

INSPECTION REPORT

OLD PRIORY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Plympton

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113320

Headteacher: Rob Pippen

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill
19623

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 July 2003

Inspection number: 247347

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Ridgeway Plympton Plymouth Devon
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mark Newnham
Date of previous inspection:	12 January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19623	Michael Cahill	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9079	Ann Moss	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
8864	Peter Clifton	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
13122	Stephanie Matthews	Team inspector	English Art and design History Educational inclusion English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN SUBJECTS	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Old Priory Junior School provides education for children aged 7 to 11 years. It is situated near the centre of Plympton in an area of mainly owner-occupied housing. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is below the national average. The school is average in size; there are 277 children on roll (138 boys and 139 girls). There are eight classes, two in each of Years 3 to 6. Almost all children are of white UK heritage and there are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average, while the proportion with full statements is above the national average. Pupils' special educational needs include emotional and behavioural as well as learning difficulties. The school has also identified a number of children whose ability is significantly above average in one or more areas of learning. Overall, attainment on entry is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Old Priory Junior is a good and improving school, which effectively enables pupils to make good progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) and to develop good attitudes to learning. The school's results in the national tests for 2002 were well above the average for similar schools nationally. Achievement in other subjects is not as good. The overall quality of teaching is good and the school provides a good level of personal support and guidance for all its pupils. Leadership and management are good overall, with the contribution of the headteacher being excellent. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in mathematics and science is well above the national expectation; in English and ICT it is above expectations.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, teaching assistants provide good support and children learn well.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development.
- The school successfully promotes good behaviour, good attitudes to learning and very good relationships among its pupils.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs; the school is good at including all children in its work.
- The school is a caring community and all children benefit from good support and guidance.
- The headteacher and other key staff provide good leadership and management directed towards raising standards; the governing body provides very good support through the way that it fulfils its responsibilities.
- The school maintains good links with parents and encourages them to be involved in its work.

What could be improved

- Standards in most foundation subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education.
- The contribution of co-ordinators in some subjects to raising standards.
- The extent to which assessment information is used to enable teachers and pupils to set individual or group targets and plan to achieve them.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a good level of improvement since the school's last inspection in January 1998. The areas identified for improvement at that time have been effectively dealt with for the most part, but more remains to be done on making better use of assessment information. The senior management team now provides good direction to the work of the school and the role of co-ordinators has been developed; here also, however, there is more to do. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching, in National Curriculum test results, and in provision for ICT, but standards in most subjects other than the core subjects have not improved. There have been huge improvements to the building, both inside and out. The strong partnership between the headteacher, staff, governors and parents provides a very good basis for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Schools are described as similar when they fall into the same band for free school meals, in this case between 8 and 20 per cent. (The figure at Old Priory in 2002 was 9.0 per cent.)

As the above table shows, pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2002 achieved National Curriculum test results that were well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science when compared with all schools and with similar schools. The majority of pupils with special educational needs made good progress against their individual targets and achieved the national standard for their age in these tests. The proportions of more able pupils who achieved the higher than expected Level 5 were well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English. The school's results in 2002 were better than those in the school year of the last inspection; the overall trend has been one of improvement in line with the national picture. The school exceeded its target for the proportion of pupils reaching the national standard in mathematics but narrowly failed to do so in English.

The evidence from the inspection is that standards in reading are well above average and in other aspects of English above average. In mathematics, especially in number work, pupils' attainment is well above average, as it is in science; standards in ICT are above average. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, overall standards are in line with expectations, although in some areas, for example the finish applied to products in design and technology, there is evidence of work that is above average. Overall, achievement in these subjects is not as good as in the core subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to their learning. They involve themselves enthusiastically in all that the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and cheerful.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils get on well together in both work and play. They readily take responsibility for performing tasks around the school.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory, overall; most parents make sure that their children get to school on time.

Relationships are a very important strength of the school and this is largely due to the very good example set by the adults in the school community.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good so that pupils make good progress in lessons and, as they move up the school, particularly in English, mathematics, science and ICT. In other subjects progress in the lessons seen was good, and progress over time is satisfactory. During the inspection the teaching in the great majority of lessons was good or better, and in a significant number it was very good. This represents an important improvement since the last inspection. The skills of English, including literacy, and of mathematics, including numeracy, are taught well. The skills of ICT are also taught well but there is scope to provide more opportunities for pupils to use their skills to support and extend learning in other subjects.

Where teaching and learning were above average this was often because of the clarity of learning intentions, careful planning and the provision of tasks with different levels of difficulty for various groups of pupils. In such lessons teachers used questions very well to revise and extend pupils' learning and to check for understanding. There was an emphasis on not only working but also producing work of quality; there were high expectations. There are very good relationships throughout the school and these enable adults and pupils to maintain a pleasant working atmosphere in the classroom. Very good teamwork between teachers and their assistants makes a very important contribution to the success of many lessons and helps to make sure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in what is going on.

Pupils enjoy learning, listen well so that they know what they have to do and show good levels of concentration and perseverance. They organise themselves effectively and collaborate well in pairs or in larger groups. In the lessons where it is made clear to pupils what they are intended to learn and teachers feed back to them how they have got on, pupils develop a good knowledge of their own learning. This improves their self-esteem and encourages independence. As they move through the school, most pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory overall, with good priority being given to literacy and numeracy. Planning for some other subjects does not promote effectively the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is enhanced by very good provision of extra-curricular activities, including residential visits and opportunities to take part in sport and music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The support provided by teachers and teaching assistants enables pupils to make good progress towards the targets set in their individual plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Citizenship, personal, social and health education are playing an increasingly important role in the work of the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral education is good; the school recognises the need to do more to prepare pupils for life in multi-ethnic Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils and they are well supported in their learning and wider development. Teachers and the other adults who work in the school know the pupils well. Pupils' views are listened to and taken into account. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' learning in English and mathematics but the information obtained is not used effectively to set targets for individuals or small groups. Procedures in some other subjects are not closely enough linked to progress against National Curriculum targets.

