

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WOODFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Whitleigh, Plymouth

LEA area: City of Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113299

Headteacher: Mr George Muirhead

Reporting inspector: Mr C Rhodes  
16408

Dates of inspection: 17 March – 19 March 2003

Inspection number: 247345

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: 5 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Taunton Avenue  
Whitleigh  
Plymouth  
PL5 4HP

Telephone number: 01752 706384

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Simmonds

Date of previous inspection: 6 October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16408	Mr C Rhodes	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it?
			Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
			English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further
9009	Mrs V Bradley	Lay inspector		Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23997	Mrs M Buck	Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed?
			Physical education	
32308	Mrs S Molloy	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Geography	
			History	
			Educational inclusion	
			Special educational needs	
18346	Mr R Bristow	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	

			Foundation Stage	
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The inspection contractor was:

Staffordshire and Midlands Consortium

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Woodfield Primary School is in Whiteleigh, Plymouth. There are 173 pupils aged between four and 11 on roll, which is smaller than most primary schools. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds and most live within walking distance of the school. Nearly all are of white British origin, and none speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free meals is double the national average. Approximately one in every four pupils has special educational needs, usually moderate learning difficulties. This is above the national average. Three pupils, whose educational needs are severe, complex or persistent, are given the protection of a statement of special educational needs. An above average percentage of pupils join or leave the school at times other than at the start and end of their primary education. Attainment on entry is below expected levels.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Woodfield Primary is a good and improving school. Standards are in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science in Year 2, and in mathematics and science in Year 6, the ends of the two key stages in primary education. Standards are below average in English in Year 6, where half the class has special educational needs. The quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory and often better. The quality of leadership and management is good. All pupils have the same opportunities to learn from a rich and varied curriculum. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Children are given a flying start in the reception class.
- Standards in Year 6 are rising, especially in mathematics and science.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is very good. Pupils behave very well and relationships are excellent.
- The headteacher provides calm and inspiring leadership, and manages very effectively. The school's explicit aims and values are clearly evident in all aspects of its work.
- The school works very closely with parents, and has very strong links with the community and with other schools.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and all pupils are fully and equally involved in all aspects of the curriculum.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English are below average in the current Year 6.
- Work in several classes is not set consistently at a level that challenges pupils of higher ability.
- The analysis of pupils' past attainment and their future targets for improvement are not set out simply enough for teachers to use them effectively to plan their work.

*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 October 1997. A new headteacher was appointed three years ago. The rate of improvement against the key issues identified for specific action in the previous



report has been good. Standards in reading, mathematics and science in Year 6 have risen, but concerns remain about the quality of pupils' writing. The overall curriculum is planned far more effectively and sound progress has been made in raising the quality of teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in this inspection, a considerable improvement, and the proportion of very good teaching has doubled. Continuing work is needed to develop the way in which teachers plan individual lessons, and match the work to the abilities of the pupils. Other aspects of the school have also been improved. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are now very good, and the quality of leadership and management has been strengthened. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved. The school gives better value for money.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Standards in national tests** in Year 6 in 2002 were well below the national average. However, standards have been rising steadily for five years and the rate of improvement in 2002 was the highest in all the schools west of Bristol. The test results were similar to those attained in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds. The school did not reach the very challenging targets it had set, but is making a determined effort to reach them in 2003. The results in 2002 in the Year 2 national tests showed a considerable improvement over 2001 and continued the upward trend of the past three years. Standards in reading in Year 2 were in line with the national average and well above those achieved in similar schools. Standards in writing and mathematics were below average, but were in line with those in similar schools in writing and above average in mathematics. Teachers estimated that standards in science in Year 2 were close to those expected nationally, and had improved since the previous year.

**Current standards** in English, mathematics and science are average in Year 2. Standards are average in mathematics and science in Year 6, but are below average in English. Just over half the class have special educational needs, and 21 of the 27 pupils have joined the school since Year 1. Standards in information and communication technology [ICT], design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education are in line with national expectations. They are above nationally expected levels in art and design in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in both these years reach the levels expected for their age in the local agreed syllabus for religious education.

**Pupils' achievement** in all classes is at least satisfactory and is good in individual cases. Most books show sound or better progress since the beginning of the school year. Pupils try hard because they are keen to learn. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the quality of the adult support they receive in lessons in all subjects, the overall good standard of provision, and the school's very good arrangements for ensuring that all pupils take a full part in all its activities.

Most children in the **reception class** are well on course to achieve the early learning goals expected for their age, and are likely to exceed them in personal, social and emotional development, and in mathematical and physical development. This represents good progress. Standards of communication, language and literacy are below nationally expected levels.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils have very positive attitudes, are keen to learn and are happy in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons, moving around the school and in the playground. There is a notable absence of oppressive or other unsuitable behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on extremely well together, and trust and respect the adults with whom they work. They have a very clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Lessons start promptly.

Pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour have created an extremely purposeful atmosphere in which they can learn and thrive. It catches the school's explicit aim to enable each pupil to respect themselves and others, and to do their best.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Years 1-2</b>	<b>Years 3-6</b>
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

**The overall quality of teaching** is satisfactory. Approximately half the lessons seen during the inspection were judged good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Seven of the 37 lessons seen were very good. The teaching of English is satisfactory in Years 1-6. Teachers are working hard to develop the ways they implement the National Literacy Strategy. However, some of the current planning does not link

the various aspects of English teaching together tightly enough and tasks do not always challenge pupils at the correct level. Teaching of mathematics is sound in Years 1-2, and good in Years 3-6. Teachers have a good understanding of the numeracy strategy and teach with greater confidence. Work in mathematics is well matched to the needs of the pupils. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively in all classes, and pupils use them successfully in other subjects. The quality of teaching in ICT and in art and design is good.

Good teaching was seen in nearly half the lessons observed. Teachers in all classes manage the pupils very well. Classrooms are very orderly, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of their subjects and, as a result, pupils learn new skills and knowledge quickly. Resources are prepared and used carefully. Teaching assistants work closely with the class teachers and groups of pupils effectively, so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved, understand what they have to do and are given a good opportunity to be successful. Very good teaching was observed when the pupils picked up the teachers' own enthusiasm, skills were taught rigorously and staff made it very clear that they expected a very high standard in the finished work. Teaching was often satisfactory rather than good when tasks were not set at different levels according to pupils' abilities. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good, and children are given a wide range of exciting opportunities in which to learn and develop.

**The quality of learning** is at least satisfactory, and was good or better in approximately half the lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils always respond positively to good teaching because they enjoy being intellectually or creatively challenged. The results are clear, for example, in the high quality art and design work seen around the school and in the overall rise in standards in English, mathematics and science. Most lessons move forward briskly, and pupils are kept alert and busy. Pupils are aware of their targets but are not always aware of what they have to do to improve. Pupils with special educational needs learn effectively because they are very closely supported in lessons and feel valued by their teachers and other pupils.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Lessons in all classes are enriched through visitors and a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There is a strong emphasis on the arts and creativity.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans are crisp, focussed and match pupils' needs accurately. Teaching assistants work in close support throughout the day.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school has made a special effort to provide planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills as young people growing up in a challenging world, and to make them aware of the cultural diversity and richness of modern society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare are very secure. Staff provide caring and thoughtful support. Procedures for measuring and

	recording pupils' progress are good, but the ways in which teachers link the results with future targets are too complicated.
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The curriculum in the reception class offers the children many interesting and exciting opportunities. The curriculum in Years 1-6 includes all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education, and gives all pupils an equal opportunity to all aspects of the school's life. There is a very positive approach to promoting racial equality and good behaviour. Links with parents are very strong, and families and the wider communities make a very important contribution to pupils' learning in school and at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has set a very clear educational direction. Senior staff are confident in him and very supportive. They work well together and support the staff in an atmosphere of trust and openness. The school's aims and values are explicit and drive every aspect of its life. Subject co-ordinators lead well and manage their subjects effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities appropriately. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are supportive of the headteacher's plans for school improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance rigorously, using national and school based data. The information is shared with staff and governors, and used effectively to set the school's priorities for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Spending decisions are based very firmly on the needs of pupils and raising standards. The school applies the principles of best value effectively.

There is a good match between the staff and the demands of the curriculum. The deployment of support staff is effective, especially in support of pupils with special educational needs. Resources are good overall. Very good use is made of computers and other new technologies in classrooms and in the office. The school finds it difficult to recruit new governors. The accommodation is appropriate and has been turned into an attractive learning environment through well-displayed examples of pupils' work. The caretaker and her staff maintain the building to a high standard. The new library is a particular asset. There is insufficient appropriate outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage, but plans are well advanced to address this.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The emphasis on hard work and effort</li><li>• The children's happiness in coming to school</li><li>• The good teaching and the progress their children make</li><li>• Pupils' good behaviour</li><li>• The good leadership and management</li><li>• The ways in which the school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homework arrangements</li><li>• The links between home and school</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views of the school. Parents had a range of views about homework. Many were satisfied with current arrangements. Inspectors agree with them. The levels and types of work set are similar to those seen in many schools. The home-school link books are used far better than is often seen, and create a good link between families and school.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most children enter the reception class at levels below the national expectation for their age. They make good progress in response to the high quality teaching, and are well on course to reach the levels expected of their age in each area of learning by the end of the school year. Many are likely to achieve higher levels in their personal, social and emotional development, and in their mathematical and physical development. The only exception is that, while children's communication, language and literacy skills are improving, standards remain generally below expected levels.
2. **Standards** in the rest of the school are judged in Year 2 and Year 6 because these are the ends of the two key stages in primary education.
3. Pupils in Year 2 achieved average standards in reading in the 2002 National Curriculum tests. Standards in writing and mathematics were below average. However, the 2002 results showed a considerable improvement over 2001 and continued the upward trend of the previous three years. Standards in reading were well above average in comparison with those attained in schools with pupils with similar backgrounds, were in line in writing and above average in mathematics. Teachers estimated that standards in science were close to those expected nationally, and had improved since the previous year. Standards in Year 6 were well below average in English, mathematics and science, reflecting the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs within the class, but were average in comparison to similar schools. Standards have been rising steadily for five years and the overall rate of improvement in 2002 was the highest in all the schools west of Bristol, and the school was the 59<sup>th</sup> most improved in the whole country. The school did not reach the very challenging targets it had set, but is making a determined effort to reach them in 2003. Girls and boys achieved similar results.
4. **Current standards in English, mathematics and science are average in Year 2.** Pupils make steady progress in response to the systematic teaching of basic skills. They show increasing confidence in using speech, read with expression and set out their ideas appropriately in writing. They do not use punctuation accurately enough. Pupils calculate with numbers to 100 accurately, recognise a range of simple shapes, tell the time, and record data on a graph. They are less skilled in using their mathematical knowledge in practical situations. **Standards are average in mathematics and science in Year 6, but are below average in English.** The range of vocabulary used in pupils' speech and writing is less than that expected for their age, and they pay insufficient attention to structure, grammar and punctuation. The proportion of pupils likely to gain the higher Level 5 is lower than that usually seen in schools. Just over half the class have special educational needs, and 21 of the 27 pupils have joined the school since Year 1. Early indications are that the current Year 4 and Year 5 will reach expected levels in English by the time they are in Year 6. Standards of handwriting and presentation are not good enough in several classes. In mathematics, Year 6

pupils work accurately with numbers to 1000, fractions and percentages. They measure shapes and angles with precision, and record data in graphs and on spreadsheets. Standards of investigational mathematics are satisfactory.

