overall, the attitudes, values and personal development of pupils continue to be a significant strength of the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Throughout the school the overall quality of teaching is good with some very good and excellent features. It is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6. Two thirds of all lessons seen during the inspection were good or better, over a quarter were very good and a significant number, 14 per cent, were excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. This is a noteworthy improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was reported. The last inspection also reported that teachers did not always have clearly defined objectives for their lessons or use assessment sufficiently well to inform curriculum planning and to track pupils' progress. These weaknesses have been addressed, although a consistent approach to marking is

lacking and is currently under review. At the time of the inspection a supply teacher working in the school contributed a great deal to the needs of her assigned class.

17. At the time of the inspection the pure reception class was taught by an experienced and very effective teacher for three days a week and by a newly qualified teacher for two days. The recently developed mixed reception and Year 1 class was also being taught by a newly qualified teacher. These newly qualified teachers contribute successfully to the education of children in the Foundation Stage and this ensures that teaching is of a good standard overall. It is of an especially high calibre in the reception class where the co-ordinator is based. This is because she is a very skilled teacher who knows and understands the needs of these children very well. She works with her teaching assistant to provide a very high quality curriculum with learning opportunities matched to each child's development needs. The classroom and outside play area have a rich and diverse selection of equipment and stimulating activities that promote every area of learning for this age group. The newly qualified teachers are being supported so that they too develop their skills further. This area of the school's work has improved since the last inspection.
18. The generally good standard of teaching achieved throughout both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has many notable features that have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers plan and prepare lessons carefully and set clear objectives for developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Objectives and the structure of lessons are shared with pupils at the start of lessons and important new vocabulary is highlighted. Teachers enjoy very productive relationships with their pupils and they encourage positive attitudes. Their management of the pupils is good. During discussion times teachers are careful to choose a wide cross section of boys and girls, of different abilities and include pupils with special educational needs. Skilful questioning ensures that lessons are inclusive and a wholly shared experience. Pupils with English as an additional language are encouraged to take part and make useful contributions, supported by the very committed teaching assistants.
19. In the very best lessons, motivating and managing pupils are highlighted as strong aspects of teaching. This is because, although some of the pupils present some complex and demanding behaviour patterns, their learning needs are met. The aims of the school are fulfilled and the very supportive ethos is conducive to teaching and learning. Teachers know their pupils very well, are firm but fair ensuring relationships are constructive. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and levels of co-operation. Pupils know what is required of them and respond well to these high but realistic expectations although the standard of presentation in written work needs some attention particularly in the younger classes.
20. Information and communication technology features in many class lessons as well as being taught well in the suite. Teachers are confident and competent because they have all attended a comprehensive training programme to further develop their skills. This enables pupils to regularly undertake tasks that enhance their understanding of key ideas. For example; in Year 6 they link their art and dance work with ICT when they research African dance masks. They design masks using facilities to explore and add texture to their images having investigated the use of lines and shape. In the very best lessons, teachers provide a stimulating context for learning and pupils respond by being interested, enthusiastic, alert and diligent. A good illustration of this was in a Year 4 history lesson when pupils were finding out about the Tudors in preparation for a visit to a local National Trust property.

21. Very good and excellent lessons have features that the school would do well to ensure are identified and promoted in all lessons. These include the way in which some teachers recognise how pupils learn in different ways and successfully use a variety of techniques to motivate and give them opportunities to speak and listen to one another. For example; the way in which the Year 2 teacher ensured that every pupil had a clock so that they were totally involved in the session on time. Her ability to keep the lesson moving at a brisk pace was exemplary and kept pupils interested and stimulated as she challenged them to solve problems introducing techniques which were very effectively consolidated during the closing minutes of the lesson.
22. In less productive lessons, introductions take too long and pupils find it difficult to listen for sustained periods without actually becoming actively involved in their learning. In a science lesson, pupils in Year 3 become frustrated by too much teacher talk and not enough time for them to contribute their own ideas and comments when they were looking at plant roots and the functions of roots and stems. There are some missed opportunities for pupils to discuss or commit their ideas to writing whether this is by using 'wipe clean' boards or their workbooks.
23. Literacy and numeracy skills are usually taught well. The national strategies are implemented consistently and teachers are using them skilfully and competently. The use of literacy across the curriculum is well developed in some but not all classes. For example; it is skilfully used in science, ICT and RE but a preponderance of work sheet type activities for geography and history limits the impact of the development of writing skills in these subjects and teachers do not always make sure that pupils take sufficient care with their handwriting and the presentation of their work. In almost all year groups there is a high degree of competency in teaching the basic skills of numeracy. Teachers usually draw lessons to a close well by reviewing with pupils what they have learnt.
24. Teachers and support staff work very well together. Teaching assistants know how they can contribute to pupils' learning and how they can support teachers in the accurate assessment of pupils' achievements. The skill, expertise and time of support staff are used efficiently and successfully. These members of staff provide the right amount of challenge alongside the care and security that some pupils require. Teaching assistants play a very valuable part in all aspects of school life including the running of extra-curricular activities both at lunch-times and after school.
25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Whilst they show patience and understanding, teachers have high expectations of both the academic performance and the behaviour of these pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well, and are skilled at making lessons interesting and accessible to them. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes towards their work, and learn well.
26. Schemes of work for all subjects are detailed and provide a secure basis for lessons. Teachers plan lessons together and share expertise. This ensures consistency and progression between classes and equality of opportunity for pupils. Monitoring of lessons and the support and high degree of cooperation which exists between teachers, are key features in bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Homework is planned for and taken account of in lessons. Teachers use a variety of methods to incorporate it into the curriculum.

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

27. The school provides a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils. Provision is good and statutory requirements are met for all subjects including those of the locally agreed syllabus for RE and collective worship. Since the last inspection there has been significant improvement. All subjects now receive an appropriate allocation of time, and the provision for PE teaching has improved. Improvements in ICT have been very good. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively introduced and there is a commitment to refine and improve them. The school has rightly placed a strong emphasis on these curriculum areas, which has resulted in improved standards. Productive links are made between some subject areas, for example; ICT and art are used extensively to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects. However, opportunities to enhance pupils' literacy skills through other subjects are not always fully pursued. The teaching of French to Year 6 pupils is successful. Pupils enjoy learning another language, and benefit from the knowledge they gain about another culture.
28. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Yearly planning sets out what will be taught and ensure that all pupils receive appropriate experiences in all subjects. The quality and range of learning opportunities the school provides are very good because teachers plan interesting activities that meet the learning needs of pupils and make good use of all available resources.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements is very good. Teaching assistants are very effective and skilled, offering very good support for pupils both individually, and in small groups. As a result, pupils' individual needs are met, and they make good progress towards achieving their learning targets. Through the use of effective management strategies pupils with difficulties are guided towards better patterns of behaviour and they make good progress towards their targets. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is equally supportive and ensures that they quickly develop competency in English and the skills necessary for them to achieve well.
30. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of gender, religion, race or ability. The quality of the curriculum is significantly enhanced by the very good links the school has with individuals, groups and local businesses within the local community. These links are actively encouraged and pursued for the benefit of pupils and their parents or carers. Many enrichment activities are organised to broaden pupils' experiences and help to raise standards. Good use is made of the immediate locality and visits to a number of locations support pupils' learning in subjects such as history and geography and personal, social and health education (PHSE). For example; Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils visit an outdoor education centre to take part in physical activities and problem solving initiatives. Regular visitors provide specialist teaching support in RE and music.
31. Arrangements for activities outside normal school hours are very good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to further develop their interest and skills with computers and in sports clubs. These activities are organised and run by enthusiastic teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils derive great benefit from them. Residential visits within the British Isles and overseas and regular visitors from other countries are very successful. They help pupils to develop a far greater understanding of places and cultures, whilst also supporting their own personal development and citizenship skills very effectively.