The school maintains good links with parents, the great majority of whom hold positive views of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has a very clear vision for the future of the school. He is very well supported by his deputy and by the rest of the senior management team. The role of some co-ordinators in raising standards in their subjects is under-developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have very good knowledge of the school and are committed to its further development. They provide very good support and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, senior management team and the governing body keep all aspects of the school's work under continuous review. They have a very clear sense of where the school is, what needs to be improved and how.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and control are very good. Specific grants, for example for staff training or for pupils with special educational needs, are used well. The school is very successful at obtaining the best value for the financial resources allocated to it.

The overall quality of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good. The whole staff team works together very well for the benefit of the pupils and the accommodation is being imaginatively and effectively improved. Resources have been chosen well and are used well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases most parents	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good and the school has high expectations of children. • Children like school and they make good progress. • Behaviour is good and the school helps children to become mature and responsible. • The school is well managed and led and parents are comfortable about approaching it with questions or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about children's progress. • How closely the school works with them. • The amount of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by the vast majority of parents. The school is aware that it needs to improve the quality of the information given to parents and is actively seeking to work closely with all parents. Homework is making a useful contribution to improving pupils' attainment. The range and quality of activities outside lessons, at lunchtimes, after school and including visits, are very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment on entry of pupils varies from year to year but in most year groups there is a greater proportion of pupils with above average attainment than there is of pupils of lower attainment, including those with special educational needs. Overall, attainment on entry is above average in terms of national test results; in the national tests for Year 2 in 2002, those pupils in the present Year 3 who transferred from the neighbouring infant school achieved results that were above the national average.
2. In the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 in 2002, results show that pupils' attainment was well above the national average in mathematics and above average in English and science. The overall trend of results since the last inspection is one of improvement in line with the national trend. When compared with similar schools, results in English and science were above average while those for mathematics were well above average. Many pupils with special educational needs have achieved well in attaining the national expectation of Level 4. The proportion of more able pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English. The school exceeded its own target for the proportion of pupils expected to achieve Level 4 in mathematics but narrowly failed to do so in English. One of the school's main priorities in the last three years has been improving pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science and it has been successful in this. The early indications are that test results for 2003 will be of at least a similar standard to those of 2002.
3. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. They benefit from the support provided by teachers and teaching assistants, particularly in English and mathematics lessons. Through this they are fully included in lessons and their attainment is often close to national expectations by the time that they are in Year 6.
4. The inspection team judged that pupils' attainment in the English curriculum as a whole in Year 6 is above national expectations with reading skills being well above average. In mathematics and science, attainment is well above national expectations. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills in ICT are above national expectations, as they are throughout the school, as the benefits of the new provision in terms of the computer suite and improved staff skills works through; there has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, standards are in line with what is expected of pupils of this age, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The absence of improvement in these areas partly reflects the focus on improvement in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The school also recognises the need to make sure that planning for these subjects promotes the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding from one year group to the next and to consider how the time allocated to them can be best used. In religious education pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
5. Overall, standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT have improved since the time of the last inspection and pupils of all abilities make good progress in these subjects, where their achievements, relative to their attainment on entry to the school, are good. However, in most other subjects standards and achievement have not improved since the last inspection and remain no more than satisfactory overall. There have been variations in the relative performance of boys and girls in national tests over the past three years. When these are averaged out there is no significant difference, although boys have often, but not invariably, performed better than girls in mathematics. The school keeps the situation under review; no significant differences were noted during the inspection. (For further details of pupils' achievements and progress in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, see paragraphs 56 – 120.)

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. As at the last inspection, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good attitudes to school and learning. Parents report that pupils enjoy coming to school and this ensures that most arrive on time each morning. When they arrive, pupils are happy and looking forward to their day. Pupils are polite, cheerful and eager to learn. They have a positive approach to school and try hard to

meet their teachers' expectations. For example, this was evident in a Year 3 numeracy lesson when pupils were looking at fractions. They settled quickly to their tasks and showed positive attitudes to their work. The safe, welcoming and calm atmosphere provides an environment that encourages pupils to do their best and they respond well. They develop good habits of working and sustained levels of concentration were observed in many lessons. For example, this was seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson when pupils were writing letters. They concentrated well and persevered in completing their activities.