5. **Achievement** is measured by comparing how much pupils improve as they move from class to class. The school keeps very detailed records, identifying the levels pupils reach at the end of each school year and measuring the progress they make over the following twelve months. Pupils are given individual targets on cards, and can check their own improvement. The records and pupils' books show satisfactory or better progress in all classes. Pupils make better individual progress in the subjects and year groups where different work is set to match the various abilities found within the class. A very good example was seen in Year 6 mathematics teaching when all pupils made very good progress because each group was set a challenging and interesting task that stretched them at the correct level of difficulty.
6. **Standards** in ICT, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and in Year 6. Standards in art and design are above expected levels in both years. Pupils reach the levels expected for their age in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Current standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards have improved in mathematics and science in Year 6, but are not as high as previously reported in English. This reflects the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the present class. Standards in all other subjects are similar to those previously reported. The exception is design and technology in Year 2, where standards are in line rather than above national expectations. Less time is currently allocated to the subject than formerly.
7. Teachers make appropriate use of **literacy and numeracy** in other aspects of the broader curriculum. Pupils use their understanding of English to write reports in science, history and geography. Note taking skills and confident speaking help pupils to prepare for later work, as when Year 4 prepared presentations on their ideas for a 'fair test' to discover whether vehicles ran faster or slower over different surfaces. Pupils use their understanding of number and measurement to work accurately in design and technology lessons or to set out the results of their science experiments in graphs. ICT skills are taught effectively, and pupils are starting to make use of them in most areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 3, for example, used a CD-ROM to investigate Christian symbols in a religious education lesson, and Year 6 made very good use of a mathematics program to measure the size of the angles of a triangle.
8. **Pupils with special educational needs** achieve good standards for their age and abilities. Their individual education plans are clearly focused and include short and long-term targets with time scales. Class teachers, learning support assistants and the pupils themselves, review them regularly. Pupils with special educational needs make generally good progress. **Boys and girls** try equally hard in lessons, and no significant difference was noticed in their attainment. Girls did less well than boys in the 2002 Year 2 National Curriculum tests for reading and writing, but this pattern is not evident in other age groups. Boys and girls are making similar progress in all classes. Higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they might in the lessons where all the class is set exactly the same work. The more able

pupils are expected to do more, but the tasks do not always challenge them at a higher intellectual level. This also limits the opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to reach their potential.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Children's positive attitudes to learning and to each other start in the reception class where their personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the school. They feel safe and secure, and thrive when their contributions are so highly valued. **Relationships** are excellent throughout the school, ensuring very good attitudes, values and personal development. Ninety-seven per cent of parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire agreed that their children were happy to be at school. Pupils are keen to learn, and approach their assignments in an enthusiastic manner. They pay close attention to the teachers and, because of the very good relationships established with them and each other, talk readily about their work or their feelings without fear or embarrassment, knowing their contributions will be heard and valued. Younger children are confident in their exchanges with adults. The excellent relationships are a strength of the school, and provide a very positive environment in which to learn, thrive and succeed.
10. **Pupils' behaviour** is very good in the classrooms, around the school and at play, and has improved since the previous inspection. The occasional lapses in behaviour in lessons and in the playground have been reduced. Pupils enjoy their lessons. When rare inappropriate behaviour does occur, the school reacts quickly and pupils are left in no doubt that this kind of behaviour will not be tolerated. Pupils know the school rules, and respond well to praise and encouragement. They recognise the difference between right and wrong, and appreciate the effect of their actions on others and the environment. Pupils feel safe and secure in school, and are confident that if problems occur, they will be dealt with swiftly and effectively. No bullying, sexist or racist behaviour was observed during the inspection. The school works hard to avoid exclusions, and is effective in discussing inappropriate behaviour, and in working with pupils and their parents to raise standards. During the last twelve months, one boy was excluded for a fixed period on three occasions. He has now moved to secondary school.
11. The excellent **relationships** contribute significantly to the positive atmosphere in and around the school. Pupils form constructive friendships and care for each other. Older pupils appointed as prefects, for example, help to organise play activities for younger pupils, and monitor the corridors and stairways at break and lunchtimes. Pupils are courteous and polite to each other and to visitors. They collaborate positively in the classrooms, work well together in pairs, share resources and help one another. They enjoy taking part in the increased number of extra-curricular activities now available to them.
12. Pupils readily accept and respond positively to **opportunities to take responsibility**. Older pupils are trained to help solve minor disputes between pupils during break periods. Pupils have a good understanding of responsibility and citizenship. Representatives from all classes, including the youngest pupils, contribute to the work of the School Council. They recognise that their views and requests are heard, valued and, where appropriate, acted upon. For



example, their suggestions have resulted in a wider range of play equipment and activities at lunchtimes.

13. **The attendance rate** at the school in the last academic year of 93.4% was slightly below the national average. The unauthorised absence rate of 0.3% is slightly less than the national average. This has happened because of the school's successful intervention policy and discussions with parents to stress the importance of regular attendance. School attendance figures are adversely affected by a small number of identified individual pupils and families whose attendance record is unsatisfactory. Most pupils arrive punctually at school, ensuring a prompt and effective start to the school day. A few pupils arrive late regularly, but appropriate procedures are in place to monitor and improve timekeeping. Once in school, lessons start promptly and no time is wasted.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

14. **The overall quality of teaching** is satisfactory as seen in lessons throughout the school, the teachers' preparation and records, and in their assessments and knowledge of their subjects and the pupils. Approximately half the lessons seen during the inspection were judged good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when one in every ten lessons was unsatisfactory. Seven of the 37 lessons seen during the current inspection were very good, which is also an improvement since the previous inspection. The overall quality of teaching in the reception class is very good because the teacher and the support staff have a very good understanding of young children's needs, and have planned and teach a high quality curriculum that interests and challenges the pupils.
15. The teaching of English is satisfactory in Years 1-6. Teachers are working hard to develop the ways they implement the National Literacy Strategy. Some of the current planning does not link the various aspects of English teaching together tightly enough and tasks do not always challenge pupils at the correct level. The overall quality of teaching of mathematics and science is sound in Years 1-2, and good in Years 3-6. Teachers have a good understanding of the numeracy strategy and teach with greater confidence. Work in mathematics is well matched to the needs of the pupils, and is leading to higher levels of attainment. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively in all classes, and pupils use them successfully in other subjects. ICT and art and design skills are taught well. The overall quality of teaching in other subjects is satisfactory, and several of the individual lessons observed were of a higher standard. No history lessons were observed and no judgement, therefore, can be made about the overall quality of the teaching.
16. **Good teaching** was seen in nearly half the lessons observed during the inspection. Where the teaching was judged very good, the planning was very finely judged so that each task followed on from the previous piece of work, and the pupils knew exactly what they were trying to achieve by the end of the lesson. They understood what they had to do to improve, and tasks for pupils of different ability were set at appropriate levels. Teachers got as much pleasure as the pupils from the learning in the better taught lessons, and their enthusiasm was sensed and shared by the pupils. Excellent use of questions, for example, lifted the quality of

thinking and understanding in a Year 4 science lesson where the teacher kept challenging a group of pupils to think and think again about their investigation. “How would you test that? What would you measure? What would that tell you?” The pupils thoroughly enjoyed being tested so hard, and the quality of their learning as they sought answers to her questions was high. All the pupils made very good progress in the lesson, because the teaching assistants enabled pupils with special educational needs to experience real achievement and higher attaining pupils responded very positively to the intellectual and creative challenge they had been set.

17. Teachers in all classes manage the pupils very well. Classrooms are very orderly, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of their subjects and, as a result, pupils learn new skills and gain fresh knowledge quickly. Resources are carefully prepared and ready for immediate use. Teaching assistants work closely with the class teachers and groups of pupils effectively so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved, understand what they have to do and are given a good opportunity to be successful.
18. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection but there were several occasions when the class were all set the same tasks and pupils capable of working at higher levels were expected to do more of the same rather than being set more testing work early in the lesson. This was also evident in pupils’ past work in their books. There was often little difference between finished work, in religious education for example, of the capable pupils and those of lower ability. In some classes, redrafted work in English was copied out more neatly as a fair copy, but with no improvement in the quality of vocabulary or accurate use of grammar. In other classes the purpose of the lesson was explained as a series of activities, rather than as a clear statement, in language that the pupils could understand, which set out what they would be able to do by the end of the session that they could not do at the beginning. A similar concern was noted at the time of the previous inspection. On a few occasions, the teaching assistants, who do very good work with their groups, were not involved actively enough in sessions for the whole class.
19. It must be noted that all of the above concerns have been addressed successfully in some classes, and that good practice in all these areas already exists within the school. The work in mathematics, for example, is very well targeted at pupils of different levels of ability.
20. Overall, the teaching for pupils with **special educational needs** is good. Teachers plan effectively because they are fully involved in drawing up educational programmes with the special educational needs co-ordinator. The planning includes clear statements of what the pupils need to know and identifies challenging activities that are well matched to their abilities. Learning support assistants are well briefed and prepared, and have a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils. They support the pupils very effectively in whole class sessions by helping them to listen attentively, asking supplementary questions to ensure understanding and providing positive feedback and encouragement. This means that they are fully involved in all class activities, and learn effectively alongside more able pupils.
21. **The quality of learning** is at least satisfactory, and was good or better in approximately half the lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils always respond positively to good teaching

because they enjoy being intellectually or creatively challenged. The results are clear, for example, in the high quality art and design work seen around the school and in the overall rise in standards in English, mathematics and science. Most lessons move forward briskly, and pupils are kept alert and busy. Pupils are aware of their targets but some are not always sure of what they have to do to improve. The quality of marking varies from class to class. Some is very detailed and is a balanced mixture of praise and suggestions for improvement. Other marking is more superficial and less helpful, because it does little more than tell the pupil that the teacher has seen the work. Pupils with special educational needs learn effectively because they are very closely supported in lessons and feel valued by their teachers and other pupils. There are appropriate arrangements for homework. The support that many parents give to developing their children's love of books and skills in reading has a positive impact on standards.

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

22. The Foundation Stage **curriculum** for children in the reception class is very good. The curriculum provided for pupils aged 5-11 is good, and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum is planned more effectively than at the time of previous inspection. Clear guidelines have now been introduced to identify what pupils are to be taught each week, term and year in each subject. They are reviewed on an annual basis.
23. An additional but appropriate allocation of time for teaching English, science and mathematics, and the positive response to the increasing demands of the ICT curriculum, has reduced the overall time available to develop skills in other subjects. Art and design, for example, alternates with design and technology, reducing the time for both. The changes to new curriculum requirements have been managed effectively. The school complies with statutory requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship, and parents have been informed about their right to withdraw their children from these and religious education lessons. Arrangements for promoting personal and social education are very good and pupils are given many opportunities to share experiences, views and opinions. Health education, which includes sex education and the raising of awareness about the use and misuse of drugs, is promoted sensitively. Homework provides satisfactory openings for parents and carers to support their children's learning.
24. The national strategies for the teaching of **literacy and numeracy** have been given an appropriate emphasis and have contributed to the significant improvement in quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection, especially in mathematics. Teachers are starting to use ICT within other areas of the curriculum. Art and design, and mathematics, are good examples.
25. The aims of the school give the highest priority to providing equal opportunities for all, and to value all abilities and backgrounds. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are fully involved in all school activities and are given full access to the National Curriculum and religious education, and to the extra activities that take place outside of the

normal school day. Pupils' needs are identified early in their school life and there is a good programme of support. Work is planned to match pupils' needs and abilities, and specific programmes are provided for the teaching of letter sounds and spelling. The school is aware of the need to provide additional support sensitively to make sure that pupils do not lose their full entitlement to the full range of curricular opportunities. Individual education plans [IEPs] provide clearly for gains in skills, understanding and knowledge in all the main subjects. Pupils with the protection of a statement of special educational need have good self-esteem and thrive because they are encouraged to share their achievements. Work is planned only satisfactorily for higher attaining pupils if they are set the same tasks as others when in class groups. There is a register of gifted and talented pupils, and opportunities are taken to extend their skills as in the neighbourhood mathematics master class, as leaders in ICT, or during club activities for art and sports.