32. Provision for PSHE, and citizenship is good. During dedicated teaching sessions pupils explore issues relating to relationships and taking personal responsibility. For example; Year 6 pupils discussed, with great maturity, the subject of bullying and the responsibility they have as the oldest in the school to set a good example, and to support younger pupils in their understanding of the issues involved. Pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of health issues and are aware of choices relating to their health. The school provides a well-organised sex education and drugs awareness programme. This is enhanced by the use of visiting specialists. The comprehensive programme reflects the school's commitment to empowering pupils with the knowledge and understanding of issues related to these aspects of life that will enable them to make informed decisions and choices as they mature.
33. The school works very constructively with the local community and partner institutions, particularly the local secondary school and the city's university. These very good links result in many benefits for pupils including regular additional support for pupils in Years 5 and 6 who have special educational needs. Pupils also experience working in a local secondary school DT department. Opportunities for higher achieving pupils to experience additional challenges are pursued through constructive links with the local university. These links have a positive effect on pupils' achievements, including their personal confidence and enthusiasm for learning. The school works closely with many other schools in the local area to develop common approaches to aspects of the school's work such as assessment, special educational needs and arrangements for pupils' transfer to secondary school.
34. Overall pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good. It is now considered to be one of the strengths of the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
35. Pupils' spiritual development is good and has improved since the last inspection. There are now planned opportunities for pupils to discuss achievements and feelings within PSHE as well as in other lessons in the curriculum such as in RE and art. Regular class assemblies, to which parents are invited, allow pupils to celebrate good work, effort and progress. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate that people, nature and the arts all provide experiences for reflection which inform their perspectives on life; this was aptly demonstrated in an assembly on the 'Roles and Rights of Children' in different parts of the world.
36. Development of pupils' moral education is good. The school's aims and values are promoted strongly in lessons and around the school. Staff provide good role models, valuing and respecting all members of the school and there is a strong emphasis on providing clear codes of conduct, so that pupils learn the difference between right and wrong. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to consider moral values. For example; they show care for others by undertaking charity work and it is also typified by pupils in Year 6 helping and encouraging younger pupils in shared reading sessions.
37. The school is rightly proud of the social development of its pupils, which is very good and shows an improvement. Younger pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility in class as monitors or table leaders. Older pupils are given additional responsibilities to help in the smooth running of the school and in directing and guiding younger pupils. Pupils are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards one another and to those less fortunate than themselves. Year 6 pupils take part in a residential visit, where emphasis is placed on mutual help and support in sometimes

challenging activities, and in living together in a community. Younger children are provided with guided opportunities to communicate and socialise with their peers. Throughout the school pupils work and play together co-operatively and in harmony.

38. Pupils' cultural development is very good as was identified at the time of the last inspection. Pupils have many opportunities within the curriculum to appreciate the art, dance and music of a number of cultures, and visitors to school help to reinforce this understanding. For example; a recent visit from an African drumming band and the use of this music at an assembly was outstanding. There is, however, still more to be done to emphasise non-western cultures. All pupils have many opportunities to listen and take part in music and drama, and to visit places of cultural interest such as city's museum where they study Egyptian artefacts. The school is very keen to forge links with schools around the world. It is successful in its mission because it manages to arrange visits to other countries by taking advantage of additional European project funding. Pupils are encouraged to use the internet to broaden their awareness and understanding of the way people live and work around the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school looks after its pupils very well. Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are now very good and have improved since the last inspection. The caring culture promoted by every staff member ensures pupils' well being. This, together with the family atmosphere of the school creates a secure environment where learning can flourish. Teachers and other staff know their pupils very well and are familiar with their background and circumstances. Support and guidance for pupils are good.
40. Procedures for monitoring attendance are now very good and have improved dramatically since the last inspection. The school has implemented revised procedures for monitoring attendance which are rigorously applied and are steadily improving the rate of attendance. It is now in line with the national average. The school also continues to liaise with the education welfare officer on a weekly basis. There is a suitable child protection policy with the headteacher and his deputy as the nominated child protection officers. This, coupled with the detailed knowledge staff have of their pupils ensures child protection matters are very carefully monitored. Every member of the school staff has received training in emergency first aid. The school values its pupils and looks after them very well.
41. The school's behaviour policy continues to promote the good standards of behaviour which were recognised at the last inspection. Behaviour standards expected from pupils are highlighted in the school prospectus. Based on acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and using sanctions as a last resort, the policy is observed and understood by all pupils. This, coupled with the examples set by staff, ensures pupils meet and enjoy the high standards of behaviour expected from them.
42. The school has a very comprehensive health and safety policy supported by a very actively involved health and safety governor. There are fully understood procedures in place should an emergency arise at the nearby dockyard and naval base. Pupils are totally conversant with and understand the system of sirens that are heard from time to time.
43. Personal development of pupils is a priority of the school and starts from the child's first day at school. Pupils are constantly encouraged to become independent and think for themselves. The introduction of the school council and the rotation of

'helpers' in some classes are some examples of the various initiatives the school has adopted. Their personal development is reported to parents both informally and in the bi-annual reports.

44. Good procedures are in place that enable the school to monitor pupils' academic and personal attainment and progress successfully. The school has addressed fully the key issue identified in the last inspection relating to this aspect of its work. A wide range of assessments is used to produce a good picture of each pupil's development in English, mathematics and science. Good improvement has been made in the assessment of pupils' achievements in ICT, and further developments are planned. Teachers assess pupils in all other subjects of the curriculum using national guidance. Through the analysis of assessment data, and monitoring of pupils' work, pupils' academic performance is closely tracked. This information is used to support the process of target setting for the whole school and year groups. This process is having a positive impact on the standards achieved, as teachers become increasingly able to identify very clearly the necessary next steps in learning for pupils.
45. Teachers use assessment information well to inform their teaching plans. Some individual targets are set for pupils. Where these are regularly reviewed through discussion or as part of teachers marking of pupils' work they serve to improve pupils' knowledge of their own learning. However, the marking of pupils' work in this valuable, informative way is not consistent across the school. There are missed opportunities to inform pupils about what they need to do to improve further. Pupils' personal development is monitored and supported well. The headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils very well and have a good understanding of their individual needs. The assessment co-ordinator offers good support to her colleagues and is committed to using assessment to support the raising of standards in all subjects.
46. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Comprehensive records, compiled by the special educational needs co-ordinator are based firmly on assessment information. Teaching assistants are well trained and confidently support pupils as they work towards achieving the targets detailed on their individual education, or behaviour plans.
47. The support provided for higher attaining pupils, is developing well. When planning lessons, teachers take account of these pupils' needs. The school also makes provision for pupils to take part in locally organised activities designed to challenge their thinking. The co-ordinator is working closely with local agencies to develop initiatives further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school fosters very strong parental support and in return receives a great deal of assistance from parents. Parents view the school as being very good. They appreciate the genuine 'open door' policy and take advantage of this to talk regularly to staff on an informal basis. The links with parents and the impact of their involvement with the school are also very good. They assist with reading, running the library after school and other tasks. The 'Parents, Teachers and Friends of Drake' work closely with the school and assist in many different ways. In addition to practical help with various school projects, they subsidise school trips, have provided musical instruments, books and computers which all help enhance pupils' learning opportunities effectively and ensure educational inclusion. The considerable sums of money they raise every year are a great help to the school. The secretary of this very

active association has also been responsible for renovating and maintaining the school gardens and in the process, won the school a £400 prize in a local gardening competition. This is just one example of the commitment that the parents and friends have in helping pupils and their school.

49. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Communication between home and school is also very good. There are regular newsletters and letters and very informative reports to parents twice a year. This is in addition to the more formal parent/teacher meetings in place since the last inspection and provides a good example of the thorough way the school approaches its reporting responsibilities. The school prospectus is very informative. This, together with the annual governors' report to parents fulfils statutory requirements and gives both prospective and existing parents a complete picture of the school. The home/school agreement is in place and there is a home/school reading 'diary' that is appreciated and well used by parents in supporting their children's learning at home. The majority of parents confirm that they are well informed and kept up to date with the various school activities, both academic and social.
50. The effectiveness of school links with parents is very good. Parents feel that the school is family orientated and their support for the school is very strong. In their view the school is very good and a happy place. During the inspection many parents came into school to help accompany a Year 4 visit in connection with their Tudor history topic. In addition, the supply teacher's husband provided additional help. This commitment of parents and friends is a common thread throughout the school. Many parents attended an impressive whole-school assembly and the chair of governors (also a parent) used up valuable holiday entitlement to ensure she was available during the inspection.
51. This very strong parental support and involvement combined with the efforts of the 'Friends of the School' greatly enhance pupils' learning opportunities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has established a very clear educational direction. He has successfully introduced a range of initiatives to improve the quality of educational provision and to raise standards. He has set a good tone for the school and created a very positive ethos, where there is a very strong and shared commitment to improve. The senior management team encompasses all sections of the school, and is playing an increasingly active and significant role in developments, not least through their frequent examples of excellent teaching. The headteacher has raised the staff's expectations of what they and their pupils can achieve and has inspired their full confidence.
53. In addressing areas for improvement, the headteacher has attempted to involve all the staff much more in leading and managing the school. He has attempted and succeeded in changing the school's 'culture' from a hierarchical, centralised structure to one that is more consultative and 'open'. Subject managers are becoming increasingly effective. They monitor pupils' work and look for patterns to see what lessons can be learned. They check teachers' planning, and in many instances are able to monitor and support teaching in their subject areas. They are gaining a more rigorous overview of standards and progress in their subjects, and this, alongside monitoring done by the headteacher and senior management team, means that systems for monitoring the school's performance, and taking action, are embedded and developing well. The deputy headteacher is a strong presence throughout the