7. Behaviour in and around school is good overall except for a few incidents of boisterousness at playtimes. Occasionally, a few pupils act in immature and attention-seeking ways in the playground. More generally, when pupils are moving around the school and in lessons they do so with a minimum of fuss without wasting time. Some behaviour, for example in assemblies and some lessons, was observed to be excellent. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour, bullying or racism. The school's caring and supportive climate for learning encourages pupils to get on well together and there is good racial harmony.
8. There are very good relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults. Very good levels of co-operation and collaboration were noted in many lessons, as, for example, in a Year 6 science lesson when pupils helped each other whilst working on classification. In a Year 4 science lesson pupils also worked very well together in groups, sharing resources, whilst looking at food chains. Higher and lower-attaining pupils work very well together, readily sharing their knowledge and skills, and this helps them learn better. On occasions, pupils showed their appreciation of each other by giving spontaneous applause when one of them achieved well. They understand and follow school rules well and treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. Teachers use personal, social and health education lessons well to help pupils recognise their worth as individuals and to see themselves as others see them. Through these lessons, pupils develop an understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and learn to respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs.
9. Pupils' personal development is also very good. They readily accept responsibility for performing tasks around the school, for example in setting up the hall for assemblies, looking after younger children and acting as house captains. The pupils are being prepared for the start of the school council and the 'buddy' system, and are participating enthusiastically in these preparations.
10. Attendance levels are satisfactory. They are lower than at the time of the previous inspection but have improved a little again recently. There has been one fixed-term exclusion during the past year and the inspection team found that the exclusion process was used as a necessary strategy for the sake of the whole school community.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. On the evidence of pupils' work and the lessons observed during the inspection, the overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good, with a significant proportion that is very good. During the inspection it was good or better in just over three-quarters of lessons, including about one in six where it was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
12. The overall teaching of English, including literacy, is good, with the quality in the lessons observed ranging from satisfactory to very good. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching is almost always good. The teaching of science is almost always good or very good, while in ICT it is almost always good. Teaching in other National Curriculum subjects and religious education is always at least satisfactory with a significant number of lessons that were good. Teachers provide suitable activities for pupils with special educational needs and the pupils are often supported very well by teaching assistants. As a result, these pupils make good progress towards their individual targets.
13. Teachers have generally good knowledge of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. This usually provides a good basis for planning lessons that provide appropriately challenging learning opportunities for pupils of all abilities; this was a good feature of many lessons observed, especially in literacy and numeracy. Good subject knowledge also enables teachers to use questions in a skilful way to revise what pupils have already been taught, to extend and check on their learning.

14. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and with the pupils. As a result, there is a pleasant working atmosphere in classrooms. There are generally high expectations of work and behaviour with, at best, an insistence on accuracy and quality. Most lessons proceed at a good brisk pace with a variety of demands being made on pupils, for example in terms of sitting still and listening, working individually and in groups, writing and engaging in practical work. Teaching assistants are often crucial to making sure that all pupils, including those who may find learning difficult, are fully involved in the lesson.
15. As a result of the good teaching, most pupils develop good work habits. They listen well to explanations and instructions, willingly offer answers to questions and contribute well to discussions. They concentrate well and work well together when that is required. Where teachers make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn in the lesson and use questions well in the concluding part of the lesson to check how well this has been achieved, pupils develop a good knowledge of their own learning.
16. Where lessons are less successful although still satisfactory (almost a quarter of the lessons seen), the reason is usually the absence of one or more of the above good features or, occasionally, because not enough time has been allocated to the lesson or too long spent on one part of it. Most often, however, it is because it is not clear enough to the pupils, and sometimes to the teacher, what they are going to be able to do or understand better or know more about at the end of the lesson. The lesson planning format used by most teachers for most subjects does not make this clear enough or indicate how it will be judged whether the lesson has been successful in terms of pupils' learning.
17. A very good science lesson on food chains with one of the Year 4 classes illustrated many of the best features of the teaching observed during the inspection. The learning objective in terms of understanding the idea of camouflage as an aid to the survival of creatures in their environment and recognising and drawing food chains was clearly displayed and introduced to the class. Pupils' interest was very effectively caught through imaginative planning and organisation that led to them acting as a flock of crows looking for caterpillars (lengths of wool of different colours) on the school field. Back in the classroom, the teacher immediately built up a bar chart to show what colours had been most easy to find. Very good questioning helped pupils to understand and explain why few green and brown pieces of wool had been found, while all of the red and most of the blue and yellow had been picked up. Further questioning helped pupils to recall earlier learning and vocabulary and to use, for example, *predator*, *prey*, *herbivore*, and *carnivore* correctly. This enabled all pupils to be ready to move on in their learning about food chains as the teacher worked with them to build up a simple chain (cat, mouse, corn) on the whiteboard and introduce the language of *consumer* and *producer*. The teacher continually assessed pupils' understanding and enhanced it, for example by having groups of pupils take roles in a food chain and get themselves into the correct order; these tasks were varied in difficulty well so that all pupils tried something suited to their ability level. Practical tasks, involving ordering pictures at different levels of difficulty, helped pupils to consolidate their learning. The pace of the lesson was very brisk but unrushed and the changes of activity maintained pupils' interest and concentration very well. All pupils were absorbed in their work and talked about it with enthusiasm, showing a very secure understanding of the basic ideas, describing or naming the habitat that their food chain would inhabit and recognising that food chains start with a plant. Many started to consider what would happen if, for example, the grass on the school field died. Pupils made very good progress because of the teacher's imaginative and thorough planning and preparation and her very good skills at moving pupils' learning on, based on her on-going assessments.
18. The marking of pupils' work is generally satisfactory, but there are too few instances where teachers' comments help pupils to know what is good about their work (or not) and what they need to do to improve further. Homework makes a useful contribution to raising standards and most parents are supportive of this. (For further details of pupils' achievements and progress in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, see paragraphs 56 – 120.)