26. The school is active in finding new opportunities to extend and enrich the curriculum. Involvement in city-wide projects has made pupils more aware of the many dangers open to young people when on the beach, with strangers, or when exposed to harmful drugs. The very good provision for **out-of-school** activities includes pupils from Years 1-6, and gives them a wide range of opportunities to develop their personal, social and creative skills. Visiting specialists have introduced rugby and football skills to both boys and girls and enabled them to participate in inter-school tournaments and festivals. Staff give most generously of their time and parents appreciate that these activities add to the quality of pupils' learning. A residential experience was a planned part of the curriculum for the oldest pupils until costs made it prohibitive.
27. There are very strong **links with the community**. Pupils are taken out to investigate the locality. The programme of opportunities for pupils in Year 3 to interview, eat with, and then 'host' residents of the local residential home provide experiences of the highest quality. There are excellent links with other primary schools through the Academic Council based on the nearby secondary school, which provide opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to share and improve their skills. This has increased the quality of pupils' learning by providing additional resources for the teaching of science and the new focus on physical education. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and there are strong links with the local secondary school. Pupils visit in Year 5 before open days in Year 6. Teachers share their expertise across the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 especially in art and design, science, and special educational needs.
28. Pupils benefit from a wide range of visitors including artists, poets and theatre groups, and by drawing on the life skills and talents of members of the community. This is to be fostered later in the year during a 'Curriculum Enrichment Week'. The school is justly very proud of its Artsmark award. Citizenship is promoted through a wide range of curricular and non-curricular activities. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions and choices, and opportunities for developing thinking skills are planned for all pupils in Years 5 and 6. Very good personal and social training encourages them not only to reflect on their own actions, but also to consider the effects of their action on others. They discuss and debate issues such as the effects of pollution on health, and how to improve their local environment. Representatives from each class are elected and then meet together as the School Council, which discusses

and makes recommendations about ways in which the life of the school community can be improved.

29. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and standards have been maintained at the high levels reported at the time of the previous inspection.
30. **Provision for pupils' spiritual development** is good. Religious education makes a sound contribution to pupils' development. They are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and the values that underpin living a good life. Assemblies develop the provision through the use of music to create a suitable atmosphere. Acts of collective worship are well planned and encourage a sense of community with shared values. They often include good story telling, a time for reflection, sharing thoughts and feelings, prayer and an invitation to affirm the 'Amen' if pupils wish. The headteacher works hard to ensure that the experience of coming together once a day strengthens the principal values of the school, that of respecting each other, accommodating and tolerating 'difference', challenging prejudice and 'being bold and strong' in pursuit of one's beliefs in difficult circumstances. Difficult subjects like death have been shared sensitively. The school provides trained bereavement counselling when necessary and has excellent links with a local hospital which offers the experience of 'Jeremiah's Journey' to pupils so that they are able to explore their feelings about death.
31. The value given to individuals is made real in the presentation and celebration of pupils' work and achievements. Work is displayed and often framed with a sense of pride and quality. For example, former Year 6 pupils' work is displayed in the hall to celebrate their time in the school and their transition to secondary education. Pupils work hard and often show a delight in learning, marvelling at new knowledge and experiences, for example the potential of computer software in an ICT lesson.
32. Very good provision is made for pupils' **moral** development. The school builds a strong framework of values that underpin the high expectations of the headteacher and staff. The headteacher challenges pupils to believe in themselves and care for each other, whilst doing what is right, even in difficult situations. A very good example is seen in the co-operative work that has developed positive relationships with another local primary school. The high quality policy and practice for managing behaviour is based on clear principles and values with appropriate rewards and sanctions. The school code of conduct is expressed clearly in positive language that pupils can readily understand and is displayed around the school. Good behaviour and work is celebrated and rewarded with merit stickers. Teamwork is encouraged at all levels, as well as an atmosphere of trust and openness. The headteacher takes a lead in finding positive ways to address problems.
33. Provision for **social** development is very good. There is a strong sense of community and pride in being a member of the school, which has improved significantly in recent years according to staff, parents and governors. Pupils of all ages share playtimes and lunchtimes, and get on very well together. Year 6 prefects are diligent in carrying out their duties around the school. There are some very good opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively and collaborate on projects that develop a sense of responsibility and initiative. For example,

Year 6 pupils organise and participate in a range of fund-raising activities in the summer term to raise money for an outing. There is a good citizenship programme that develops pupils' skills of making life-choices, and which also raises their self-esteem. Pupils develop a sense of being part of a wider community by raising money to support charities catering for a variety of causes including cancer and refugees. They show commitment to being a member of their local community in many ways. For example, Year 3 have supported and visited a local residential home for senior citizens over an extended period of time. The school regrets that it is no longer possible to provide a residential experience because of rising costs.

34. Provision for pupils' **cultural** development is also very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school seeks to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own cultural traditions. They visit Plymouth museums to extend their knowledge and understanding of the local community. There have been enjoyable celebrations of the World Cup, and the Golden Jubilee, as well as a school Christmas production. The school is also effective in teaching pupils to appreciate other cultural traditions. A colourful display of artefacts, photographs and information about aspects of Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism give value to the religious beliefs of other ethnic groups. Pupils enjoyed the opportunity to sample food and music during a multicultural week, and met representatives from a number of countries. Good use is made of other subjects, such as art and music, for pupils to explore other cultural beliefs and ways of life, for example through Aboriginal art. Appreciation of cultural achievement is encouraged through exploring the work of artists such as Clarice Cliff, with pupils producing some very high quality work as a result. Pupils participated in the Plymouth Arts Education Festival and with local artists to produce murals, as well as a Japanese visitor promoting a display of Japanese poetry.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school continues to provide the very good support, advice and guidance for its pupils seen at the time of the previous report. The levels of care it offers are a significant strength. Relationships within the school are excellent. All staff provide very caring and thoughtful support to pupils, and are accessible and responsive to their pastoral needs. The excellent relationships throughout the school create a very good learning environment and have a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Parents are happy with the support and guidance offered to their children.
36. The school has high expectations of good **behaviour**, clearly explained, defined and understood by all. Pupils respond very positively to the praise and encouragement from all members of staff. They understand and appreciate the system of rewards, and try hard to gain points towards their team totals. Regular weekly assemblies provide good opportunities for celebrating pupils' individual work, effort and good behaviour. The certificates awarded are then displayed in the school foyer for all to see.
37. If inappropriate behaviour does occur, the school has very good procedures for consulting with both pupils and their parents on ways to improve. The level of care and support to pupils at risk of exclusion is very good. Pupils' behaviour at lunchtime is good. The dining area is noisy, mainly as a result of the design of the building. Good levels of supervision in

school and on play areas at break and lunchtime have a beneficial effect on behaviour. Relationships between pupils and the lunchtime supervisors are very good. The breakfast club offers a good opportunity for those pupils who use it regularly to start their school day. There was no evidence of oppressive behaviour or bullying during the inspection. Older pupils have been trained to mediate in minor disputes between pupils. Pupils confirm that they feel safe and secure within the school and the playground. The school's systems for monitoring and responding to any rare incident of racial or sexual harassment, or bullying, are excellent. Racial equality is actively promoted, in line with the school's clear policy. When necessary there is appropriate advice and support to pupils following bereavement or family breakdown.

38. Monitoring of pupils' **personal development** is good. Class teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors all play an important role in the care of pupils, and in monitoring and supporting their social development. Teachers keep ongoing records of discussions with parents at consultation evenings, and any concerns are noted, together with the outcome of any actions planned at that time. Pupils' progress in individual subjects is carefully recorded and monitored. Teaching assistants write down and share their observations with teachers through written records and at weekly meetings. Targets for individual achievement are set following discussion with parents at the consultation evenings.
39. School procedures for recording and reporting **pupils' attendance** meet statutory requirements. Parents know what to do when their child is absent. The school's monitoring arrangements are very good, and there is good weekly liaison with the education welfare officer. There is a small number of individual pupils and families whose attendance record is not satisfactory. Parents are actively encouraged to bring their children to school each day on time, but there are a small minority who regularly arrive late. In such instances, there is appropriate intervention by the education welfare officer.
40. **The health, well being and safety of pupils** is given an appropriately high priority. The school places a high emphasis on being a "Healthy School". Fresh fruit is available to younger pupils during the morning break, and pupils have access to drinking water at all times. Regular safety checks of the school premises are carried out, and governors on the Building and Premises Committee carry out inspections at least once a term. The school is fully accessible on the ground floor. Governors are aware of the limitations, and their responsibilities, posed by Years 3-6 being on the first floor. Child protection procedures are good, well-established and meet statutory requirements. The headteacher is the person designated as having responsibility for child protection. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are regularly reminded of the importance of being vigilant and are aware of the procedures to be followed if there is a concern. The school ICT systems are designed to make sure that pupils can only access approved Internet websites.
41. **Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress** are good and have improved since the previous inspection. Staff measure what the youngest children know, understand and can do when they enter the Foundation Stage in the reception class, and in each year group until the age of 11. Formal assessments are made at the ages of seven and 11 by making national comparisons, with optional testing at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers test and record

the gains pupils have made in skills, knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics and science at least once a term, and monitor their progress through the school. The results are not yet used to their fullest extent in English to set medium term targets linked to nationally agreed levels of attainment. The comprehensive records of progress made in all the other subjects are an improvement since the previous inspection. These give teachers secure information on which to base judgements about standards and progress according to gender or background.

42. The results of national tests in English and mathematics are analysed carefully in order to identify what skills need to be developed in order to improve standards. There are detailed procedures which identify the achievements of pupils when they start a new school year, and teachers make separate predictions of what they are expected to achieve by the time pupils leave the class. Progress is reviewed on a termly basis and targets are adjusted. There is a good tracking system, which monitors gains in academic and personal skills, but this is not always used to give a sharper focus to teaching and learning in periods shorter than a term or to identify what each group needs to do in order to reach its next target. The good marking policy is used inconsistently. At its best, marking informs pupils when they have achieved their targets and then explains how they can improve. Other marking is more superficial.
43. The quality of care for **pupils with special educational needs** is good and all statutory requirements are met. Individual needs, whether learning or emotional and behavioural, are identified early from concerns expressed by the class teacher, parents, an analysis of progress or through identification by outside agencies. The special educational needs co-ordinator and class teacher initially assess pupils' needs. Individual educational plans are drawn up in consultation with pupils, parents and representatives of appropriate supporting outside agencies, and are used as the basis for planning, teaching and on-going assessment. Teaching and non-teaching support is organised effectively and fairly. Targets for improvement are shared with parents, carers and pupils. Pupils with greatest need have the protection of a statement of special educational need and have individual adult support. The school works closely with outside agencies. Speech therapy is available for specific pupils each day with trained learning support assistants. As a result of successful intervention, the needs of some pupils decrease, whilst for others the progress remains slow.
44. Although the overall current **use of assessment** to set challenging targets for improvement for each ability group is unsatisfactory, some very good procedures have been recently introduced. They include the introduction of group targets, the sharing of these targets with pupils and parents, and a move to improve the quality of the planning so that it identifies more precisely what pupils need to learn next. The school also plans to give a greater awareness and purpose to teaching and learning by involving pupils more in the evaluation of the quality of their own work. The use of these strategies means that the school is very well placed to simplify its current assessment procedures, and to combine the good records of past attainment with challenging targets for the future. This will enable teachers to put pupils' termly assessments and their future targets onto one sheet of paper, which can be updated as pupils move through the school. This will also identify, at a glance, the pupils who need extra support and simplify teachers' planning for groups of different ability within their classes.



## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents and carers have a very positive view of the school. Although only just under half of parents returned the questionnaires and attendance at the parents' meeting before the inspection was very low, both sources of information indicate that pupils enjoy coming to school. Parents value the school's emphasis on encouraging their children to work hard and do their best. They report that the teaching is good and enables children to make good progress. They feel that children behave well, the school is well led and managed, and value the ways in which the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views.
46. Parents had a range of views about homework. Many were satisfied with current arrangements. Inspectors agree with them. The levels and types of work set are similar to those seen in many schools. Some parents would like to see stronger links between home and school. However, the inspection judgement is that links are very good, and much stronger than found in many schools. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging parents to be involved in the education of their children, and the headteacher works hard to ensure effective communication. The policy of convincing parents that they and the school can work effectively together has been successful in improving standards of behaviour. Attendance at the termly consultation evenings is high, and follow-up appointments are offered to those parents who do not attend. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed at the twice yearly reviews, or more often if the need arises. Details of targets and progress towards achieving them are included in the home-school link books. The home-school link books are used far better than is often seen, and create a good link between families and school.
47. The school regularly consults parents by means of surveys, and despite not receiving a response from a number of parents, uses the information constructively. The school has organised curriculum weeks when different areas of the curriculum are explained in order to support parents whose own education was not a positive experience. Parents are invited into school on a regular basis, for example when the 'healthy school' initiative was introduced and fruit was provided for the younger pupils. Parents attend the class assemblies, and recently parents were active in fundraising for Comic Relief. A crèche is provided for all assemblies, productions and main events in school. The pre-school breakfast club gives a welcome service.
48. **The quality of information** for parents is good. Weekly newsletters give them a wide range of useful information about school events and successes. The prospectus is an informative document, explaining why the school's rules and procedures are necessary. Detailed information about the curriculum in all year groups is given in the home-school link books, which also provide a very useful means of ongoing communication between parents and the school. Parents are encouraged throughout the school to hear their child read on a regular basis, and it is evident from scrutiny of the home-school link books that they respond positively to this encouragement. Helpful comments in the link books suggest how they can help their child improve further. There is a clear homework policy, and parents know how much their child is required to do each week. Annual reports of pupils' work are satisfactory.

They give parents a good range of information about what their child knows and can do. Reports tell parents how their child has progressed, but do not always explain how they can help their child to progress further. There is a good induction programme for parents and children starting school for the first time.

49. A small number of parents regularly help in the classrooms. A larger number of parents provide valuable support on educational visits. The school's parent, teacher and friends' association (PTFA) organises social and fundraising events to support the school and its work very successfully. The help provided is very much valued and appreciated by the school. Some volunteer parent helpers are able to use their classroom activities to support their own educational programmes. Others have received support for their own learning through school and government initiatives.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

50. **The overall quality of leadership** by the headteacher and key staff is good. The headteacher provides calm and inspiring leadership. He is committed to achieving the school's aims and is determined that the school, its pupils and staff will succeed. He is clear about the contribution the school should make in helping pupils develop as confident and aspirational human beings who believe in themselves, set themselves goals, and care for others. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, who joined the staff at the beginning of this school year, share the same high ambitions for the school.
51. The headteacher's very clear vision drives the thinking of governors and staff, and shines through in all aspects of the school. Staff and governors are appreciative and supportive of the headteacher and confident in his plan for improvement. All adults work well together in an atmosphere of trust and openness. There is a clear sense of purpose and a passion that every pupil should enjoy school, develop high self-esteem and experience the best possible education. Displays, posters and banners proclaim the school's values and its intentions for its pupils. Pupils are helped to contribute to the life of the school through participation in the School Council. Parents are also invited to shape the direction of the school through the use of questionnaires and the opportunity to participate in school activities.
52. The school is **managed** effectively on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher promotes an open, honest and trusting style of management. There is great emphasis on teamwork, focusing on developing staff strengths. The headteacher's delegation of management responsibilities is good and reflects his astute assessment of how best to move the school forward in a productive and positive way. Clear structures are in place across the school so that all teams work together effectively at all levels. All staff have job descriptions that outline their roles and responsibilities clearly. Senior staff work hard to support the headteacher but there is no representation on the senior management team for literacy or the Foundation Stage to strengthen its effectiveness in raising standards.
53. Subject co-ordinators have clear guidance to help them focus on their key task and duties. The monitoring of planning, teaching and pupils' work, in literacy and numeracy in particular, has improved in recent years. As yet the co-ordinators for the other subjects have had less

release time to monitor standards in lessons. This reflects the headteacher's decision to keep teachers teaching their classes in order to focus on raising standards in reading, writing and numeracy, and raise expectations of behaviour and attitudes to learning.

54. Office staff are helpful, welcoming and efficient in their responsibilities. The school uses new technology very well to support office systems and to monitor pupils' performance and attendance. The headteacher is keen to reduce the administrative load on teachers and all teachers have a laptop computer on which to plan lessons. Other support staff, such as midday supervisors, cleaners and the caretaker, provide good service to the school. The building is clean and well maintained.
55. The special educational needs co-ordinator is on the senior management team. Funding is clearly identified and used effectively. The co-ordinator maintains the register of pupils with special educational needs and plays an important part in raising the awareness of all staff to know how best to help those with learning or behavioural difficulties. Special needs resources are managed efficiently. The co-ordinator teaches a class full time and is only able to monitor pupils' progress half-termly. However, teachers keep detailed records of the pupils in their classes and will approach the co-ordinator for support or advice. The governing body is well informed and all statutory duties relating to pupils with special educational needs are met in full.
56. The **governing body** fulfil their statutory duties and responsibilities satisfactorily. The chair of governors has given long and valuable service to the school and, together with the vice-chair, offers sound support to the headteacher. Governors are establishing their role as 'critical friends' in a positive manner that helps the school move forward. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are well informed by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators through written and oral reports. They are fully aware of the improvements the school has made under the direction of the new headteacher and are very supportive of his future plans. There is a programme of governor visits but not all governors have been able to carry them out. There is some difficulty in recruiting new governors. The various committees have clear terms of reference and seek help from the headteacher, the clerk to the governors and the local education authority representative on the governing body when necessary. The curriculum committee meets at least once a term and governors are linked to the various subject areas in order to monitor their effectiveness.
57. The school evaluates its own performance systematically, using all the data available to good effect. There are good systems for assessing the academic performance of different groups of pupils. This information is used for directing resources towards the areas the school considers as its most urgent priorities. These currently include the need to improve standards, especially in writing, to provide additional literacy and numeracy classes, and to support pupils with special educational needs. The school improvement plan is a useful working document that provides a good blueprint for senior staff, governors and staff to use to check progress against the school's clearly and appropriately identified priorities. Some of the criteria identified as measures of success are too general, and are not linked explicitly enough to pupils' performance.

58. Educational priorities are very well supported through the **school's financial planning**. The **budget** is well managed. The level of 'carry forward' is appropriate, especially in the current uncertain financial climate. The governors have a sound understanding of the principles of best value, and appreciate the need to compare the performance of the school with all schools nationally and with those taking pupils from similar social backgrounds. Careful consideration is given to alternative quotes. Some purchasing is through local authority recommended suppliers who adhere to the 'best value' principles. The best value checks continue after purchases have been made. The new laptop computers, for example, are subject to a discussion with the suppliers as there are some concerns about battery life.
59. There is a good policy and programme for **monitoring teaching and learning**. The practices and approaches established by the headteacher are effective and are used to plan the programme of staff training and development. The subject co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy monitor teaching in the autumn term with the headteacher, look at pupils' work in the spring term and analyse the national test results in the summer. The school's strategy for performance management is secure and a cycle of observations is in place. The headteacher is committed to developing staff and focusing on increasing their confidence and abilities. The school is seeking accreditation as an Investor in People.
60. The school is well staffed with **teachers and support staff**. Staff's expertise and experience are generally well matched to their responsibilities. The headteacher has identified the need for a specialist to lead and manage physical education. The induction programme for staff is a priority for review, but there is already a useful staff handbook. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and make a positive contribution to the behaviour, social development and attainment of pupils. They provide positive role models for behaviour across the school and relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. Pupils know that adults value, respect, like and care for them.
61. Learning **resources** are good. The decision to resource the school with laptops is innovative and they provide useful opportunities for flexible, class-based learning. Excellent use is made of links with the Academic Council, local sports teams, the Acorns on-site nursery and other community links. The accommodation is well maintained and is used efficiently. The school recognises the need for refurbishment of pupils' toilets as soon as funding becomes available. The school has a good library as well as a dedicated hall for teaching purposes. There are sufficient hard surfaced and grassed areas. The headteacher has successfully negotiated for additional teaching space for games. The planned developments for the new nursery provision and outdoor 'classroom' for the reception class are well on course to improve the overall provision within the school and for the local community.
62. The pupils' sound and sometimes good progress, their very positive attitudes and very good behaviour, the sound teaching with some good aspects, and the good leadership and management mean that the school is effective and provides good **value for money**.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to continue and increase its current rate of improvement, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
1. Raise standards in English, particularly in Year 6, by increasing all teachers' understanding of the planning needed to deliver high quality lessons.  
*(see paragraphs 4, 15, 18, 78 and 81)*
  2. Increase the range and level of work set for groups of pupils of higher ability in all subjects.  
*(see paragraphs 8, 18, 25, 81, 87, 95, 108, 116 and 127)*
  3. Simplify target setting and records of pupils' past attainment by combining them into a single document.  
*(see paragraphs 42 and 44)*

It should be noted that the above issues have already been identified by the school, and feature in its improvement plan.