- school, particularly in the areas of mathematics, PE and PHSE. Her role as deputy, and as a part of the senior management team, is very supportive and is developing more specifically to impact very favourably on standards of attainment.
54. A strong sense of teamwork is apparent in the school with teachers, governors and support staff playing a full part in the school's life. Teachers joining the school are well supported by other staff, and this has served to minimise disruption caused by staff turnover and long-term absence. Teachers are hard working and very committed to extending their professional knowledge and understanding. The school's development plan contains appropriate priorities. Resources, including training, are directed carefully to address them. Governors are closely involved in drawing up the plan and because of good systems of communication, regular presence in school and accurate up to date reports, are able to closely monitor progress in these priorities.
55. The governing body is very effective in carrying out its statutory duties, is very supportive of the school and takes an active part in its life and work. It is led very well by the chair of governors who is very committed to the school, and who knows it well from several perspectives, parent, governor and helper in school. She ensures that committees work efficiently and that all governors, experienced and newcomer alike, are able to contribute to the school's life and development. Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and areas for development through regular reports, presentations by key staff, regular visits and through their links with particular subjects and classes. These form a key part of the school's self evaluation and improvement strategy. During their visits governors have the opportunity to observe lessons and report their findings to the governing body. Communication about such visits is very open, and relationships between staff and governors are based on trust and respect.
56. The strategic use of resources is very good. The school's budget is closely monitored by an experienced, skilled finance team, and is planned very effectively. Its link to the school's development plan is very good and this helps establish value for money in terms of targets being met. The most recent auditor's report showed very satisfactory control procedures in place and there were only one or two minor issues needing attention. Specific grants, such as those for pupils with special educational needs, are used effectively for their intended purposes.
57. The school applies the principles of best value very well. Major items of spending are subject to tender and the school takes extensive advice in evaluating them. Recently the school temporarily overspent, with the full knowledge and backing of the local education authority (LEA), when building its new computer suite. The school managed to obtain further funding to make good its previous overspend, which showed prudent financial management. So carefully was the project researched and managed that the school now has an excellent facility housing 36 new computers. There is provision for future community use, and the whole project was delivered at a cost much below the 'normal', a very good value project.
58. The accommodation provides a satisfactory environment for learning. The school has tried hard to use existing space well in its provision of a library, audio visual aids room, and most recently a comprehensively equipped ITC room. There have also been improvements to the Foundation Stage classroom, to the staff toilets and the headteacher's previous office which has been changed to create extra teaching space. However, there is urgent need for improvements to the boys' toilets, which are inappropriate for junior age boys. Outside there are two playgrounds, well marked out to provide purposeful play activities. The school has no school playing field but has access to the facilities in a local park. The accommodation and external areas are

very clean and very well maintained by premises staff. The commitment of the caretaker is exceptional. His enthusiasm and support have a very positive impact on the day to day running of the school.

59. There is an appropriate level of staffing across the school and this is deployed effectively. Administrative staff are very efficient and add greatly to the smooth running of the school. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution, helping deliver support programmes that enhance the national strategies such as the mathematics 'Springboard' and the 'Early and Additional Literacy Support' They have access to training courses to assist in their professional development. 'Performance Management' procedures are securely embedded in the work of the school.
60. There is an adequate level of resources across the school, with good resources in mathematics, ICT, DT, special educational needs, music and PE. Resources for other subjects are satisfactory, but those in geography, art and RE need enhancing.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to build on its successes, the school should:

- (1) Promote a consistent approach to;
- the development of speaking and listening skills,
 - handwriting and presentation,
 - the use of literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum by using the examples of very good and excellent practice evident in the school,
 - marking so that it identifies what pupils need to do to improve further.*

(Paras: 5, 16, 19, 22, 23, 27, 45, 73, 78, 80, 81, 90, 95, 97, 98,121,123,147).

*(*This area is currently under review within the school's own improvement plan.)*

In addition the school may also wish to consider ways of improving the cloakroom provision for junior boys, particularly the oldest, because the infant sized toilets are inappropriate to meet their needs. (Para: 58)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	13	12	17	0	0	0
Percentage	14	27	24	35	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	221
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	41

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	22	14	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	21
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	33	33	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	92 (94)	97 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	22
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	33	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	94 (97)	100 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	14	17	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	13
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	23	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (82)	74 (85)	90 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	23	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (76)	74 (85)	81 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	186	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	198

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	538,172
Total expenditure	513,686
Expenditure per pupil	2,324
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,451
Balance carried forward to next year	24,486

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.5
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	221
Number of questionnaires returned	63

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	38	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	29	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	38	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	51	14	2	3
The teaching is good.	67	29	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	44	11	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	24	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	37	48	14	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	49	43	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	43	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	40	17	3	16

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

62. Children are admitted into the reception class in September or January according to their birth date. Some of these children transferred to a mixed reception and Year 1 class in January 2003 because of the second intake of very young children. They are assessed when they are admitted to find out what they can do. The results of these assessments show a range of attainment, which varies from year to year, but overall it is well below average in communication, language and literacy and below average in other areas. Children's development in personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development and aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world is good and they are close to but not achieving the Early Learning Goals in these areas when they join Year 1. However, although the progress they make in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics is also good, the standards they reach do not reflect the significant efforts that have been put into the work to help them move forward. By the end of their reception year most children are unlikely to have achieved the nationally expected levels in any of these areas of learning. A minority does manage to reach or even exceed the expected goals because the school recognises each child's needs and makes sure they achieve what they can. The reception class provides a bright, stimulating caring environment in which children learn well. Children are well prepared for their move into Year 1, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
63. Before starting school most children attend pre-school groups. Teachers have very good relationships with these groups and the well-organised induction programme ensures that children settle into school life quickly. Parents are provided with good information about the school day and the activities in which their children will be engaged. Parents support their children's learning in a variety of ways including sharing books at home. Parents receive informative reports, which indicate clearly what their children have achieved. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator ensures that there is very high quality provision for the youngest children at the school. She has a very clear understanding of what these children need. Children enjoy school. They are keen learners and respond very well to the activities planned by their teachers. Children become fully involved, they are enthusiastic and work very hard.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Many children start school with underdeveloped skills in this area of learning. Good teaching ensures that the organisation of daily activities provides children with many meaningful opportunities to develop these skills through working in small and large groups. Children learn to co-operate and consider the needs of others as teachers and their assistants support their learning particularly in the role-play area in the reception class which provides changing scenes for imaginary play. During the inspection this area was a castle that gave opportunities to dress up as a king, queen, princess or prince. The characters could count money dressed up as the 'king' in the 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' rhyme or serve bread and honey in a tea party scenario. Relationships with adults are very good, and disputes are rare. In a range of situations children are beginning to initiate conversations and negotiate. Children concentrate for extended periods of time because they are well supported by adults and the planned activities are very well matched to their learning needs. Children's self-help and social skills develop well. Children work independently, behave responsibly and handle

resources with care. They seek the help of adults when necessary, confident in the knowledge that they will be well supported.

Communication, language and literacy

65. When they start school many children have poor skills in these areas. In particular, they have limited knowledge and understanding of reading and letter sounds, writing and handwriting. The provision of stimulating learning opportunities through good quality teaching and structured schemes ensures that all children progress well but by the end of their reception year only a very few will reach the expected levels. The development of children's speaking and listening skills are strongly promoted through all activities. Children learn about letters and the sounds they make in many different ways, such as by following taped songs and rhymes. Many opportunities are provided for them to handle and explore books. Most children do understand that print conveys meaning and that the title of the book is printed on the front cover. The organisation of the classroom, including the clear labelling of resources and displays, supports children's learning in this area. Children enjoy and listen attentively to stories. Overall, adults provide an effective level of support to increase children's speaking and listening skills. When adults become directly involved in activities such as role play, children make very good progress. Children gradually become better communicators. Some have to overcome significant difficulties to enable this to happen. Many opportunities are organised to help children develop their dexterity and ability to write. They use dough to make letters, have easy access to a magnetic board and letters to play and practise with letters and sounds. They are well supported by adults who help them to write individual letters correctly. Children have the opportunity to practise these skills in the role-play areas and other situations such as completing the 'Feeding the Fish' record.