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

The quality and range of learning opportunities

19. The curriculum is broad, satisfactorily balanced and relevant; overall, provision is satisfactory. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are suitably covered; all statutory requirements are met. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have the necessary preparation in order to move on to their next school. The school arranges for additional teachers to cover the Year 6 classes to ensure that they are well prepared for the end of key stage tests.
20. There are schemes of work in all subjects for each year group, from which teachers plan each term's work. Planning and provision for English, mathematics, science and ICT are good. In other subjects, the subject skills, knowledge and understanding are not always built on sufficiently well from one unit of work or one year group to the next.
21. The school organises special weeklong curriculum events on an annual basis to enhance particular areas of the curriculum. This year the focus was on music; in previous years, it was art and design and technology. These were well attended by governors and parents, who came into the school to contribute. Governors have a good knowledge about curriculum developments and financially support residential visits and other special events. Some weaknesses in the curriculum have been identified and acted upon. For example, the school is now providing many more opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport. The community contributes well to pupils' learning.
22. There are daily sessions of literacy and numeracy for each class; provision for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum are good. Other subjects of the curriculum are taught through blocks of work such as 'Healthy Plant Growth' in science and a local study of Plympton in geography. There are common planning sheets in use and these identify how provision for pupils of different attainment is to be met. Where appropriate, the use of ICT is also identified, for example, a digital camera was used in the local study of Plympton.
23. Pupils benefit from the availability of a good quality outside area. The ponds and wild area provide a good resource for teaching science and enable environmental work to be covered in several curriculum areas. The school swimming pool is used well; all pupils have good opportunities to develop their swimming skills.
24. There is a school policy on inclusion that is implemented very well. All pupils are fully included in lessons and extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is principally due to planning being adapted to meet their needs and careful deployment of support staff to work with individuals and groups of pupils. Provision for these groups of pupils is guided by individual education plans. These plans have clear targets and progress towards them is monitored on a termly basis. The coordinator has identified the need to increase parental involvement in this area. Provision is effectively supported by outside agencies.
25. The curriculum is enhanced through a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, art and performing arts. The clubs are well attended by the pupils. Musical groups also take place at lunchtimes. There is a good range of visits to art galleries and local churches as well as residential visits.
26. The school makes good provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship. Resources to support the programme are good and it is timetabled appropriately for each class. The sex education programme is supported by a visit from a local nurse. Health and drugs education are provided through the science curriculum. The relationship with the main infant school, which provides most pupils, has improved and is now good. There are also good links and relationships with the local special and secondary schools.

Provision for personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development

27. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
28. Provision for spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. The development of pupils' self-esteem is central to the school's good ethos and is evident in the teaching. The recent improvements to the school's accommodation have greatly improved the welcoming atmosphere of the school. All pupils are included and each individual is valued. Pupils' self-esteem is raised through performing in assemblies and through good use of praise by the staff in lessons. In a

Year 6 religious education lesson the teacher very skilfully drew out the feelings of pupils as they were looking at religious art. In a Year 3 art lesson when pupils were making a collage they worked with maturity and independence and showed great pride in their work. The school has a climate where pupils respect others and are respected. For example, this was observed in a Year 3 ICT lesson when pupils worked very well together in two and threes, sharing their skills, showing each other great respect.

29. Provision for pupils' moral and social education is also good. The school teaches the pupils right from wrong and helps them behave well individually and in groups. A sound personal, social and health education programme is taught and this help pupils consider some current social and moral issues. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils were seriously discussing *kindness, helpfulness, honesty and friendship*. Pupils were heard to discuss, in a sensible and mature manner, moral issues about the bombing of Plymouth during World War Two. There are good structures for behaviour management and pupils are considerate of each other. Older pupils are encouraged to help the younger children and they regularly collect money for charities. They are eagerly preparing for the introduction of the school council and the 'buddy' system.
30. The provision for the cultural development of the pupils remains satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school provides a broad and interesting curriculum which helps pupils develop their understanding of art, music and literature. This provision is reinforced through regular assemblies and by visits to museums and places of interest. Religious education and geography lessons make a good contribution to learning about other faiths and about life in other countries, but the school does not yet do enough to prepare pupils for life in multi-ethnic Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. Pupils continue to be well cared for by the staff, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Parents and pupils appreciate this good provision. All pupils are valued and the school's good ethos promotes good racial harmony. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The senior management team ensures that there is a shared understanding by all members of staff of the necessity to promote consistently the guidance given in the school's behaviour policy. Teachers and teaching assistants make a significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe and calm environment for all pupils, both in and out of lessons. Good behaviour is encouraged in ways that make sense to the children. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well supervised. The occasional outbreaks of boisterous behaviour by a few pupils who act in immature and attention-seeking ways are handled well. The recent research carried out by the educational psychologist and the school to investigate how some pupils see some aspects of their school life is providing valuable information on how pupils regard themselves and each other.
32. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are also good. Although no formal profiles for the personal development of each pupil are kept, pupils are monitored effectively. Staff know pupils well and respond sympathetically to them individually, taking good account of any personal circumstances that may affect their learning and general well-being. Staff give good praise and encouragement during lessons, and achievements, large and small, are all celebrated. Class discussion time is being used well to help pupils express their thoughts and feelings and to learn to understand themselves and others. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility by, for example, acting as team captains, as class monitors and helping at lunchtimes. The new school council and 'buddy' system will enable the pupils to take on even more responsibilities.
33. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Attendance rates have improved recently after having dropped since the last inspection. They are now broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. The overall decline in the attendance rates is due to parents taking their children out of school for holidays in term time. Staff now make sure that parents fill in the appropriate application forms for extended holidays. Such holidays are actively discouraged as they often adversely affect pupils' learning. The school follows stringent and appropriate procedures for registering pupils each day. There are clear procedures for following up any absences and the school works closely with the education welfare officer.
34. There are good procedures in place for child protection; the headteacher is named as the designated person in charge. The personal and academic progress of any children who are being cared for by the local authority is carefully monitored. Staff are receiving appropriate training to enable them to keep up to date with aspects of first aid. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessments are carried out.
35. Overall, the procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' work are satisfactory. The school keeps a large amount of data about the attainment and progress of pupils in each year, particularly in English and in mathematics. The data that is collected is used to identify areas of the curriculum that need to

be developed. However, it has yet to be used to its full potential in setting and sharing individual targets with pupils. In other subjects of the curriculum, procedures are not yet well established.