In addition to the above, governors should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:

1. Continue to work towards the establishment of an appropriate outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
2. Raise the standard of presentation in many pupils' books.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	53

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	11	19	0	0	0
Percentage	0	19	30	51	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		173
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		60

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		47

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	11	10	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	18	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (71)	86 (71)	90 (83)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (67)	86 (83)	86 (75)
	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	17	9	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	16	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (56)	62 (68)	85 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (52)	62 (68)	65 (88)
	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	172	3	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	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	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Average class size	24.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	223

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	508519
Total expenditure	518724
Expenditure per pupil	3051
Balance brought forward from previous year	48123
Balance carried forward to next year	37918

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
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)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	173
Number of questionnaires returned	77

**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	0	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	1	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	51	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	32	5	5	0
The teaching is good.	70	27	1	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	49	6	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	30	4	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	38	0	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	49	6	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	34	3	3	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	51	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	43	5	3	1

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

64. Children are given a flying start in the reception class and have benefited from their pre-school experience in the Acorns registered nursery on the school site. The introduction to the reception class is managed sensitively. Parents and carers are fully informed and involved in settling the children into their new class. Information is collected when children start in the reception class in September or January so that the teacher can identify what they already know, understand and can do. This is then used to respond to children's needs, set challenging targets for improvement, and to compare their achievements with other Plymouth schools. There are currently 23 children in the class. 14 started in January, of whom 10 are 'summer born'.
65. The teacher's information, supported by the inspection evidence, indicates that children's attainment on starting school is below that found nationally because their creative and communication, language and literacy skills are below expected levels. As a result of the very good quality of teaching and learning, most children make good progress and are on course to achieve nationally expected levels in nearly all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum by the end of the school year. Overall achievement in communication, language and literacy skills is not as high as other aspects of the curriculum. Children are very well prepared to begin the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
66. The quality of teaching is very good. Children receive very good support from the two teaching assistants under the leadership of an inspired teacher. Relationships are excellent. Where teaching is at its most effective, activities are planned and built on previous skills, knowledge and understanding. There was a sensitive balance between direct teaching and planned opportunities for children to explore, investigate and learn from each other. The teacher has a very good awareness of the needs of the children, and the different parts of the curriculum are linked skilfully. There is a shared commitment to raising standards and a desire to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are aware of the urgency that must be directed to the development of higher communication, language and literacy skills. Every opportunity is explored to develop listening, speaking and writing, with role-play as a high priority. The 'Post Office' linked different learning needs effectively, including writing letters, addressing envelopes and weighing parcels. The visit to the post box made children more aware of the local area. Children with special educational needs receive very good support, make good progress and are being guided step-by-step through the early stages of learning.
67. An active partnership with parents and carers is encouraged and valued. Parents are given detailed information that includes advice on how to support their children's learning at home. The teacher manages the very good resources effectively. Weekly meetings with teaching assistants encourage high quality learning and ensure that all staff record children's progress in the same way. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good. The classroom and practical area are alive with children's work, which is highly valued and creates a stimulating area in which to learn. Rooms are divided into learning zones where children are encouraged

to use and apply their skills. The learning is managed and organised consistently well. The decision to arrange a session when resources and activities are shared with pupils in the adjoining Year 1 class has improved the quality of learning of all the children because they learn from each other. There is no separate secure outdoor area for children to develop their physical and creative skills. This has been given a high priority and plans are close to fruition. In the meanwhile children use the outdoor climbing area, and many activities spill out into the corridors and cloak areas.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

68. Children's personal, social and emotional development has improved since the previous inspection, and is now a strength of the Foundation Stage. The excellent relationships provide a very good basis for the good quality of learning which is evident for all children. They soon feel safe and secure, and thrive when their contributions are so highly valued. Many are at ease with the increasing number of known adults with whom they work. A significant proportion of children enter the school with immature skills. They learn school routines quickly and respond positively to the very good teaching. They are encouraged to develop friendships, share and work together, and are developing a respect for one another. They are very well behaved, eager and enthusiastic. Most are sensitive to the needs of others and help, for example, to fasten laces and buttons. Children are learning to concentrate, persevere with their learning and seek help when required. They flourish when given 'choice' in their learning and are developing a sense of responsibility. Resources are clearly labelled and stored so that children can get and return them by themselves. Children are highly valued not only by adults but by other children, as was observed when a child returned after illness. This vital area of learning is given a high priority, to very good effect, and standards are above those usually expected of children of this age.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

69. Communication, language and literacy skills are variable on entry but there are a significant number of children whose standards are below those considered typical for children of this age. Every opportunity is planned for activities to encourage speaking and listening skills, and children make good progress, including those with special educational needs and the growing number with speech problems. They respond positively to the very good teaching but, although there are several exceptions, many children are unlikely to reach expected levels by the end of the school year. The teacher and two teaching assistants are skilled in asking questions to encourage a richer language and a greater understanding. A water play activity was used effectively to use language which identified position such as 'at the bottom', 'underneath', and 'floating'. The 'Hospital Area' is well planned to provide good opportunities for imaginative play and the promotion of speaking, reading and writing skills. Records indicate that nearly all children can read and write their first name unaided, with a significant group writing their full names. Lower attaining children demonstrate early writing skills by making marks. Many of the children who started school in September are able to copy or write simple sentences, and are ready to begin the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children are developing a love of books and are well motivated by stories such as the 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. There is a stimulating reading corner with a good

selection of books, which children handle carefully. They are beginning to recognise words with a growing knowledge of the initial letter sounds, and have many opportunities to enjoy listening to story tapes.

### **Mathematical development**

70. Mathematical development is good. Teaching for the development and awareness of mathematical language is very good. Singing games help to reinforce number and make learning fun. Many children can count to 10, explore mathematical patterns and sequences, and know the names of simple shapes such as circles, squares and triangles. In one lesson, the children had to investigate the properties of solid shapes. Their level of understanding was impressive, and all of them used the word 'sphere' accurately. Many children knew the term 'cube' and some recognised 'cylinder'. Higher attaining children explained why shapes with 'curved surfaces' rolled and other shapes would only 'slide'. Subsequent activities included further investigation of rolling and sliding down a slope, and the modelling of an eggcup from clay, which had started off as a sphere. Mathematical development is linked purposefully to every day activities. Children are familiar with 'counting on' to find out how many are absent or how many more had brought sandwiches. The counting of money following their charity appeal was a valuable activity that promoted good speaking and listening skills. Children were fascinated when comparing their collection of baby clothes, and used vocabulary such as 'bigger', 'smaller' and 'heavier' and 'lighter' correctly. Children count forwards and backwards from 0-10 and know how to order numbers, including which number is 'next' or 'one more' or 'one less'. Most are on course to exceed the levels expected for children at this stage in their education by the end of the school year.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

71. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. They respond positively to the good teaching, and are on course to achieve expected levels by the end of the year. Work is planned to build on their natural curiosity and to help them to understand the world in which they live. The school environment is used very well and opportunities are planned to promote the use of all five senses. Children are knowledgeable about the display of tadpoles, which they know are to be returned to the pond after they have finished their observations. When talking about the display of baby photographs, they clearly understand how to put them into chronological order to illustrate the passage of time. Photographs also highlight visits within the local community as when posting their letters. There is a very good range of resources in the 'Hospital Corner' with pupils using a stethoscope and 'I don't know what it is called, but it is for looking in your ears!' They build with an exciting variety of objects and use dough, bricks, water and sand safely. They are proud of their 'ambulance', which they have constructed and painted themselves. Everyone has designed and made a wheeled vehicle from card and dowel. Children are learning early ICT skills. They know that the mouse controls the computer, and use it click on shapes before using the 'fill tool' to design their own caterpillar. Children are fully absorbed in their own culture and enjoy learning about others.

## Physical development

72. Opportunities for physical development have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. Before entering the adjoining nursery class, many children have had few opportunities to develop regular climbing and balancing skills. They use the fixed climbing 'train' eagerly and, depending on the weather, use the limited selection of larger resources. They demonstrate good balancing skills using pogo sticks, 'stilts' and a space hopper. They await the forthcoming development of a secure area to use bikes and trikes. Children show a greater awareness of space, and use and move apparatus safely in the hall. Their listening skills are good and they follow instructions sensibly. Clear focussed targets enable children with individual education plans to make good progress when climbing and balancing. Physical development is given a high priority and all children have frequent opportunities to develop their skills. They respond very positively to the very good teaching and most have already exceeded the early learning goals expected for their age. Increased finger and hand control are developing through handling small objects such as making buns and exploring different textures, completing jigsaws, and working with construction sets. Children use scissors safely. Pencils and a range of media, such as crayons, playdough and paints, are used well to record pictorially.

## Creative development

73. Examples of last year's work and photographs on display indicate that the teacher provides children with a rich environment for creative development in which skills are developed step by step. Although starting school with a limited range of previous experiences, most children respond enthusiastically to the very good teaching and are on course to have achieved expected levels by the time they move to Year 1. Role-play is given a high priority and encourages imaginative play. Good teaching encourages children to develop a love of music and they enjoy playing a range of untuned percussion instruments. Children enjoy singing, as was seen when they sang an action song to warm up for their hall activity. More opportunities for children to experience colour through the medium of paint have been created since the previous inspection. During the inspection, children mixed colour confidently, with higher attainers being aware of the changes that take place. Children are proud of their achievements and enjoy these activities, which they are most eager to share with others.

## ENGLISH

74. **Standards** are in line with the national average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. Nearly all pupils make sound, and in some instances good, progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Standards in the current Year 6 are not as high as those reported at the time of the previous inspection, largely because the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current class is greater. **Standards in national tests** in Year 6 in 2002 were well below the national average, but had been rising steadily for five years. The test results were similar to those attained in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds. The school did not reach the very challenging targets it had set, but is making a determined effort to reach them in 2003. The results in 2002 in the Year 2 national tests showed a considerable improvement over 2001 and continued the upward trend

of the past three years. Standards in reading in Year 2 were in line with the national average and well above those achieved in similar schools. Standards in writing were below average, but were in line with those in similar schools.

75. Pupils in Year 2 are working at nationally expected levels for speaking and listening, reading and writing. Overall standards of literacy are close to expected levels. Some pupils are achieving higher levels of attainment in listening and reading. This is because teachers expect and make sure pupils listen carefully, and have used the approaches in the National Literacy Strategy effectively to raise standards in reading. The majority make sound progress but some make good progress. Many pupils in Year 6 are working at nationally expected levels for listening but the vast majority are below the level typically expected in speaking, reading and writing. However, they make sound progress and some make good progress. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the group have made good progress in relation to their starting points in September. Pupils in Year 3 have made slower progress largely due to teacher absence. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 are well placed to achieve nationally expected standards by the time they complete Year 6.
76. Pupils increasingly show confidence in **talking, and listen** carefully to their teachers and each other. In Years 1 and 2 many speak in sentences but some lower attaining pupils still use single words and phrases to answer questions. Speaking and listening skills are developed effectively through appropriate class activities in literacy and other lessons, when pupils are expected to share their ideas, explain their thoughts and feelings, and to listen to others. Pupils spoke in an open and friendly manner with inspectors and, in the case of higher attaining pupils, talked animatedly about their work. For example, a pupil in Year 2 who was very enthusiastic about reading and was keen to draw the inspector's attention to all the "hard words" in his book. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from additional adult support and encouragement, which helps them to contribute confidently in lessons. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 generally listen well and this helps them learn more effectively. Speaking skills in Years 3 to 6 are improving but current standards in Year 6 are below national expectations. Pupils, however, make at least sound and sometimes good progress. Pupils are generally willing to make contributions to class discussions, especially the boys, and try hard to use new vocabulary to explain their ideas. The good relationships shared with teachers encourage them to express themselves without fear of appearing silly or making mistakes, and they gain confidence through practice.
77. Pupils are increasingly confident in **reading** aloud and talking about the books they read. Reading skills in Year 1 and Year 2 are in line with national expectations, and although they are improving in Years 3 to 6, standards are below national expectations in the current Year 6. Pupils read with good expression, intonation and sound understanding throughout the school, but particularly in Years 1 and 2, where pupils are gaining from early experience of the National Literacy Strategy. This is largely because all teachers read aloud effectively and demonstrate how punctuation and the size of the font influences how a text is read. All pupils are gaining confidence in reading new words because letter sounds are well taught and pupils are encouraged to break words into syllables. This is developed effectively through the Phonic Awareness Training (PAT) programme. Higher attaining readers remember their teachers' advice to read on to the end of the sentence, and go back and make an intelligent



guess at a word they do not know. Many demonstrate that they think carefully about the meaning of what they are reading and self-correct when what they read does not make sense. Pupils who have limited skills in reading are supported well by teachers, teaching assistants and, in some cases, voluntary helpers. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to develop their skills and read an appropriate range of books. Teachers use a wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts in literacy lessons and encourage pupils to 'read between the lines' to infer and deduce meaning. They are shown how to make best use of the library and use the laptop computers to develop their skimming skills and ability to access the Internet and CD-ROMs to carry out research.