Mathematical development

66. On entry to the reception class, children's attainment in this area is more variable but is still below average. Some children are able to recognise numbers and count but still the majority encounters problems with this aspect. The very comprehensive provision and effective teaching ensure that children achieve well, but most are unlikely to reach the expected goals by the end of their reception year. A rich variety of activities provides opportunities for focused learning of skills, solving problems and independent exploration. Children learn about number when counting spoonfuls of flour during cooking activities such as making jam tarts. Through the singing of songs and rhymes, they learn about addition and subtraction as when they counted the cherries on the plate during a number session. Displays encourage children to count accurately and recognise numbers. They learn the names of simple two-dimensional shapes through practical activities. Adults are very skilled at helping children learn the vocabulary of mathematics and frequently pursue opportunities throughout the day in a range of situations. For example, children learn to count and use positional language correctly when working outside on large play equipment and when using the sand tray. The role-play area gives additional and high quality experiences for counting 'homemade' cakes and buns that the baker, featured in the 'Sing a Song a Sixpence' nursery rhyme, has produced.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Provision in this area of learning is very good and effectively promotes learning through interaction, exploration and problem solving. Although most children are unlikely to reach the expected goals by the end of their reception year some will and

they will certainly be well prepared for the next stage of their education. The majority of children does not have a good general knowledge of the world around them when they enter school. Activities are well matched to children's individual learning needs because teaching is effective and this ensures they all make good progress overall and frequently achieve very well in lessons. Children investigate the similarities and differences between ingredients when they cook. They learn about what plants need to grow and care for them in the outdoor play area and also find out about the life-cycle of a frog. They select from a range of collage materials when making wheeled model vehicles for pigs to travel in and when creating string puppets. Children evaluate their work through discussion. They confidently use computers and can operate listening centres. The good range of manufactured construction kits ensures that children have ample opportunity to use their imagination when building, and exploring the different ways objects can be joined. A very valuable experience was offered to the children during the inspection when the teacher gave them time to wash clothes the old-fashioned way. The teacher's own collection of an enamel jug, basin, washing dolly, tin bath and mangle were used very effectively by the children to wash clothes. This stimulated discussion and the children had fun as they hung up the washing on the clothes line using old-fashioned clothes pegs. In this way they found out about the past in a meaningful way.

Physical development

68. Children's attainment in this area is better, although most are still unlikely to reach the expected goals in relation to hand control by the end of their reception year. The practical emphasis placed on all planned activities fully supports learning in this area. Some children experience significant problems undoing their buttons and really struggle to get ready for physical activities. When working in the outdoor play area children develop their co-ordination and balance skills. They climb, hop and run with growing confidence. When controlling large wheeled toys they show a good awareness of space and each other. Good resources and productive teaching ensure that children have many opportunities to develop their control over objects. They build with small equipment, and have to learn to handle paintbrushes and pencils. Teachers' planning ensures that the secure, safe outdoor play area is used well to promote children's learning in this, and all other areas of learning.

Creative development

69. Children achieve well in this area of learning because the well planned activities and good teaching allow them to communicate their feelings and use their imagination. Adults are skilled at using open-ended questions to encourage children to talk about what they can see, feel and think. Children work co-operatively in their role play and when making crowns to wear in the 'castle'. Children enjoy singing many songs and rhymes from memory. They are provided with a wide range of media through which they express their ideas and learn to work in flat and solid shapes. They contribute to class displays of 'The Rainbow Fish', 'The Hungry Caterpillar', 'Under the Sea' and 'Humpty Dumpty and Friends'. They are given various printing tasks with rollers, sponges and potatoes and these provide useful opportunities to develop hand control, creative skills, colour mixing and blending and give children chances to explore and find out what different coloured media can do.

ENGLISH

70. Improvement in English since the last inspection has been very good. The school's emphasis on raising standards in English, including a specific focus on writing and raising boys' attainment has had a measurable effect on raising standards overall.
71. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were above both the national average, and average for similar schools in writing. They were well above both the national average, and average for similar schools in reading. Results in reading and writing for these pupils have been above the national average for the last two years, with a significant proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels.
72. Results for pupils in Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests reflected the overall ability of the year group. They were in line with the national average, but below average when compared to similar schools. Pupils made above average improvement on the results they achieved at the end of Year 2 by the time they are in Year 6.
73. Inspection evidence confirms that significant variations in the overall ability of different year groups. These are reflected in the standards attained. Factors to consider include the proportion of boys and girls and numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. The school has implemented a range of strategies to improve boys' attainment, and inspection evidence indicates that this is succeeding and standards for boys are rising. Currently pupils in Year 6 are achieving above average standards and in Year 2 standards are satisfactory.
74. On entry to school pupils' attainment in all aspects of English are well below those expected. In response, the school has rightly focused on devoting a significant proportion of time to improving standards in English. A structured and systematic approach to the teaching of reading, writing and spelling has resulted in improving standards, and good progress is made by all pupils. There is, however, an inconsistency of approach to the teaching of handwriting and speaking skills. As a result, pupils do not make the same above average progress in these aspects of English. The very effective support for pupils with special educational needs, throughout the school, ensures that these pupils achieve well in lessons and over time. This is also true for pupils with English as an additional language, and higher attaining pupils. The use of additional packages to support national strategies contributes effectively to pupils' achievement in lessons and their good progress.
75. Throughout the school pupils' make at least satisfactory progress in developing their speaking skills. They make good progress when teachers plan opportunities to develop these skills in English and other subjects of the curriculum, and then ensure that these opportunities are fully exploited. Pupils, especially younger ones, are keen to speak although many find it difficult to articulate their ideas fluently. In the most successful lessons pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to discuss their work in pairs or small groups, to read their work to their classmates and make full spoken responses to questions. Where these opportunities are regular features of lessons, pupils' speaking skills develop well. Although plenary sessions are a feature of most lessons they are often too short, or too teacher led to fulfil their potential as a time for pupils to develop their speaking skills. Assemblies provide pupils with good opportunities to practise their skills of speaking to an audience, and do much to raise all pupils' confidence and self-esteem in this area of learning. Pupils learn to listen attentively when others are talking although this is more successful in some classes than in others.

76. The structured approach to the teaching of reading, and the high quality support pupils receive from teachers and teaching assistants, ensures that throughout the school pupils of all abilities make good progress. As a result, pupils attain standards in reading that are above average by the end of Year 6, although there are marked variations within and between year groups. The school successfully establishes an enthusiasm for reading that contributes significantly to the progress they make. The school's "Book Bug Award", and "reading buddies" schemes, effectively support very positive attitudes to reading. Pupils are taught, and use, a range of strategies to read unfamiliar text. They enjoy reading a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction texts. Older pupils are able to talk about their favourite authors and the kind of books they enjoy reading most, giving reasons for their choices. Pupils throughout the school confidently read out loud in lessons, both together and as individuals. Throughout the school teachers provide good models when reading aloud. Pupils listen attentively during these sessions and work hard to improve the fluency and expression with which they read. Most pupils read regularly at home to their parents although for older pupils this is a less regular feature. However, all pupils do read frequently to themselves, to teachers and to teaching assistants at school.
77. Very few pupils belong to local libraries. The school has correctly identified the need to improve its own library facilities, pupils' access to books in classrooms, and the number and range of books available to pupils and has plans in hand to do this. Currently, the library is cared for by a dedicated teaching assistant. Her organisation of the area makes certain that pupils can access the available books easily. Good use is made of the local library support service to ensure that new books are regularly added to the school's stock of books and gaps in the provision are identified. Pupils are taught the necessary skills to enable them to locate information in a library. Pupils confidently use ICT to support their research skills.
78. The school has placed strong emphasis on developing pupils' writing skills, with an appropriate focus on boys' achievement in this area. Analysis of school data, and inspection evidence from lessons indicates that standards are rising as a result. All pupils, including boys, are enthusiastic and use their knowledge and skills well when writing for different purposes. Year 2 pupils confidently write stories using texts that are well known to them as a model. They make increasing use of varied vocabulary to engage the reader, and write in simple but well constructed sentences. By Year 4, pupils' story writing is well organised, and they are aware of the importance of describing both the setting and characters well to maintain the interest of the reader. Many Year 6 pupils write very well and most have a good understanding of the use of standard English. They have a secure knowledge of, and the skills necessary to write in a range of styles for different purposes. For example; they write play-scripts, letters and reports, increasing their use of paragraphs and complex sentences.
79. The uniform approach to the teaching of spelling and use of punctuation ensures that throughout the school, pupils make good progress in these areas. Handwriting is taught discretely and many pupils develop a joined fluent script. However, pupils do not consistently transfer these skills to their writing in other subjects. Consequently, presentation in exercise books is very variable and does not accurately reflect pupils' actual skills. The use of ICT has a positive effect on the amount and quality of pupils' written work. Pupils rapidly develop the skills that enable them to record and edit their work with ease. In addition, the high quality presentation which results from the use of computers gives all pupils increased confidence to work hard and persevere with tasks that they find challenging. This increased enthusiasm and effort are having a

particularly beneficial effect on the achievement and subsequent attainment of boys, and pupils with special educational needs.