36. Teachers mark pupils' work and make comments that praise what has been achieved or progress made. However, there are few comments that are specific to the development of understanding of subjects other than English; written guidance to promote further understanding is underdeveloped. Marking gives insufficient direction to pupils to increase their own knowledge about their learning as well as understanding what they need to do to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The school fosters positive views among parents. They warmly praise what the school achieves. They value its caring attitudes and are satisfied that their children make good progress. Parents believe teachers know their children well and that such secure personal relationships help pupils to want to succeed. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire stated that their children like school and those seen during the inspection said their children are eager to come. They say that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and is helping them to become mature and responsible.
38. Some parents do not think that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team found that the range and quality are good and the clubs are very popular with the pupils.
39. Several parents do not feel well informed about how their child is getting on, and some do not feel that the school works closely with them. The inspection team found that the school is now trying very hard to work closely with parents in their children's education. There are regular parents' meetings and a greatly improved open door policy whereby parents can approach members of staff at any appropriate time if they would like to discuss their child. The quality of information given to parents is satisfactory. The regular newsletters, school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are informative. However, parents are not kept informed of the curriculum area and topics to be studied by their children each term and the end of year reports to parents are inconsistent across the school. Although they say what the pupils can do, they do not always say how they have progressed in each subject. A very small number of parents say they were not comfortable in approaching the school with an issue about, for example, what they regard as bullying. The new headteacher is very aware that there is a need to improve the information given to parents about the steps taken to deal with such problems and plans to do this.
40. Several parents are dissatisfied with the amount of homework that their children receive but the inspection team found that the quantity and suitability of the homework given across the school was good and supported the work that the pupils were doing in their lessons.
41. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of the vast majority of parents. It judges that the school is now trying very hard to work closely with parents and is actively trying to involve even more parents in the life of the school. Parents now speak very highly of the improved informal links with the new headteacher and his staff. They see the links as a two-way process ensuring pupils' interests are to the fore. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is good. For example, some parents come in to help with reading or with art. Many parents are keen to volunteer to help on school visits. The Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association is a small but dedicated group of hardworking people who have raised money to fund, for example, leaving gifts for pupils in Year 6 and new sports equipment. The parent governors make a valued contribution to school life.
42. Induction procedures for children entering Year 3 are now very good, and they are also good for pupils entering school at times other than at the beginning of the school year. Parents are pleased at how their children settle in and enjoy school. They also like the care taken when the oldest pupils transfer to secondary school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher has a clear vision of the way that the school can develop and improve in the future and has transformed many

aspects of the work and management of the school since he was appointed. Many positive and necessary changes have taken place in response to the last inspection report and these, and other more recent changes, have improved the school. The headteacher's leadership is excellent and is sharply focused on raising the level of pupils' achievements through improving the quality of education that the school provides.

44. Prior to the headteacher's appointment the school had gone through a period of instability in relation to all aspects of leadership and management and although some changes had been made nothing had been done to ensure that they were effective. This was especially true of the management of subjects and of the curriculum. The subject co-ordinators are now established and most are effective in leading their subjects because they have a clear vision of the way forward. Curriculum planning is now improving and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been developed well. The school has succeeded in raising standards in English, mathematics and science to above the level seen in most schools. However, standards are only average in the foundation subjects and religious education.
45. The vision and drive of the headteacher have been very significant in bringing the school and community together and improving links with partner institutions, particularly the infant and secondary schools, and with parents and the wider community. This has brought about a significant improvement in the quality of the education provided by the school. He has gained the confidence of staff, governors, parents and pupils and is very good at team building and motivating everyone within the school community. A strong feature of the school is the unity of purpose and teamwork that is clearly operating in all parts of the school. Teaching and ancillary staff work very closely together and this is of real benefit to all pupils and has been instrumental in raising standards and creating a really inclusive school.
46. There is now a strong senior management team. The skills, expertise and experience of the headteacher and his deputy complement each other very well. The deputy, who is experienced and knows the school very well, has a clear view of the school's priorities, its strengths and areas for further development. The role of the subject co-ordinator is being developed although new and non-specialist co-ordinators do not all share a clear understanding of what should be achieved. Established co-ordinators, including the co-ordinator for special educational needs, are well informed and effective in promoting their subjects and in monitoring standards.
47. The school's aim to raise standards and improve the quality of education is reflected in all aspects of its work. Good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate its work. This has brought about a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and in the standards that pupils achieve in national tests. Targets are set for improvement and areas of relative weakness, for example most of the foundation subjects, have been identified and strategies are being put in place to overcome these weaknesses. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school makes provision for higher-attaining pupils by setting in some subjects for part of Year 6. It is an inclusive school and is ensuring that both boys and girls reach their potential. Pupils are aware of inclusion issues and in an assembly Year 3 demonstrated ways in which people with hearing disabilities can communicate.
48. Governors give full support to the school and they and the headteacher have worked very hard to appoint new staff, raise standards and involve parents and the community. Governors have good levels of knowledge of the issues facing the school and they are kept well informed, which helps them to remain fully involved in discussions and new developments. They undertake their roles with enthusiasm, for example in working with individual members of staff, and they are genuinely part of the school. Governors, the headteacher and the staff have a real commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement. They are not complacent, there is very good culture of monitoring and target setting which keeps the school moving forward toward achieving its aims. Governors fulfil their statutory duties very well. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and individuals play a vital role in many aspects of its daily life. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs has recently been appointed, and in a short time has made a good contribution.
49. The school development plan, drawn up by the headteacher, staff and governors, sets a clear agenda for continuing development and improvement and for financial decision making. Very good financial planning ensures that the school's income is used to best effect, in line with the priorities that have been developed. Grants allocated for specific purposes, for example for pupils with special educational needs and for staff development, are used very well. The financial control on the part of the headteacher, school administrator and the governing body is very good. The school is very successful

in obtaining the best value from the financial resources allocated to it; the school provides good value for money.