78. **Pupils' writing** is in line with national standards in Year 2, but below in Year 6. Overall progress is sound and sometimes good, with the exception of Year 3, where there has been some lack of progress due to teacher absence. There is an appropriate range of opportunities for writing but the National Literacy Strategy is not used as effectively as it might be to plan units of work and individual lessons that link work on writing composition, grammar, punctuation and spelling together within the lesson. Expectations of pupils' presentation and care are too low across the whole school, and teacher absence has particularly affected the quality of books in Year 3. Year 2 pupils set out and communicate their ideas in a variety of written forms, but punctuation of sentences is not secure and they write in a conversational style with spellings that rely mainly on their knowledge of sounds. Pupils mostly make sound progress through Years 3 to 6. Year 6 pupils write to communicate their ideas to the reader but pay insufficient attention to structuring, organising and punctuating their work. Descriptive language is still limited and in some cases a conversational style persists. Teachers do not demand a high enough standard of handwriting. Many pupils make no attempt to join letters long after they gain control of letter formation. There is little use of ink. Pupils with special educational needs generally receive helpful support through a good range of strategies and resources. For example, teaching assistants provide good support in lessons and in delivering additional literacy teaching to small groups. Consequently these pupils progress as well as and sometimes better than other pupils.
79. Pupils increasingly apply their literacy skills in other lessons. The strategies used to raise standards in reading are beginning to take effect and are enabling pupils to understand more difficult or complex texts in other subjects and, for example, to read instructions in science lessons more accurately. Other literacy skills are used appropriately to write a range of reports and factual accounts, take notes and label diagrams.
80. Overall the **quality of teaching** is sound, often with some good features. Classrooms are bright and cheerful with useful displays that support learning effectively. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well, and pupils listen carefully and get on with their tasks. Pupils are valued and respected by all the adults in the school, and praise and encouragement are widespread. Relationships are excellent, and pupils contribute willingly in lessons without fear of failure. Often their appreciation of the teacher's sense of humour and fun, as seen in a Year 4 lesson, help them to enjoy the lesson more. Teachers improve pupils' reading through demonstrating how to read with expression and with attention to meaning. Letter sounds are often well taught, especially in Year 1. In good lessons, teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' participation and learning in the whole class sessions, as well as

working well with individuals or groups on set tasks. In the best lessons, teachers explain clearly, ask searching questions to improve and assess pupils' understanding, and give precise instructions so that pupils are able to work independently and confidently.

81. When teaching is less effective teachers do not share with pupils exactly what it is they will know, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson. Pupils may know what they are doing, but not what they are learning as a result. When teachers are unclear about what they expect the pupils to learn in the lesson, the independent group tasks are less focused. Similarly, unless the teacher is clear what will be learned by the end of the lesson and brings pupils together to check out the gains made in learning, the final part of the session is less effective. Often the final part of the lesson focuses on what pupils have done, rather than being an opportunity to establish what pupils have learned. A few teachers do not use some of the teaching approaches recommended by the National Literacy Strategy to their full effect. There are missed opportunities to demonstrate clearly to pupils how to write in particular styles and to work with them to guide and share writing. Consequently pupils are not gaining a good understanding of the skills needed to structure, organise and punctuate their writing, and many use a limited range of vocabulary. The school's interpretation of drafting writing and the use of drafting and final draft books is confused in several classes. Pupils are not explicitly taught the skills of drafting, revising and editing their work. Sometimes work is corrected by the teacher, but pupils' involvement after the initial piece of writing is usually no more than copying it out 'in best'. In some classes there is insufficient planning for differing ability groups of pupils, especially those capable of working at higher levels. Occasionally explanations about independent tasks are too long and confused, and pupils are not clear about what they have to do when they move from the carpet. The quality of marking varies considerably but is generally encouraging. Pupils are often told what they have done well and sometimes there is advice on how to improve.
82. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator works with the headteacher to analyse data and has identified the areas for improvement correctly. She recognises the improvements that have been made in recent years but is clear about the need to continue to raise standards, particularly in writing. She has experience of monitoring planning, teaching and pupils' work and this has helped inform her view on the quality of provision and standards in the school. There are useful procedures for assessing pupils' learning but the assessment information is not used to full effect to set clear targets for pupils' learning within and by the end of the school year, linked to the nationally agreed descriptions of levels of attainment. The co-ordinator manages a budget and the very attractive library, as well as a good range of books and resources. These are helping to improve pupils' attitudes to reading. Laptops are increasingly used so that pupils can improve a range of writing, spelling and reading skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. Standards are in line with the national average in Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, and reflects teachers' increased skills and confidence in teaching numeracy, and the successful implementation of the national strategy. Pupils make satisfactory or better progress in all classes. Those with special educational needs are supported effectively, are fully involved in all class activities and make good progress. There is no

significant difference in the progress of girls and boys. **Standards in national tests** in Year 6 in 2002 were well below the national average but have been rising steadily for five years. The test results were similar to those attained in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds. The school did not reach the very challenging targets it had set, but is making a determined effort to reach them in 2003. The results in 2002 in the Year 2 national tests showed a considerable improvement over 2001 and continued the upward trend of the past three years. Standards were below average, but were above average with those in similar schools.

84. Most pupils in Year 2 can count on and back in twos quickly and accurately, and identify odd and even numbers. They are beginning to understand place value and can sequence numbers to 100 correctly, complete simple addition and subtraction problems, recognise a range of simple shapes, and many can tell the time accurately using a clock with hands. Pupils are less sure in applying their mathematical skills in new situations because they do not have enough opportunities for practice. Lower attaining pupils practise simple addition and subtraction with numbers up to 20, recognise reflective symmetry and can sort and organise simple data. Pupils with special education needs are given good support. They use number confidently to 10, name common two-dimensional shapes, and use information recorded by tallying to create simple block graphs.
85. Pupils in Year 6 have a very good understanding of place value to 1000 and most can work confidently with numbers involving decimal places. They have learnt to use and record a number of strategies for solving problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. However, the more able children are constrained by having to use problem solving recording 'frames' rather than design and test their own strategies. They are able to 'partition' or split up numbers, which enables them to answer quick fire questions such as  $34 \times 38$  accurately and explain the process they used. Their mathematical skill of estimation is good and this helps them to establish whether their answer is reasonable. They have a good understanding of ratio and proportion, and use fractions and percentages to calculate quantities. They measure perimeters and calculate areas of shapes by using formulae accurately, and to know the angle sum of a triangle.
86. Lower attaining pupils can calculate simple percentages and solve word problems. They can use a protractor to measure angles and record information on line graphs. The high levels of support for pupils with special educational needs ensure that they are fully involved in all class and group activities. Pupils with statements of educational need are taught the same skills as others. Their self-esteem remains high, as they feel valued by both adults and pupils. They can use computer software to estimate, measure and check angles, and calculate perimeter and area by counting squares. There is a register of gifted and talented pupils, and opportunities are taken to extend their skills as in the neighbourhood mathematics master class.
87. Overall the **quality of teaching** was satisfactory in Years 1-2, and good in Years 3-6. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. Each class has a daily mathematics lesson which focuses on developing pupils' numeracy skills and there is consistent use of the recommended sections for each lesson. The

mental and oral introductions are good. Although pupils are set appropriate tasks in the main part of the lesson to match their varying abilities, these are not always sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils in some classes. The summing up part of the lesson is used to check levels of knowledge and understanding. In the best lessons this session is also used to extend the pupils' learning.

88. Lessons are well planned. Pupils are told what they will have learned by the end of the lesson and resources are carefully prepared. Where teaching is good or better, teachers have good subject knowledge and know how to implement the National Numeracy Strategy in effective and interesting ways that encourage their pupils to make good progress. Questions are probing so that pupils learn to evaluate their mathematical strategies and refine their thinking. In the best lessons there is a good match between the level of challenge and the mathematical understanding of different groups of pupils. The most able pupils in Year 4, for example, were given the opportunity to provide their own questions, whilst the least able were able to tackle problems successfully because of the skilled support from a teaching assistant. Where teaching was less effective, pupils were not expected to explain their reasoning and the level of challenge was inconsistent.
89. Pupils learn effectively because most teaching is stimulating and they get caught up in the activities. They like mathematics and are consistently well behaved. Pupils are attentive and eager to answer questions. They agree that 'maths is fun' and respond well to a challenge. A good example was seen in Year 5 when pupils used their knowledge of area to find the size of an irregular shape. Although the activities change, some lessons for younger pupils require too much sitting on the carpet and they lose concentration. Basic skills are taught rigorously because teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. Relationships are very good. Pupils work well with each other and the adults in the classroom. They remain on task and are eager to share their understanding. The quality of marking varies from teacher to teacher. In the best examples the work contains a written comment that encourages the pupils, and indicates how they might improve. Other teachers limit the marking to ticks and, in a few examples, past work had not been marked. Although individual targets are set for pupils, there is no reference to them in pupils' books. Homework is set regularly to reinforce and build on work done in school. In most classes work is presented neatly. ICT was only seen used in one class during the inspection. Little use is made of the library to extend pupils' understanding of numeracy.
90. Mathematics has been a focus for development since the last inspection. The recently appointed deputy headteacher is providing good **leadership for the subject**. She is very aware of the need to raise standards, especially those of higher attainers, and has established good systems for analysing test papers to identify gaps in pupils' understanding. An action plan identifying priorities for improvement was already in place at the time of her appointment, and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has provided her with secure information concerning the quality of provision across the school. She has a clear grasp of professional development needs of the staff and has provided in-service training to address them. She has recently purchased additional classroom equipment and materials to improve the quality and range of resources. Mathematical game packs for parents to use with their children are a useful additional resource in the school.