80. The skills developed in literacy lessons enable pupils to understand the different styles and purposes of writing. Some links to literacy are planned for in other subjects. However, the teaching of literacy skills through other subjects has not been fully explored, and as a consequence valuable opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their skills are missed. This is particularly true of the opportunities provided for pupils to develop their speaking skills and complete longer pieces of writing.
81. Teaching is good overall with some very good and excellent features. The teaching of basic skills is effective and teachers have good subject knowledge. The consistently high quality of teaching has a direct impact on pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and their resulting achievements. In the very best lessons teachers have high but realistic expectations of what pupils can achieve; they motivate pupils through planning interesting activities and manage pupils and time very well. In addition, these teachers challenge and support pupils of all abilities through their use of a variety of teaching methods, and the effective deployment of skilled teaching assistants. In lessons where plenary sessions are used well, pupils are encouraged to discuss and evaluate their work, they make excellent progress. These characteristics of lessons also serve to raise pupils' self-esteem and support fully the development of pupils' speaking skills. Teachers explain tasks clearly and are skilled at asking questions to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of past and present learning. Teachers' marking is however, inconsistent. The best clearly provides pupils with an indication of what they have done well, what they need to do to improve, and when they have successfully achieved personal targets. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning, particularly in reading and spelling.
82. Pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to all aspects of English. They work hard, persevere with tasks and produce a good quantity of work. Presentation is variable and reflects the lack of a whole-school consistent approach to handwriting. Pupils of all abilities are justifiably proud of what they achieve, and demonstrate a mature approach to learning in English through the value they place on their own and each other's work.
83. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive effect on standards, as has the use of ICT to support pupils' learning. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and communicate these objectives to their classes. Targets are set, and all pupils are supported well in their efforts to achieve them. Teachers plan very good range of activities for pupils to help pupils learn effectively.
84. The English co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and provides very strong leadership and management of the subject, and effective support for her colleagues. The subject is effectively monitored through observing lessons, analysis of test results and scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work. These strategies provide the co-ordinator with the information she needs to identify what needs to be done to continue to improve standards. The quality and quantity of resources are sufficient overall, and used well to support pupils' learning. The school has correctly identified the need to improve the library provision, and pupils' access to books within classrooms.

MATHEMATICS

85. Pupils throughout the school achieve well. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in Year 2 are achieving standards in line with those expected overall. On entry, standards are below average so this constitutes good progress. Pupils in Year 6 are

attaining standards above those expected and this again represents good progress. There are fluctuations in standards due to cohort differences, but the overall trend is an improving one and inspection evidence confirms this. Indications are that this year's results will once again be above average.

86. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, with some particularly strong teaching at the top end of each key stage. There is an increasing emphasis on providing pupils with practical experiences to underpin their learning. Teaching is frequently lively and good overall, with appropriate use of practical resources motivating pupils and retaining their interest.
87. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well established. The strategy is well understood and adapted by teachers, and pupils particularly enjoy the whole-class mental activities which introduce lessons. The school is developing clear and effective procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and using the findings to provide work that meets pupils' differing needs. Consequently, teachers and teaching assistants are able to offer very well targeted support to pupils with English as an additional language, special educational needs, and also tasks with appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils. Better use of assessment information has enabled the school to refine its planning for 'Springboard' and 'Booster' (additional support packages) mathematics groups, and links with the community have been exploited by groups of pupils taking part in mathematics workshops at Plymouth University and by involvement in 'Successmaker', an ICT and maths project at the local community college.
88. Pupils aged seven have made good progress in acquiring basic numeracy skills, given a low starting point. Good planning and strong teaching ensure that pupils build well on previous work. Pupils have good opportunities to work practically and develop the use of accurate mathematical language. A majority of pupils are in no doubt when offering up reasons for their answers. Many are confident with numbers up to 100 and correctly order and sequence numbers. They are able to recognise and name two and three-dimensional shapes and can identify properties of these shapes. A number of pupils show sound skills in measuring when using non standard and standard units of measurement but skills in estimating are less well developed. Other strengths in pupils' attainments are their ability to identify coins and combine them to make money totals, identifying halves and quarters and in using analogue and digital time. In an excellent lesson with Year 2 pupils, a range of very well planned activities quickly helped pupils become confident in identifying 'hour', 'half past', 'quarter past' and '11.30'. An increasing emphasis on tackling 'written' problems and investigations is developing pupils' self-assurance and is beginning to have a positive impact on their learning.
89. By the age of 11 many pupils quickly work out calculations in their heads, and have a good understanding of the relationships between unit, decimal and percentage fractions. Higher attaining pupils correctly calculate ratios. Pupils are able to measure using a variety of standard units, and in one outstanding lesson, the oldest pupils quickly improved their accuracy when using protractors to measure a variety of angles. The teacher's excellent use of an ICT programme enabled pupils to see a variety of angles being 'formed', helped them understand that an 'angle' represents an amount of turn and their measuring became more secure. Pupils are increasingly using their mathematical skills to solve problems expressed in words. They experience a variety of work in handling data and are expected to interpret what the data indicates.

90. The quality of learning reflects the quality of teaching and it is good overall. There is a good level of inclusion and planning clearly focuses on enabling all pupils to practise and improve key skills. Relationships are very good and teachers take great care to build pupils' confidence. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants who support individuals or groups. In one lesson with some of the older pupils, whilst the class teacher was teaching the majority of the class, the teaching assistant was quietly giving an almost identical lesson, modified for their needs, to a group of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' attitudes are very positive and their willingness to share ideas and methods of working especially at the top end of the junior department makes a significant contribution to learning. Contributions from support staff are very good. There is a strong sense of very effective teamwork, enabling pupils to learn well.
91. Assessment is used appropriately. Teachers know the pupils well and assessment information is used to track pupils' progress, set targets and inform what will be taught next. The school's current emphasis on increasing confidence and ability in decision making, mathematical investigation and problem solving is as a direct result of analysis of assessment information. However, in the case of day to day marking of pupils' work, although teachers show appreciation of the efforts pupils make, they do not consistently indicate to pupils the next step in learning and what they have to do to improve.
92. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject, through monitoring of planning and teaching. Good subject management ensures that colleagues are well supported, with a clear emphasis on continuous professional development, and with appropriate resources to deliver the subject well. Homework activities are well structured to support pupils' work in school. Work in other subjects such as science, DT and ICT makes a satisfactory contribution to developing numeracy skills. The co-ordinator is resourceful in using 'outside' agencies such as numeracy consultants and 'Advanced Skills Teachers' to support and enhance the school's programme, and the school operates successfully 'The Family Numeracy Programme' to help parents become more involved with their children's learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

93. In 2002, at the end of Year 6, pupils achieved average standards and their results were in line with those of similar schools. This showed a decline on the previous year's results, which were well above average. This 'dip' in results relates to the specific special educational needs of the group of pupils taking the tests and it is worth noting that overall the progress they had made since Year 2 was very good. The Year 2 results for 2002, based on teacher assessments, were well above the national average indeed they were in the top five per cent. There were no marked differences between boys' and girls' achievements.
94. Standards seen during the inspection indicate that pupils in Year 2 are reaching average standards. At the end of Year 6 pupils are working above national expectations. This represents a similar picture to that apparent during the previous inspection. Pupils generally make good progress in their lessons throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve well. Those with English as an additional language also make good progress because class teachers and teaching assistants make sure they are included in all the class discussions and group work.

95. When Year 6 pupils compare the impact of air resistance on different sized parachutes, they successfully measure surface area, draw meaningful comparisons and control the factors that make their investigations fair. They are able to use data logging equipment linked to the computer to measure temperature. Year 5 pupils produce comprehensive, informative and neatly presented booklets to describe their experiments with magnets. They use their literacy skills in a very productive way. Work in Year 4 includes productive activities for measuring temperature and investigations into how to keep things warm. Year 3 pupils can explain the effect gravity has on springs and elastic bands. Pupils are able to conduct tests with developing proficiency as they move from one class to the next and by the time they are in Year 6 they are able to plan and undertake experiments with a high degree of independence.
96. In Year 2, pupils are able to describe the life-cycles of humans and they can group materials according to their characteristics. In Year 1 pupils can describe how they hear and distinguish the sounds they encounter on a walk around the school. During investigative work they can suggest which materials let sound reach their ears and which do not. Year 1 pupils are provided with ample opportunities to explore and this pays dividends in the development of science skills. However, their recorded work in science suffers because their literacy skills are still underdeveloped and these youngest Key Stage 1 pupils find it hard to write about their discoveries. Any written work is poorly presented and detracts from the quality of the outcomes of their scientific enquiry. By the end of Year 2 the pupils have caught up on their basic skills enabling them to record more fluently and appropriately. Handwriting is gradually becoming better formed and pupils take more care.
97. Throughout the school, science teaching is good with some lessons having very high quality features. The best lessons ensure that the teacher uses a variety of techniques to draw pupils' enthusiasm and interest to the fore. In a Year 5 class, a productive and challenging lesson ensures pupils use the Internet to research and find out about when different parts of the world are in darkness when answering questions they have raised about the 'Earth and Beyond'. They also look at the effect of the earth's movement on daytime and night-time at the north and south poles using torches and globes. During their enquiries they co-operate very well, even though a number of pupils experience significant learning difficulties and some present challenging behaviour. In Year 6, very effective teaching ensures pupils are encouraged to investigate what happens when lemon juice, water, and vinegar are added, in turn, to bi-carbonate of soda and cream of tartar. The teacher's very skilful questioning technique challenges and supports pupils as they review their previous investigations into physical and chemical changes and whether these are reversible. They can explain that the 'fizzing' reaction relates to the escaping of a gas and they can name the gas as carbon dioxide.
98. In Year 3, the teacher's good subject knowledge makes sure that pupils can successfully describe the purpose of roots and stems. They then undertake investigations to show how water is transported through celery stems. However, pupils do get restless when the teacher misses opportunities to get them all involved in sharing their previous knowledge and does not get them started on their activities speedily enough. With a predominantly Year 1 class, successful teaching encourages pupils to predict which instrument sounds will travel furthest. With another class of Year 1 pupils the teacher provides well planned and resourced activities which enable them to find out about the effects of 'pushing and pulling' on how things move. In Year 2, pupils respond to the teacher's enthusiasm and very good organisation when productive links are made with literacy. The teacher uses a

well known text to introduce the idea of the effect strenuous exercise has on our bodies and the pupils are encouraged to discuss healthy lifestyles. By the end of the lesson they can talk capably about why their heart is beating faster. They discuss knowledgeably about getting hot and needing a drink because they have been taken out into the playground to experience these things.