50. The school's current priorities include improving standards and provision for ICT and physical education throughout the school, and producing a long-term strategy for the development of the school building and grounds. The great majority of parents who returned completed questionnaires considered that the school was well led and managed; inspection evidence strongly supports that view.
51. The availability of teaching and non-teaching staff is good. All are appropriately trained or qualified and most are very experienced. Staff development for teachers in the school is good and most have recently attended training courses. Individuals have benefited from high level management training courses and from secondments to other schools. Newly qualified teachers are supported well and the quality of planning in most subjects and of school information ensures that supply teachers can work effectively as soon as they are in the classroom. Appraisal and performance management are in place and are fully effective. Members of the senior management team and most subject co-ordinators are able to monitor teaching and pupil progress on a regular basis. All staff, including those whose work lies outside the classroom, contribute well to maintaining the school's welcoming and positive working atmosphere.
52. The school makes good use of new technology in all aspects of financial and other management. Teachers are able to use computers and other new technology in lesson planning and the production of resources and displays. Resources are plentiful, of good quality and they are used well. The school is very well resourced for literacy, religious education, practical work in art and design and for artefacts in history. Good use is made of the local area as a resource, particularly its museums. Resources are accessible, well used and well managed.
53. Accommodation is good. The recent building programme has transformed the appearance of the school and created an improved working environment. More improvements are already being made to provide a waiting area for parents and there are long-term plans for further development. The hall is multi purpose, many classrooms now have additional areas for practical work and the environmental areas, grounds and swimming pool are valuable assets. However, some classrooms are too small for the number of pupils. There are three poor quality mobile classrooms and the library, although well used and well stocked, is located in a corridor rather than in a purpose built room. The interior of the school is bright and light because it has recently been redecorated, but displays in the corridors and in most classrooms are limited and do not do justice to the quality or variety of pupils' work.
54. The school has successfully addressed the key issues from the last inspection and has developed significantly since that time. Much valuable innovation has taken place since the appointment of the headteacher now in post. The school has improved well since the last inspection. This is due, in the main, to the excellent leadership and direction provided by the headteacher and key managers, the support of governors and the hard work of teachers and other staff members.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. **The headteacher, with the governing body and staff, should:**

Raise standards in most foundation subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education by:

- making sure that schemes of work make clear what is to be learned in each year group;
- keeping appropriate records of what pupils know, understand and can do so that work can be planned to build on this;
- making sure that the way in which time is allocated to these subjects effectively promotes good learning;
- regular monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work.

See paragraphs 4, 20, 89, 96 and 112

Improve the contribution of co-ordinators in some subjects to raising standards by:

- making sure that raising standards is the main focus of their work;
- providing opportunities for them to observe teaching and learning and to monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work;
- monitoring progress towards agreed subject-specific targets.

See paragraphs 44, 46, 80, 92, 97, 110 and 120

Improve the extent to which assessment information is used to enable teachers and pupils to set individual or group targets and plan to achieve them by:

- making sure that lesson planning includes clear learning intentions and how progress towards them will be assessed;
- relating assessments closely to National Curriculum programmes of study and levels of attainment;
- using ICT capability to enable teachers to easily access use the collected assessment information;
- developing the use of marking that makes clear to pupils how well they are achieving against their targets and what they need to do to improve.

See paragraphs 16, 18, 35, 36, 78 and 97

In addition, the following additional points for improvement should be included in the governors' action plan:

Those aspects of the accommodation, including the provision for teaching music, that remain on the school's improvement list;

See paragraphs 53, 106

Information for parents about what is being taught and about their children's progress;

See paragraph 39

The planned development of ICT skills across the curriculum;

See paragraphs 89, 92 and 100

Increasing the opportunities that pupils have for learning about life in more ethnically diverse parts of Britain.

See paragraph 30

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

47

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

52

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	28	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	17	60	23	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 about two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	277
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	17

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	31	29	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	27	30
	Girls	24	26	27
	Total	51	53	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (90)	88 (92)	95 (99)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	28	30
	Girls	26	24	26
	Total	54	52	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (92)	87 (94)	93 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
265
0
5
0
0
0
0
1
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
1
5

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.7
Average class size	34.6

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	163

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	619596.00
Total expenditure	602884.00
Expenditure per pupil	£2233.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	74299.00
Balance carried forward to next year	91011.00

The carry forward figure includes monies earmarked for physical improvements that have had to wait on completion of the re-roofing, and for maintaining enhanced staffing levels. The projected carry forward figure into 2004-2005 is £20K.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

34%

Number of questionnaires sent out

277

Number of questionnaires returned

93

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	55	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	35	54	5	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	54	6	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	44	33	5	0
The teaching is good.	43	46	4	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	37	38	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	41	8	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	37	1	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	23	37	30	8	3
The school is well led and managed.	51	38	4	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	44	10	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	31	24	3	6

Some rows may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Other issues raised by parents

Some inconsistency in the setting of homework.

Parents greatly appreciated the improvements initiated by the present headteacher.