## SCIENCE

91. Standards are in line with national averages in Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement in Year 6 from the time of the previous inspection. However, the standards and presentation of work in pupils' current science books did not always reflect the high expectations of teachers or the enjoyment that pupils showed when carrying out investigations during the inspection. There was very little difference between the standards for boys and girls. Progress has been satisfactory overall, with some pupils making greater progress. Those with special educational needs are supported effectively, are fully involved in all class activities and make good progress. **Standards in national tests** in Year 6 in 2002 were well below the national average but have been rising steadily for five years. The test results were similar to those attained in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds. Teachers estimated that standards in science in Year 2 were close to those expected nationally, and had improved since the previous year.
92. Pupils in Year 1 know that forces are present when pushing and pulling, and have considered whether materials are hard or soft, rough or smooth, or dull or shiny. Year 2 pupils have carried out investigations on forces with enthusiasm and growing confidence. They have observed, measured and recorded the movement of vehicles down slopes, investigated the effects of 'friction' on different surfaces and levels and explored altering the length of pendulums. Pupils have begun to predict what would happen before recording their findings.
93. Pupils in Year 3 have explored the suitability and properties of materials used for clothing, including durability and the absorption of water. They knew how to look after their teeth and recorded their own eating habits at home before recording their favourite foods. There was a growing understanding of what constituted a 'fair test', and predictions were becoming more accurate as a result. The quality and quantity of work in Year 4 was good, and knowledge of the properties of materials has improved. Pupils knew which materials were more suitable to keep you warm, and pupils have recorded temperatures in order to find which areas of the school were the warmest. Previous work for all pupils in Year 4, including those with special educational needs, was well presented, and recording was beginning to reveal a variety of recording styles. Pupils in Years 3-6, including those with statements of special educational need, have become increasingly more confident when describing what makes a fair test. In discussion, pupils in Year 5 showed a good understanding when classifying food into protein and minerals, carbohydrates, and fats, and were aware of what makes a healthy diet and a healthy body. In Year 6, work on forces has been recorded in 'Newtons', as when recording upward thrust. They have investigated the effects of change, and knew that it can be reversible or irreversible.
94. There has been much improvement in the development of investigation and exploration skills since the previous inspection. The very recent 'Science Day' provided an exciting range of investigations. Pupils were still buzzing from their experiences and were eager to describe to inspectors how they made the testing 'fair', and what they would do next time to improve. There are satisfactory links with numeracy and literacy. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are encouraged to use charts and tables to record their findings. There was little evidence of older

pupils using pie charts or line graphs. Usually, pupils showed good listening skills and were confident when replying to questions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have developed more choice when recording their findings although many were allowed to print rather than using the expected joint script. The use of worksheets in Year 6 does not help to promote the quality nor quantity of writing. ICT was underused during the period of the inspection.

95. Overall, the quality of **teaching and learning** seen during the inspection was satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2, and good in Years 3-6. Very good teaching was seen in Years 4 and 6. The most effective teaching happened when teachers knew the subject material well enough to build on what pupils already knew, understood and could do and, more importantly, planned for pupils to use their skills to investigate and explore their ideas. Teachers used technical language and questions effectively, asking ‘How would you test that?’ and ‘What could you do next?’ Overall, pupils made at least satisfactory progress with some very good progress in Years 4 and 6. Generally, pupils worked well together. They thrived when activities were closely matched to their abilities, and when the pace of lessons was brisk and the level of challenge was high. Where teaching was only satisfactory pupils did not concentrate so hard, and time was often used to give information rather than to allow pupils to find out for themselves. Pupils were well behaved and, when carrying out investigations, claimed ‘science is fun’. This added significantly to the quality and pace of teaching and learning. Lesson planning has improved since the previous inspection but does not indicate in enough detail what each ability group, especially the higher attainers, is to learn. Teachers now use national guidelines to support science teaching. This has given consistency to the order of investigations which pupils experience term on term and year on year. The effective use of teaching assistants has improved the quality of learning, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
96. Science is managed well by the subject co-ordinator. Appropriate curricular guidelines, based on nationally produced materials, have been more closely matched to the needs of the school. The co-ordinator manages and orders high quality resources. She has analysed the results of previous national tests, provided evidence of what pupils should be aiming to achieve, and has identified which areas should be developed first. She has produced a realistic action plan that includes the improvement of recording skills. She is aware of the need for the increased use of ICT to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She understands that science provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and writing skills, which continue to be a school priority. The vital monitoring of teaching and learning is at its early stages and has yet to have an effect on standards. The recent introduction of procedures to check what pupils know, understand and can do at the end of each term is well placed to enable teachers to set targets for each ability group and provide more challenge in the learning. There is now a good marking policy but it has yet to be applied consistently in all classes. At its best, marking informs pupils when they have achieved their targets and then prepares them for further challenges. The library contains a suitable range of scientific reference books for pupils to use to extend their individual understanding.

## ART AND DESIGN

97. Although only two art and design lessons were observed during the inspection, a review of examples of past work on display, an analysis of pupils' sketch books and teachers' long term planning, and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils, demonstrate that standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected nationally. Skills are taught effectively, and the high quality of finished work reported at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. Not enough lessons were observed during the inspection to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge in the lessons seen, relationships were very good and pupils were managed very effectively. Teachers intervened appropriately to praise achievement, and searching questions prompted deeper thought. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, were highly motivated, worked hard and made appropriate progress.
98. Art and design plays an important part in pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Very good behaviour and their willingness to work well together and support each other, added significantly to the quality of their learning. Pupils from Year 6 willingly shared their experiences, skills and techniques in discussion. They explained the order in which light and dark colours should be mixed, when to use a thick or a thin brush, and the influences of a range of famous artists. In the Year 6 lesson, pupils used their sketchbooks to 'trial' colour mixing and were selective about the results they achieved. They talked about the 'swirls' used by Van Gogh and the colours used by Matisse. Pupils' work based on the work of Clarice Cliff is stunning. These examples are proudly displayed in the entrance, and have recently been on display in the Phoenix Theatre. Previous studies of aboriginal and Peruvian art, together with the making of African masks, have extended pupils' cultural horizons. Pupils in Years 2 and 5 have used the 'fill' tool on their laptops to re-produce the work of famous artists.
99. There are very close connections with design and technology, and the overall quality of design has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils thrive on the value which teachers place on their work and are eager to participate in club activities and competitions. Pupils' work is very well displayed around the building and adds to the stimulating learning environment. The school is rightly proud of its 'Artsmark' award. Visiting artists are used effectively to work with pupils and have strengthened the quality of art. Appropriate links are made to ICT, and the library contains several books that illustrate the work of famous artists.
100. The co-ordinator has a good overview of standards through a regular scrutiny of teachers' work portfolios, but has yet to extend her understanding by monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in other classes. Manageable assessment procedures are used to highlight the needs of groups of pupils and she plans to talk to groups of pupils in all classes to determine what and how they learn. Resources are well managed, accessible and are of a good quality and quantity. There is a register of gifted and talented pupils, and opportunities are taken to extend their skills during club activities for art.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. A judgement on standards in design and technology in Year 2 and Year 6 has been made after observing two lessons, reviewing examples of past work on display, a review of planning, and by talking to the co-ordinator and pupils. The evidence indicates that standards are typical of those expected for the pupils' age and that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make appropriate progress. The apparent lower standard since the previous inspection is due mainly to the reduction of the time available because of the increased demands of the curriculum. Design and technology lessons are alternated with art and design, thus reducing the opportunities to build on and practise skills, term-on-term and year-on-year. Standards in the design element have improved since the previous inspection by time pupils reach Year 6.
102. Pupils in Year 6 are knowledgeable about the skills needed for design and technology. They emphasised the need for planning and talked from their experiences about the properties of materials. They shared their strategies and techniques confidently, for example when choosing the most suitable adhesive to join a variety of materials. They obviously enjoyed their activities and shared how they would improve next time, an essential requirement of designing and making. Links between design and technology and science have been promoted, as during the recent Science Day when pupils designed musical instruments, built the tallest 'egg tower' and constructed a container to protect an egg.
103. **The quality of teaching** is at least satisfactory and there were some good features in the two lessons seen during the inspection. Teachers gave clear instructions, managed pupils well, and used questioning effectively to check on gains in skills and understanding. Pupils in Year 4 reasoned confidently why paper was less successful than card when investigating levers as part of their topic on 'moving pictures'. Pupils enjoyed their activities and were proud of their achievements. They measured accurately and handled tools safely. Teachers have high expectations and pupils are aware of the need to aim for a quality finish to their work. They grow in confidence as a result of the excellent relationships and the value which teachers attribute to their work. Pupils' personal and social skills are very good and they respond well when evaluating the quality of their work and deciding how to improve. There are many opportunities to share ideas when working together, and their levels of discussion are good.
104. The co-ordinator has adapted long term planning by matching national recommendations more closely to the needs of the school, and has introduced a system of assessing what most pupils know, understand and can do, as well as identifying those who have exceeded, or are yet to gain essential skills. She manages the good level of resources well and has a clear vision of how to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This includes grasping the planned opportunity to influence standards by monitoring teaching and learning. Pupils make some use of ICT, to label diagrams or write out the sequence in which a design will be turned into a product. Books in the library explain how various machines work, which helps pupils to understand the design process.



## GEOGRAPHY

105. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations, and the levels of attainment reported at the time of previous inspection have been maintained. Pupils of all ability, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress as they move through the school.
106. Year 2 pupils have studied their local area and have evaluated what they like about it in simple terms. They can draw simple routes from home to school. They are currently studying a contrasting locality, the Isles of Scilly, and can identify the human and physical features of an island. They use maps and posters effectively to find out more information. Pupils were able to place human features on a map using co-ordinates. They can identify geographical features, houses, roads, shops and rivers, and know that an island is surrounded by water.
107. Older pupils are acquiring sound mapping skills, and can understand maps of different scales and use a key. In the Year 5 lesson observed, pupils studied road maps to find where they live, and used directional language and co-ordinates to identify different places. In Year 4, pupils have drawn a scale map of a village in India, identifying similarities and differences with Whitleigh. In Year 6, pupils study rivers and valleys, and have carried out a river study on a field trip. During discussion, Year 6 pupils demonstrated a good understanding of river formation. They have studied the immediate locality and talked confidently about environmental change and land use.
108. **The quality of teaching** was satisfactory in the two lessons observed. In both, the teachers emphasised the appropriate geographical vocabulary and used a variety of resources to engage pupils' interest. For example, the Year 5 teacher had recorded a video of a different locality to develop an awareness of how places relate to each other. Although there were examples of good practice, not all work is differentiated and pupils' books in some classes, Years 1 and 2 for example, show that they have been set the same things to do. This means that some higher attaining pupils are not stretched and lower ability pupils are disadvantaged because of their poor literacy skills. Pupils enjoy geography. They are eager to answer questions and to contribute ideas. They work well in pairs and independently, and attitudes and behaviour are good.
109. The enthusiastic co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject. Geography is a current priority for the school and she has drawn up a focused action plan for the development of the subject. This has started well. Priorities were identified through a systematic audit of what needed to be done urgently. These included pupil interviews, which highlighted the need for more opportunities for field trips and more 'hands-on' experiences, and has influenced the way the budget is to be spent. The co-ordinator has made good use of the national scheme of work for geography and has adapted it in the light of the review and increased teacher confidence. Planning is now matched more closely to pupils' needs and prior knowledge and understanding. The co-ordinator meets regularly with staff to look at units of work and discuss how they could best be taught. This boosts their confidence. Pupil progress is tracked and she has started to put together a portfolio to illustrate the order in

which skills should be taught. Learning resources are satisfactory. The library, Internet and CD-ROMs are used appropriately for individual research.