99. Pupils are always enthusiastic about science and they usually display positive attitudes. This is because they are given opportunities to explore, to find out and to discover for themselves. They co-operate very well. The school endeavours to create additional opportunities for pupils. This is praiseworthy and has a significant impact on pupils' work. Year 6 pupils talked animatedly about visits to the local secondary school where they looked at microbes under powerful microscopes having prepared slides of samples collected from their hands on a previous visit. Visits to outdoor locations give pupils the chance to study the environment effectively, making useful links with geography. Literacy skills are well promoted through the recording of science investigations as are mathematical measuring and problem solving techniques. Information and communication technology is very effectively used both during investigations and to record data collected. It is also used to present information in a very eye-catching way. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' marking is however, inconsistent and requires some improvement.
100. At present science is being managed, temporarily, by the headteacher. He has very good subject knowledge and is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. The action plan identifies, correctly, the areas for development. Monitoring of lessons has taken place and the school's analysis of data and careful and effective tracking of pupils has a positive impact on standards. There has been satisfactory progress in the subject since the previous inspection. Governors are secure in their knowledge of the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Standards in art for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected nationally overall. Particular strengths are the pupils' skills in observational drawing, and the design elements of pupils' work which are strongly supported through the use of ICT. Inspection evidence indicates that there has been improvement in teaching, and standards in Years 1 and 2 have risen showing satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well in lessons and make good progress as they move through the school.
102. A strong feature of the provision for art and design are the links that are regularly made to other subjects. Pupils learn to use colour effectively to create mood and impact, and use their skills in art and design to compliment their learning in subjects such as history and DT.
103. In Year 1 pupils produce colourful pictures when working on a DT project involving moving pictures. To support their learning in mathematics, they produce printed repeating patterns using two-dimensional shapes. Through their collage work they develop an understanding of the textures and properties of a range of materials. Using work completed in literacy lessons as a stimulus, Year 2 pupils produce good quality observational drawings of their "teddy bears" using pencil. They pay good attention to the shape and form of their teddy bears and begin to use shading to create texture. Through the effective use of ICT pupils learn about the work of Mondrian and create their own pictures in his style.

104. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to develop their knowledge and skills in observational drawing and learn to use a range of drawing media to good effect. In Year 3 good links are made to pupils' learning in history. When studying World War II they design posters to support recruitment for the armed forces. Their work is well organised and designed. The effective use of colour and slogans results in work that has a powerful visual impact. Effective use is made of artists' work when exploring how relationships are portrayed through art. For example, pupils' study the painting titled 'The Cholmondeley Sisters', and successfully complete their own version using a process requiring separate steps. Their finished work is detailed, and demonstrates clearly pupils' growing appreciation of design.
105. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate good use of imagination and competence in using a range of media in their entries for a local painting competition. Their drawings of Tudor buildings, linked to their work in history show a level of skill above the expectations for pupils their age. They achieve accuracy in terms of shape and form and a developing awareness of perspective. The use of shading to add texture to their work is good.
106. In Years 5 and 6 pupils experience working in three dimensions. Whilst investigating containers, pupils in Year 5 create their own from a range of materials including clay. The design element of their work is successfully promoted. Pupils in Year 6 study African art and design masks using ICT. The completed masks are used to support their work in dance. By the end of Year 6 pupils confidently draw and paint from observation. Their pencil drawings and paintings of objects as diverse as portable music centres and apple-blossom are of a consistently good standard.
107. Teachers plan lessons to match the requirements of the scheme of work. As a result, pupils successfully build on skills they have acquired as they move through the school. The school has adequate resources to support the teaching of art, although reference materials are not extensive. Teachers use the resources they have effectively. For example, before designing their African masks pupils in Year 6 studied four real masks, and photographs of tribal masks. Inspection evidence indicates that teaching is good overall. In the very best lessons, the management of pupils is excellent, as is the use is made of high quality resources and teacher demonstration. Pupils respond to this high quality stimulus by using their imagination and skills to the full.
108. The school's scheme of work is based on national guidelines to ensure that pupils experience a satisfactory range of art and design activities. Art is used well to support pupils' learning in other curriculum areas, and contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, the use of non-western art is limited. The use of ICT to support learning in art and design is good. Pupils are given opportunities to practise their skills, experiment with techniques and generate and modify their designs. The school plans to introduce the use of sketchbooks throughout the school to ensure that these valuable aspects of pupils' work are retained, for pupils to reference as necessary. Display of art work is of an impressive quality. It succeeds in demonstrating the high value placed on pupils' work and in providing a bright and stimulating learning environment.
109. Pupils thoroughly enjoy art activities. In lessons characterised by very effective pupil management, pupils behave well and work hard. Where pupil management is less effective and lessons are too long, pupils' interest wanes and the momentum of the

session is lost. Pupils learn to appreciate and evaluate the work of others, they respond positively to suggestions as to how they might improve their own work.

110. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has carried out some monitoring of the subject through lesson observation. The school portfolio provides a good record of work completed by each year group and the overall standards achieved. An effective audit of the subject has been used to inform an action plan that is designed to bring about improvement. The co-ordinator is clear about the way forward for the subject and is committed to providing high quality experiences for pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. On the basis of a review of samples of pupils' past work, workbooks, photographs, portfolios and lessons, standards are judged to be above average compared to those nationally for pupils up to seven years. They are above average with some very good features for pupils up to 11 years. Overall, the high standards found in the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils make good progress because teachers have secure subject knowledge and devote sufficient time to the subject. Pupils who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make good progress because they are very effectively supported by teaching assistants. Girls and boys progress at similar rates.
112. Displays around the school illustrate how pupils in Year 1 can successfully create a design for an owl with wings that flap. Before making their models they practise tearing paper, scrunching it and cutting it in order to gain more understanding of the properties of paper. Other Year 1 pupils use construction sets to make models that have a design purpose. They also design and make windmills with developing skill. In food technology they produce colourful faces having selected appropriate pieces of fruit to put on a plate and cover with jelly. In Year 2, pupils can accurately cut and join materials such as felt, paper and card and make very appealing finger puppets which fulfil their design proposal. They use sewing techniques in this activity and have previously compared how strong 'joins' are if made with sticky tape or glue or stitching to help them select the correct 'join' for their puppet. They also use a variety of materials to create wheeled models that are of a high quality. These Key Stage 1 pupils can also design and make pictures with moving features, demonstrating an early understanding of levers and pivots.
113. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils examine pneumatic systems that enable them to work in pairs to make 'moving monsters' that are hiding within a collage representing a forest background. Effective links are made with literacy in this task as pupils are challenged to write a step by step instruction sheet to support this activity. Older Key Stage 2 pupils study commercial products. They consider the appropriate materials to use when designing toothbrushes and a container to hold them. They draw on their knowledge of the properties of materials effectively. These activities allow the pupils to relate their ideas and designs to 'fitness for purpose'. Pupils in Years 5 make musical instruments, successfully linking science, music and design. Year 6 pupils design and make high quality slippers having accessed information from the Internet. They use this to help them think about what would be the important features to take into account when making a snug pair of slippers. For example; they discussed the padding and material that would make the soles of the slippers safe and comfortable.
114. Teaching and learning in lessons are usually good with some very strong features in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan lessons carefully around clear objectives. They choose resources well to illustrate features of design in their introductory sessions

with pupils. For example; by showing a range of masks made from wood to help pupils create African tribal masks from 'papier mache' for a dance performance. They use questioning skills successfully to challenge pupils to think and explain for themselves. Teachers include pupils of all abilities in each part of the lesson and adapt their questions to pupils' abilities well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work so that lessons are well ordered and purposeful. Teachers model the key skills needed for the set tasks and this enables pupils to proceed confidently. There is a good degree of expertise amongst the staff and a culture for sharing good ideas.