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

ENGLISH

56. National test results in English in 2002 were above the national average and inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 6 have at least a similar level of potential attainment. The performance of boys and girls over the last three years is similar. The trend over a three-year period is one of improvement in all aspects of English. There has been a noticeable improvement since the last inspection. The present Year 6 has had the full benefit of the literacy hour and overall attainment in reading is very good and writing is good. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well, although the proportion of more able pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has been lower than in mathematics or science.
57. **Standards in speaking and listening are good** although listening skills are sometimes variable and pupils often do not listen carefully to the sound of words and this affects their spelling. The school's focus on phonic awareness is helping individual pupils to improve. In all year groups, speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion activities and most individual pupils are able to speak confidently to adults and in school assemblies. Pupils generate ideas in brain storming sessions and contribute well in discussions. The work planned for literacy lessons encourages skills in listening, and other subject areas, including art, make a valuable contribution because pupils have to listen carefully to instructions. Pupils in Year 6 were able to talk well about their residential experience and many were very confident in sharing their ideas on books and authors. Pupils also comment on and review their own and others' work at the end of some lessons and this adds to their confidence and ability to express themselves clearly.
58. **Overall, skills in reading across the school are well above those expected nationally.** There are some really able readers in all year groups. Reading standards of higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 are particularly good and pupils' skills in the use of the library are generally well established. Some pupils show weaknesses in the basic skills and their poor range of vocabulary and general knowledge affects their understanding of what they read. However, they are effectively using dictionaries to check their understanding. Above average pupils can explain and understand challenging use of imagery and explain the use of metaphor, while average pupils recognise alliteration used in poetry.
59. The school uses reading scheme books with lower-attaining readers and pupils are encouraged to use a variety of books appropriate to their ability level. Many pupils belong to libraries outside school and pupils in all year groups were enthusiastically reading the latest Harry Potter book. Higher-attaining older pupils can explain the term *genre* and talk about why they like some authors and not others. The literacy programme is encouraging higher standards in reading and many pupils cope well with detailed study of fiction and non-fiction texts in class, although some require a considerable amount of support. Pupils have good library skills. Average-attaining pupils in Year 6 understand the classification system for non-fiction books and can explain the use of an index. Because of this they are well prepared to use libraries in secondary school. Although the school library is small it is well stocked and managed. Year 6 pupils have been introduced to a wide range of literature and they can talk about poems and stories read in class. A higher-attaining pupil showed an unusual ability to read about and understand a biography of Winston Churchill. However, the school does not make enough use of non-fiction texts but has plans to focus on this next year. Individual pupils are able to use computers to develop their skills in some aspects of reading and research. Skills in skimming and scanning and information retrieval were being well developed during the inspection.
60. **Attainment in writing is above the national average.** Work is well presented, with most pupils being able to use a joined up script as skills in handwriting are practised regularly. However, in some classes pupils almost always use pencil. Drafting and redrafting of work is a regular part of work in every class. In Year 5, pupils were observed carefully planning and then drafting protest letters: they had been taught effectively how to write formal letters. Pupils also have specific computer lessons to support work in English and many are very skilled. A display of poems about the Blitz showed their talent as verse writers and their ability to enhance presentation by using computers. Higher-attaining pupils are able to write about and illustrate their ideas well. However, in subjects other than English pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to produce pieces of extended writing to support their work. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate on grammar and punctuation; for example, many pupils of average attainment are able to explain the use of commas, speech marks and the apostrophe. By

contrast, many younger pupils make errors in basic spelling and punctuation and some younger pupils are not clear about exclamation marks. The range of written work in English lessons is good with evidence of imaginative work and of writing for a variety of reasons and possible audiences.

61. The literacy hour provides many opportunities for creative work and pupils benefit from writing their own poetry and stories and plays. In Year 4, work on Haiku poetry was very successful because of the oral work and the focus on syllables. This helped all pupils to understand and create their own Haiku. Individual pupils with lower potential attainment and some of those with special educational needs find it difficult to express their ideas clearly on paper and struggle to produce extended pieces of writing. However, they can all write simple sentences and attempt pieces of extended writing. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 5 showed their understanding of letter writing and were able to contribute to classroom discussion well, because of the quality of the support provided by staff in the room. The use of individual white boards is effective and supports lower-attaining pupils particularly well. The teaching of pupils with behaviour or learning difficulties is good in English because tasks and resources are adapted to their needs and they are well supported in class. Provision is inclusive in that it is planned to ensure progress for all. For part of the year, pupils are set by ability in Year 6 and this is promoting a high level achievement for all. Boys respond well to the style and content of most lessons.
62. Teachers monitor learning effectively and they set targets for pupils. Assessment is used to plan for different ability groups during the literacy hour. This contributes to a high quality of learning for pupils in the majority of English lessons. In the most successful lessons observed, there was a very good match between the teaching strategies in use and the needs of the pupils, and this helped pupils to learn well. In the majority of lessons observed, progress was good and all pupils were kept firmly on task. In a few lessons the activities were not sufficiently well paced to ensure consistently good progress for all pupils.
63. Pupils enjoy their work in English and their behaviour and response in lessons are good and often very good. They are happy to talk about their work and they recognise and enjoy a variety of types of writing because of the well-chosen texts used in class. Year 6 spoke with real enthusiasm about the books that they have read. *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* is particularly popular and links well with work in history. Most pupils take real pride in the creative work that is displayed very well in some classrooms. However, little written work is on display in the school as a whole and opportunities to celebrate pupils' creativity are lost.
64. The teaching of English is good overall. Teaching has been particularly effective in preparing Year 6 for the national tests. Class teachers have a good understanding of all aspects of the teaching of English and they are able to provide inspiring examples and set interesting tasks. Most teachers mark work regularly and provide valuable advice on how pupils could improve; however, there is some variation in the standard and frequency of marking. Individual teachers are highly skilled and during the inspection there was some particularly effective teaching of sentence structure, poetry and the writing of formal letters. The school is now very well resourced for English, especially with regard to the availability of books. These resources are readily accessible to teachers and the library is well stocked and managed. This ensures that resources can have a real impact on pupils' learning. Overhead projectors make a valuable contribution to learning and computers are used well in the classroom and computer suite. They are used as an integral part of work in English.
65. The subject is managed well. Planning is good and the literacy programme has been implemented effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and individual education plans and learning support are used well. English lessons are planned across the year groups and this helps new and inexperienced teachers. Leadership is very good. There has been a clear focus on ensuring continuity and progression, the choice of resources and on the development and use of assessment and target setting. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, particularly in the improvement in standards and the development of resources for literacy.