## **HISTORY**

110. The limited time available during the inspection and the organisation of the school's timetable meant that no lessons were observed and it was not possible to make a judgement about the overall quality of teaching. A sample of pupils' work from each year group and work on display around the school, and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils, indicate that standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally and have been maintained since the previous inspection.
111. Pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding about the difference between present and past. They are developing historical skills and gaining knowledge about the past. Pupils in Year 1 worked with their parents to complete a questionnaire about the toys their parents played with as children. They have compared teddy bears from Victorian times and the present, and identified that the materials had changed as well as the design. Pupils in Year 2 recalled the life of Florence Nightingale and wrote an account of life in a hospital at that time.
112. Pupils in Year 6 have studied a range of topics and have a sound understanding of chronology. They have developed skills in using evidence and can extract information using different sources to find out about the past. Pupils in Year 3 studied old maps of the local area and identified what was the same today and what had changed. They made good use of ICT to answer questions about King Alfred. Year 4 pupils are currently investigating Ancient Egypt and the importance of the River Nile to their lives. Activities have included work on hieroglyphics. They have also studied life for the rich and poor in Tudor times using information from different texts and pictures. Year 5 pupils are looking at the structure of Victorian society. Their knowledge of social conditions is good. They have selected relevant information from historical sources and produced well-structured accounts. Pupils in Year 6 use ICT to extract information from CD-ROMs and the Internet in their study of Ancient Greece. Their work demonstrates their knowledge and understanding of the similarities and differences between the city states of Athens and Sparta. Pupils enjoy history and speak enthusiastically about the topics they have studied. They were able to explain the beliefs and way of life in Ancient Greece, and the influence of their civilisation on the world today.
113. The history co-ordinator is new to the role but is experienced and is developing effectively as a leader and manager. She has been able to monitor planning and has identified the lack of consistency in the use of ICT as a priority for staff professional development. She has talked to pupils to find out what they know, and plans to develop a work portfolio to ensure that all teachers have the same understanding of the standards pupils should reach in each year group. Resources are satisfactory and the library is used well to support independent research.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

114. **Standards of attainment** are in line with expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. Although this would appear to mean that pupils are working at levels similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, there have been many improvements during the past three

years and pupils now have more opportunities to learn new ICT skills systematically and to use them in every subject in the curriculum. Staff are far more skilled and confident in their use of computers and include ICT based activities in more lessons. Pupils are very keen to make progress and respond confidently in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have additional adult support, their friends are always willing to help, and the nature of the work itself gives them confidence as they do not have to worry about spellings or handwriting. The school recognises that several pupils in each class have gifts in ICT, and they are encouraged to work alongside any of the pupils who may be having difficulty. There are not enough planned opportunities in ICT lessons for gifted pupils to be set tasks at a higher level of skill so that they can fully develop their potential.

115. Pupils in Year 2 log onto their computers confidently, enter and edit text correctly, and save what they have completed at the end of the session. They create block graphs by entering data into a computer program and use the results to illustrate how far the various vehicles they had made in a design and technology lesson could travel. Pupils in Year 6 understand the Internet, and demonstrated this by finding websites so that they could compare the characteristics of African and Indian elephants, look up that day's weather in London, and access City of Plymouth tourist information. They communicate information effectively through word-processed texts and e-mails, and have used several programs to control events or explore ideas. A good example was seen when Year 6 used a program to make traffic lights change colour in the correct order and with appropriate timings for each stage. Higher attaining pupils were able to add green and red pedestrian lights to complete the exercise.
116. **The quality of teaching** is good overall. Most teachers have a secure knowledge of the software. Skills are taught methodically, as was seen when Year 1 worked effectively and systematically to learn the 'save and close-down' procedures. The pupils were attentive, thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and all made good progress. The teaching was very good in Year 4 because the pupils were highly motivated, each step was taught rigorously, and pupils were amazed at what they could do. Progress was very good because pupils were determined to be successful. Teachers are starting to make good cross-curricular links, as when Year 2 started a lesson about the colour-fill tool with examples of paintings by Mondrian. The quality of teaching was satisfactory rather than good when pupils complete the planned work faster than anticipated and were given 'more of the same' rather than being set work that took their understanding to the next level.
117. The school has made a very innovative and successful decision to equip itself with laptops rather than a suite of computer workstations. The ICT room is equipped with an electronic whiteboard which enables the teacher to sit comfortably with her own laptop and show the pupils how to develop their skills by projecting an image of her screen onto the whiteboard. There are enough laptops for each pupil in a class to have one of their own for a skills teaching lesson. Additional laptops are available during the week for group use in class lessons in other subjects, and pupils report that this "makes learning better." The laptops are all linked to the main server and printers by wireless, and hard copies can be produced quickly on class printers.

118. The subject is currently led by the headteacher, in the absence of the co-ordinator. He brings considerable expertise to the subject and is involved in City-wide initiatives for ICT. Standards are assessed on an annual basis, and indicate that they are rising steadily year-on-year. The governing body has invested in the part-time employment of an ICT technician. This is proving very beneficial, and allows teachers to concentrate on teaching ICT skills rather than worrying about why some computers go off line. The governing body has taken all the necessary measures to ensure that pupils are unable to access inappropriate websites when using the Internet. The school intends to establish computer workstations in the library to add to the range of opportunities for personal research.

## MUSIC

119. **Standards** are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6, and are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils make steady progress. Those with special educational needs are encouraged to take a full part in group discussions and practical sessions by the teaching assistants. A good example was seen in Year 1 where the teaching assistant worked closely with one pupil so that, to his great enjoyment, he was able to play his instrument in correct time with the rest of the class.
120. Standards of singing in Year 2 and Year 6 are appropriate for their ages. Pupils sing tunefully in lessons, assemblies and in the weekly hymn practice. No part-singing was heard during the inspection period, and the choir has not met this term due to the illness of the co-ordinator. Year 2 pupils have a good sense of rhythm and can maintain the beat in accompaniments. Year 6 pupils have a basic knowledge of standard notation, and understand the 'shorthand' ciphers used to indicate 'soft', 'loud' and other instructions to the player. Pupils in both classes enjoy listening to music and talking about what they have heard.
121. **The quality of teaching** is satisfactory, and is good in some individual lessons. The school makes good use of a commercial scheme. Pupils accept this positively, and sing happily to a taped accompaniment and listen carefully to a range of recorded music. Where teaching is good, as was seen in Year 1, teachers use the commercial tapes very effectively by stopping, starting and explaining the work confidently so that pupils listen intently, perform better after practice, and enjoy making music together. The teaching in Year 1 was particularly strong because of the way the teacher introduced a wide range of untuned percussion instruments, and helped the pupils to 'compose' a variety of sounds that would fit the mood of different passages within the song they were learning.
122. The subject is temporarily led and managed by the headteacher. The co-ordinator has produced a realistic appraisal of current strengths and areas for development, and is keen to see the subject develop further. The concerns in the previous report about policies and a scheme of work have been addressed successfully through the purchase of the commercial programme. Pupils have opportunities to learn a range of individual instruments including keyboards, recorders, guitar, violin and flute. Although some use is made of ICT to access sites on the Internet, the school does not yet use composition programs. Tape recorders were not used during the inspection week to enable pupils to hear their own work and decide

how it might be improved. The library has an appropriate range of books about famous composers and the instruments of the orchestra.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Standards are in line with national expectations for Year 2 and Year 6, and are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils make sound, and on occasion, good, progress. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all activities and make similar progress to the rest of their year group. The school meets the requirements for standards in swimming.
124. Pupils in Year 2 work together safely and with enthusiasm in gymnastics, and understand the reasons for warming up and cooling down at the start and end of a session. They demonstrate increasing control by linking their actions together and trying hard to create a fluid sequence of movement. Pupils are well behaved and self-disciplined. Relationships are excellent and they work together sensibly, sharing mats readily. They talk about their actions and suggest ways of improving their work. Pupils in Year 6 create, practise, repeat and refine their movements in dance. They remember sequences and show increasing control and accuracy in lessons. Pupils work well in pairs to create, develop and perform a simple dance. They enjoy observing others' performance, watch carefully and make simple judgements about what was good and what might be improved. This helps them to make changes in their own expressive movements.
125. Dance, gymnastics and games lessons were observed during the inspection. **The quality of teaching** is satisfactory overall with some good features. Teachers change for physical education and therefore model appropriate and safe dress for pupils. Pupils are expected and encouraged to participate. A lack of kit is no excuse for not undertaking some physical activity, albeit walking round the pitch while the physical education lesson is underway. Strengths in teaching include clear expectations of pupils' behaviour, involvement and response during lessons. Teachers not only demonstrate what pupils need to do but often join in. This was a very useful strategy for helping some Year 6 pupils, for example, to overcome their natural shyness in participating in dance. The teachers' own enthusiasm also helps pupils persist in making an effort. Again, in the Year 6 lesson, this was a significant factor in developing good pace and momentum, and enabled pupils to really enjoy themselves by the end of the session. Teachers usually provide good, appropriately timed opportunities for pupils to practise skills individually, in small groups and then in larger groups. This was seen in a Year 5 netball lesson. Lessons are less effective when the purpose of the activities is not shared with pupils. They know what they are doing in the particular lesson but not why, and are less clear about the gains in learning they will take forward to future lessons. Also, insufficient emphasis is given to helping pupils see how they can improve through practice and by refining movements.
126. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator makes excellent use of links with local schools, local coaching opportunities, for example with Plymouth Argyle and Plymouth Albion, as well as training and funding through the national Primary Link Teacher initiative. He also ensures that pupils have the opportunity to be involved in local

competitions and matches. Effective use is made of a good range of resources, which are stored carefully so pupils can access them and develop good routines that help lessons move at a good pace. The co-ordinator is imaginative in seeking to make the best of grants and opportunities to improve the provision, for example, in extending the playing fields available to pupils. He makes sensible use of informal and formal opportunities to monitor teaching and pupils' learning. As headteacher, the co-ordinator has identified the future benefits to be gained through appointing a physical education specialist to the staff. There is a register of gifted and talented pupils, and opportunities are taken to extend their skills during club activities sport.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the levels expected in the locally agreed syllabus, and are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' books indicate that they make satisfactory progress but, because much of the work set is similar, pupils capable of higher attainment do not get enough opportunities to explore ideas or facts at a more challenging level. There are exceptions, as was seen in Year 3, where pupils were given a range of tasks, including research on the Internet, that interested and stretched them at the correct level of difficulty. Pupils with special educational needs also make appropriate progress because they are well supported by teaching assistants and become fully involved in all the class activities.
128. Pupils in Year 2 have a good recall of the main Christian festivals, especially Christmas and Easter, and several stories from the Old Testament. They understand the concept of Christian baptism, and linked it to John the Baptist. They know the story of Moses, and were fascinated to learn how modern Jews celebrate the Passover. Pupils in Year 6 have a mature attitude to faith, one commenting that religion was important because "people need a hope." They respect the beliefs of others, and their own rights to believe, or not, without pressure. This is important to them, and reflects the school's explicit aims and values, and successful removal of oppressive attitudes. Year 6 pupils have an appropriate understanding of the basic facts of the life of Jesus, and know why Easter is the most important Christian festival. They recalled some of the facts they had learned about Hinduism, and especially valued being able to meet a Hindu visitor who had made his faith alive and interesting.
129. It was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection but the evidence from this and the pupils' books indicates that **standards of teaching** are sound. The lesson observed was good because the stimulating resources caught the pupils' interest. They looked at the seder or Passover plate with great interest, and were later able to recall in detail how the meal would be set out. Good use was made of an informative video and reference texts to give the pupils a range of ways in which to extend their understanding. Teachers are starting to make greater use of the Internet and other ICT based resources to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. The library contains an interesting range of books about all the major world faiths and a good display in the corridor, drew pupils' attention to a number of world faiths.
130. The co-ordinator is well informed. She is aware that, while pupils' general attitudes to religious education are appropriate, they do not approach it with the same enthusiasm as they

do other subjects. She is keen to make sure that pupils gain a wider understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths, and to develop the curriculum so that it has a higher status in pupils' eyes. The school supports several charities enthusiastically, and links this to the Christian concept of giving and sacrifice. Resources are good, and classes have visited a local synagogue as well as the parish church.