115. Pupils enjoy DT and co-operate well within activities. They readily share their ideas with others in their group. They are encouraged to think for themselves and to solve problems through projects that capture their imagination. The tasks provide positive social experiences and pupils learn to appreciate the views of others when they evaluate each other's efforts. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were understandably keen to sample different flavoured biscuits. They did this work sensibly and took care to record how the texture and appearance of the biscuit influenced their liking of the product. They used appropriate vocabulary and really thought about what appealed to their sense of taste. They enjoyed eating the biscuits in preparation for devising a recipe to use when they cook their own biscuits at a future date.
116. A very strong feature of this area of the school's work is the liaison that exists with the local secondary school. Different year groups of Key Stage 2 pupils are transported to the community college by a teacher who collects them on a weekly basis. This means that ultimately Year 6 pupils are familiar with, not only with work that will be expected of them after they transfer, but also the buildings and the routines to be met when they start the next phase of their education. During the inspection 19 pupils were observed working in the DT department where they were challenged to produce a puzzle game. This involved them in making a design for the construction of a wooden box with inserts. The aim being to manoeuvre a ball bearing around pieces of wood in the box avoiding two centimetre holes cut as traps. Pupils were very enthusiastic about this excellent opportunity that was presented to them.
117. Design and technology provides pupils with many opportunities to develop socially as mentioned above. It also supports cultural development. Textile work used to create a colourful and well made banner celebrates 'Drake Primary School – in search of the world' and illustrates historically linked events such as the sailing of the 'Golden Hind' and then portrays the contacts the school has with schools in other parts of the world, for instance; Romania. Gardening projects supported by the 'Friends of the School Association' involve pupils in planning flower beds and challenges them to consider the aesthetic qualities of the school grounds in a useful way. Links with RE are forged when the oldest pupils produce profiles of faces of Jesus and the disciples using cams to make the mouths open and close.
118. Design and technology is being co-ordinated by the headteacher at present and he provides very good knowledge to support the subject. He evaluates samples of pupils' finished products and is building a portfolio of representative work. Lessons are monitored and ensure that the very detailed scheme of work, which gives clear guidance to staff, is being implemented well. Obvious success in the subject is celebrated in stimulating displays and also in portfolios depicting high quality work and photographs.

GEOGRAPHY

119. By the ages of seven and 11 pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in geography are broadly in line with those expected. This is a similar position to that at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching seen was never less than satisfactory and on one occasion was very good.
120. By the age of seven pupils have a sound knowledge of local places. This is due to teachers effectively placing an emphasis on 'fieldwork'. Pupils go on local walks and are encouraged to look at the range of buildings, types of housing and how the land is used. They identify key areas such as the railway track, the church, the park, the doctor's surgery, and identify types of housing. Their writing and pictures illustrate 'how they see their area', and what was different between old and new houses. They identify 'pointed' roofs and 'flat' roofs and 'wooden' doors and 'plastic' doors. Some notice 'different locks on the doors' and 'new houses with no chimney'. Teachers effectively use personal experiences as a way of developing map work, and pupils' awareness of localities further away. So "we go to school in Plymouth", "Mrs G's family live in Shropshire" and "Lauren's aunt went on holiday to Turkey" are "real" experiences which pupils discuss and write about.
121. By the age of 11 pupils have further developed their knowledge and understanding of local features by studying Keyham and the River Tamar. The oldest pupils, as part of their 'Rivers' topic visit Dartmoor to find the 'source' of the River Meavy and identify evidence of it 'meandering'. They examine the features of rivers, some of the positive and negative ways they are used and their effect on the environment. Sound progress is made in developing technical vocabulary and mapping skills. Older pupils in their 'local studies' build very effectively on previous learning. They ask "What is needed to improve Keyham?" Good use is made of mathematical skills to collect data and opinions, of some literacy skills to write letters to the local council, geographical skills to plot routes and finally computer graphics and text to create their ideas as to where improvements could be made, as for instance with some solutions to traffic problems.
122. The subject is managed satisfactorily and lessons are monitored appropriately to evaluate the standards that are achieved. Teachers use national guidelines to teach a balanced geography curriculum, and ensure that pupils experience a range of activities to support learning but there is scope to develop literacy skills more effectively when pupils undertake research and the overuse of worksheets, does on occasions, inhibit writing. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and they address issues of geographical enquiry and the development of such skills as mapping and fieldwork techniques. There is a need to update and enhance resources to support teachers in their delivery of the subject. The school is currently developing links with and arranging a visit to a Gaelic speaking school in Clonmel, Southern Ireland, as part of its programme of making links with and travelling to other countries.

HISTORY

123. Evidence indicates that pupils at seven and 11 attain the standards that are generally in line with those expected, and progress is satisfactory. This is a similar position to that at the time of the previous inspection.
124. Although only one lesson was observed, following scrutiny of displays, pupils' work and discussions with staff it is clear that teachers successfully develop an interest in history. Teachers effectively promote an understanding of change over time, in six and seven year olds, by studying familiar, everyday objects. Pupils compare 'Toys'.

They identify “my best toys” and then compare them with toys their parents used. In comparing ‘new’ and ‘old’ toys they identify ‘old’ toys as the soft toy and the doll that are “ripped” and “bald”. Teachers make some use of opportunities to develop reading and writing skills by researching famous people such as Florence Nightingale. Pupils identify, through their writing, some of what Florence Nightingale did to help that was ‘new’. However, opportunities to develop literacy skills are missed because there is an over dependence on the use of worksheets.

125. Older pupils develop their understanding of chronology, become familiar with a range of primary and secondary source material, and use it to support learning. Pupils studying World War II extract information from a range of sources including postcards, photographs, books and old newspapers and are able to depict the meaning of such slogans as “Your Country Needs You” and the ‘feeling’ of the blackout. Pupils studying ‘The Tudors’ have good access to a range of artefacts including costumes worn by boys at the time, items of everyday life such as a clay pipe, goblet and spoon, pomander and a ‘swan necklace’. This experience and research are underpinned by a visit to, a Tudor mansion, to experience more of the Tudor lifestyle. By the age of 11 pupils are able to link information from various sources in order to reach judgements about how people lived. They are beginning to be aware that there are different versions of the same story. Sound progress ensues from varied, well planned activities, access to artefacts and primary data, and on the evidence of the one lesson seen, from good subject knowledge and enthusiasm on the part of the teacher.
126. The history curriculum follows national guidelines, and the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils’ cultural development. Visits to a museum in Torquay, the Roman baths in Bath, and experience of ‘A Victorian Christmas’, presented by a visiting ‘one man theatre group’, all contribute to pupils’ cultural and social development. The subject is led satisfactorily by the co-ordinator who is monitoring and identifies correctly the way forward for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. Raising standards in ICT has been a priority for the school. Significant financial resources, monitored very carefully by governors looking for value for money, have been used to provide a very high quality ICT suite, maintain access to computers in classrooms and train teachers and teaching assistants. This has ensured that throughout the school pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above those expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also do well and reach similar standards. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection and indicates that the finances invested in this subject have been effectively spent.
128. In Year 1 pupils learn how to control the mouse by drawing faces. They select pictures from a program containing many images, add labels and print their work. By Year 2 all pupils are able to log on to the computer and use a word-processing program to complete work started in literacy lessons. Pupils are confident, and use the mouse, keyboard and a variety of programs to support their learning in most subjects with increasing competence.
129. In Years 3 to 6 pupils’ skills and their ability to use a range of programs develop well. In Year 3 they combine text and graphics to design posters about World War II. Their word-processing skills improve and most can confidently use bullet points in their work. Year 4 pupils design questionnaires and present their findings as graphs. They begin to use publishing programs with confidence. Pupils in Year 5 use graphic

modelling to represent musical compositions, and to draw representations of their homes including the sources of water to be found in it. They use ICT to good effect when editing and presenting their written work.

130. Pupils at Year 6 are very skilled at using the Internet to search for information to support a range of subjects. They regularly use computers to present their work in many subjects. For example; they produce information leaflets about rivers using fact boxes to increase the appeal for the reading audience. They demonstrate clearly their competence in the use of publishing programs. Many pupils have well-developed keyboard skills, and are confident in the use of e-mail. They create multimedia presentations combining text and graphics to support, for example, their assembly performed to the whole school and parents. In support of their work using data in mathematics they display their results in a variety of ways.
131. The quality of ICT teaching is good with some excellent features. The main strengths are the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm of the teachers and teaching assistants, the good planning of the curriculum that ensures skills are systematically developed year on year, and the very good cross curricular links that allow skills to be taught and applied across a range of contexts. The ICT suite and computers in classrooms are used with equal effectiveness and support pupils' learning very effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are often well supported in English lessons through the use of computers. It also has a positive effect on the enthusiasm of boys for writing, and the self-esteem of pupils who find achieving high quality levels of presentation very difficult. Good teaching is rewarded by the enthusiasm of pupils who work hard and achieve well. Targets are set for each year group and pupils are assessed against these targets at the end of the year. Teachers also use a variety of tests to assess pupils throughout the year. Work to improve the use of these assessments is underway.
132. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and able to give extremely high quality support to her colleagues. She has correctly identified areas for improvement in the subject, most of which revolve around the purchase of appropriate software. These include programs to support music and the use of sensors and data loggers. Two computer clubs are organised for pupils. These are run by teaching assistants and provide pupils with valuable additional opportunities to enjoy using ICT and develop their skills even further.

MUSIC

133. Due to timetable arrangements it was not possible to observe sufficient music lessons to make a secure, overall judgement on the quality of teaching in music. However, evidence about standards was collected from a variety of sources including samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning and talking with Year 6 pupils. This evidence, plus presentations by pupils in the limited number of lessons observed and their singing and instrumental skills displayed when playing in assemblies, suggest that standards at the end of both key stages are above national expectations. It also suggests that the progress of all pupils is good. In the lessons seen pupils with special educational needs are very well supported as are pupils with English as an additional language. Music has a firm place in the school's curriculum. It was recognised as being satisfactory in the last inspection. There have been improvements in the subject and standards have risen. They are now good with some very strong features, particularly in the way links are made to develop pupils' social and cultural awareness.

134. Year 5 pupils can discuss productively composing a piece of music to represent a space journey either in a frantic or a calm way. They decide how they will illustrate this journey using their knowledge of 'tempo', 'pitch', 'timbre', 'dynamics' and 'texture'. They can correctly name notes such as crotchets and quavers. They have recorded and presented their compositions very effectively using ICT. Year 1 and 2 pupils plan musical journeys as well. They achieve good results. In Year 2 they use instruments appropriately and sensibly and their endeavours are tape-recorded so that they can evaluate their efforts. In Year 1 they annotate a story with symbols to represent long and short sounds which are then interpreted into a musical composition. This story is linked well with the Easter story and with the tradition of hiding Easter eggs thus reinforcing awareness of Christian beliefs successfully.
135. Year 6 pupils talk animatedly about their love of music. They can describe in detail why they enjoy different kinds of music and the moods that are conjured up by different composers both modern and classical. They create their own music, using standard notation to record their compositions with increasing confidence and ability. They remember, fondly, the many visitors to the school who have contributed to their knowledge of different types of music very effectively.
136. Very useful links are made with other areas of the curriculum, notably dance, ICT and science. Visitors to the school promote an understanding of the diversity of cultural influences. They successfully raise pupils' awareness of music from Japan, Newfoundland, Malaya and Ireland. The school has also taken up offers of involvement in the Plymouth 'Education Action Zone' musical initiatives. These music workshops make a valuable contribution to raising pupils' standards and include oboe and percussion presentations. Recorder and percussion clubs are made available to pupils. The African drumming performance by the percussion group in an assembly was of an especially high quality. Teaching assistant support for this activity is commendable and enhances pupils' capabilities well.
137. The recently assigned co-ordinator is leading the school forward effectively and her action plan for the subject is appropriate. She monitors lessons and evaluates the standards achieved successfully. Resources are many and varied. They are of a good quality, reflect cultural influences and are stored in their own area, which is easily accessible to all. The use of ICT is being developed effectively but is also recognised as an area for future development. The success of music at the school is underpinned by teachers' knowledge, recently enhanced through professional development prompted by the school's focus on this subject. The school has made good use of an 'Advanced Skills Teacher' and her help has been productive. The government produced scheme of work for music is used and is supported by a published resource. Very worthwhile additional opportunities are provided by the Local Education Authority Music Services. Valuable specialist tuition is provided for keyboard, violin, trumpet, flute, and guitar and these have a significant impact on standards and pupils' opportunities to learn how to play instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. During the time of the inspection it was not possible to observe all aspects of the PE curriculum. Evidence is drawn from observation of lessons in dance and games, from a scrutiny of the school's planning and from discussions. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainments are broadly in line with what would be expected of pupils of this age in the aspects observed. This is an improvement at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection.

139. By the age of seven pupils are able to move sensibly from one activity to another. They are able to make good use of the space in the yard when taking part in games activities. They have an awareness of others and show a due regard for safety. Many pupils show sound control when rolling a ball, and when passing it to others, and show sound hand eye co-ordination when receiving a pass.
140. By the age of 11 pupils understand that exercise is essential to health and fitness. In their dance work, pupils work well in small groups to develop their dance routine, and both boys and girls are equally keen to demonstrate their dance sequences. They change the speed of their movements to match the emphasis of the spoken words in the poem they are interpreting, and work at different levels of difficulty. A small number of pupils show developing signs of poise, good limb extension and 'exaggerated' movements. In a very good lesson with the oldest pupils the teacher worked hard to encourage them to present an 'African Dance'. An outstanding feature of the lesson was the complete lack of self-consciousness. All the pupils were totally involved and they skilfully changed from working in unison, to developing small group movements and then back to the culmination of the dance in unison. Pupils' attitudes, enthusiasm and quick progress reflected very good, skilful, knowledgeable teaching.
141. By the time they leave school at 11 over 90 per cent of pupils are able to swim the required distance, and many do much more, developing skills in a variety of strokes, in personal survival and water safety.
142. Overall the teaching seen was satisfactory, and very good in the lesson described above. Teachers work hard to teach skills and techniques. Appropriate time is given for pupils to practise, and pupils concentrate well and work hard.
143. Subject leadership is strong. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and understanding and has developed a clear planning framework which is progressive and well balanced. She has given demonstration lessons, led professional development sessions for staff and encouraged the involvement of 'Advanced Skills Teachers' and secondary school staff. She has developed a range of extra-curricular activities to enhance the PE programme. These include netball, cross country running, tag rugby and athletics, and the school takes part in inter-school competitions in these sports as well as football. Professional coaches from Plymouth Albion RUFC, Plymouth Argyle FC and Active Hockey are invited to school to coach pupils in Key Stage 2, whilst Year 2 pupils have the opportunity to participate in 'It's a Knockout' at the local secondary school. An outdoor pursuits' programme gives pupils opportunities to experience abseiling, climbing, kayaking, canoeing and orienteering, and these activities make a clear contribution to pupils' physical and social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. Judgements are based on the limited number of lessons observed during the inspection, and also on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils and staff. At the end of both Years 2 and 6, standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of some aspects of Christianity are above those expected. These findings reflect those found in the last inspection. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because teaching has improved and indications are that standards are rising as a result. Taking into account their limited knowledge and understanding when they join the reception classes, pupils including those with

special educational needs achieve well in lessons and make good progress as they move through the school. This is also true for pupils with English as an additional language. Close links are made between RE and PSHE, and citizenship. Collective worship makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning in RE and art is used as an effective resource. The subject also makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

145. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about Christian festivals, practices and celebrations. Links to other world religions are made and similarities and differences are investigated. Pupils explore the importance of relationships in their lives and the sense of belonging that comes from belonging to a family and having friends. By studying stories from the Bible they begin to develop an understanding of moral issues such as forgiveness. By the end of Year 2 pupils are developing an understanding of other world religions. For example, they learn that the "Passover" is an annual Jewish remembrance celebration and that the food eaten at that time has symbolic significance.
146. Skills, knowledge and understanding are consolidated and extended as pupils move through the school. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity. They have a sound knowledge of Judaism, and by comparing, for example; places of worship, and signs and symbols they develop an appreciation of other religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism.
147. Teaching is good with some very good features. Teachers have thorough subject knowledge and plan lessons that provide a broad and balanced RE programme. Resources, including ICT, are used well and teachers expect pupils to achieve well and they make good progress over time. Effective class management and good relationships with pupils usually result in good efforts and attitudes. Visitors provide an extra dimension to pupils' learning experiences and lessons often contain moments that fully support their developing spirituality. A very good example of this was observed in a Year 6 lesson as pupils sat spellbound and in silence, as a visiting Methodist minister broke bread when acting out the service of communion. This sense of anticipation was also observed in a Year 4 lesson as the teacher shared Christian artefacts from Armenia. Where links are made to other subjects, learning is very good. For example; pupils in Year 5 developed a deep appreciation of the crucifixion when they compared paintings depicting the event.
148. Pupils behave well in RE lessons and are keen to learn. However, their recorded work does not always reflect their interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Skills learned in literacy are not transferred to their work which is inconsistently presented and often unfinished. Teachers' marking is also inconsistent, and does not sufficiently guide pupils as to whether they have achieved the expectation for the lesson.
149. Leadership and management of the subject were under review at the time of the inspection. The policy and scheme of work now provide teachers with sufficient guidance to enable them to plan effectively. An action plan to secure improvements has been developed. The school has some resources to support teaching of the subject, although the number of reference books available is limited. Good use of the Internet for research and the loan of materials from a local "Faith Centre" ensure that pupils have access to the artefacts they need to support their learning. In addition, the good use of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum significantly.