MATHEMATICS

66. Standards seen in mathematics are well above national expectations in Year 6 and this matches the results that the school achieved in last year's National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils; the school has improved considerably on the standards reported at the last inspection. Pupils of all levels of ability make good progress and achieve well, particularly in number-based work. There has been variation over the years in the performance of boys and girls in national tests but no significant differences were observed during the inspection. The school monitors this aspect well.
67. Pupils in Year 3 have made good progress from the overall good test results that many achieved at the end of Year 2. Their books indicate that they have been encouraged to develop a range of strategies for performing calculations and that most of their number work is accurate. Pupils show a good knowledge of the names and properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and draw and measure accurately in centimetres. During the inspection, pupils in both classes made good progress in well-taught lessons on fractions. The use of visual aids to demonstrate equivalence helped pupils' understanding, and the use of fraction number fans enabled one teacher to keep very good track of the progress that pupils were making.
68. Pupils in Year 4 have continued to make good progress, applying their number skills, for example to the calculation of areas and perimeters. Many pupils confidently use negative numbers in the context of temperature and in relation to the shapes that they translate and reflect. Good progress was made during the inspection by pupils in both classes in their understanding and use of multiplication and division as inverse operations. Lessons proceeded at a good pace, and pupils of differing levels of ability were catered for well through the provision of graded tasks and the support provided by teaching assistants. Most pupils showed that they know their tables and this provided a good foundation for the further progress that they made.
69. Good, thorough teaching in a Year 5 class enabled pupils of all abilities to make good progress in their use of the 24 hour clock in the context of bus timetables; the challenge for higher-attaining pupils of constructing the timetable for return journeys was very well chosen. There is good evidence in the earlier work seen of higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 that their learning has also been extended, for example when they had to find the n^{th} term in a sequence. The work of most pupils in Year 6 shows that they have made good progress across the mathematics curriculum. During the inspection, pupils in one of the Year 6 classes built very well on their earlier knowledge of the properties of shapes when they investigated the lines of symmetry of polygons. The investigation was well chosen to provide differing degrees of challenge for pupils of various ability levels. The teacher used the concluding part of the lesson very well to pull together the findings of the different groups of pupils for the benefit of all. As in some other lessons, good planning by the teacher and good support by the teaching assistant effectively made sure that all pupils had full access to the content of the lesson.
70. On the evidence of the lessons observed and examination of pupils' earlier work, the overall quality of the teaching and learning in mathematics, including the skills of numeracy, is good. The introduction of teaching units from the National Numeracy Strategy is providing good support for teachers. Where teachers adapt these to the needs of the pupils and allocate sufficient time, pupils benefit from the ideas and structure provided. There is scope for more planned use of pupils' mathematical skills in other subject areas. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning mathematics. They readily offer answers to questions and clearly enjoy the challenges of mental arithmetic and of investigational work.
71. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has successfully led the school away from over-reliance on following a commercial scheme and overuse of worksheets. He is actively seeking the support of parents in raising standards and has produced a very helpful booklet for them on mental and written calculation strategies. He recognises that there is a need to improve further the presentation of pupils' work and to use ICT more to support and extend learning in mathematics. The resources that have been purchased in the last two years are of very good quality and are being used well to promote learning. The co-ordinator rightly intends that pupils should enjoy mathematics and work as mathematicians as well as achieve very good results in national tests. The evidence from the inspection is that this is being achieved to an increasing extent; improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

SCIENCE

72. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. At that time, standards of attainment were in line with national averages; they are now much higher.

73. By the end of Year 6, attainment is well above national expectations. An above average proportion of pupils are working at high levels of attainment for their age. The results of the 2003 tests for Year 6 pupils are also likely to be high in relation to national averages. No significant difference between the performance of boys and girls was noted during the inspection.
74. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have a very good all round knowledge and understanding of science. They can apply their knowledge well. In Year 6 overall, attainment is high across all the areas of science with a particular strength in life processes and living things. There are few weaknesses although data handling skills are not fully developed as pupils progress through the school. Line graphs are drawn without correct scales and do not have 'best fit' lines to accommodate experimental error. Most pupils have secure understanding of what constitutes a fair test. However, their planning is not always sophisticated enough to answer precise questions, such as: "How does temperature affect the amount of a substance that will dissolve?"
75. There are some examples of extended writing. Most Year 6 pupils accurately describe the function of the heart and link this with transport of oxygen around the body. They study forces and relate air resistance to the size of a parachute. In lessons, they produce high quality number and branch keys to identify plants and animals. Year 5 pupils research the solar system and some produce excellent writing, presenting information on how the earth was formed, the comparative size of planets and phases of the moon. In lessons, most describe correctly how flowers are pollinated to produce seeds. Year 4 pupils write about skeletons of different animals and how muscles work. In lessons they discuss the difference between producers, consumers and predators, and in most cases write correct food chains. Overall, Year 3 pupils have a good knowledge of key facts about the healthy growth of plants, make measurements and record the results of investigations in tables.
76. Overall, the pupils with special education needs make good progress. Progress is more secure when they have the direct support of either the teacher or a teaching assistant. In a Year 6 lesson, the teaching assistant had been well briefed and was able to support work on different animal groups well. Pupils have good attitudes to science. They are keen to explain what they know and understand and co-operate well with each other in class. They value high achievement and enjoy practical tasks.
77. Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. During the inspection, two out of five lessons seen were very good, two were good and one was satisfactory. Overall, teachers have a strong understanding about learning in science; they provide pupils with a good range of practical experiences. Their own subject knowledge is very good and in lessons they explain ideas about science clearly. In a very good lesson about classification in Year 6 there was high quality planning; tasks were carefully adapted so that the needs of all pupils were met and the range of resources used was very good. Towards the end of this lesson, good class management and effective questioning ensured that learning was successfully extended. Other very good teaching included the use of drama to develop ideas about predator/prey relationships. Again, high quality planning promoted very good learning. In the one lesson that was satisfactory, there was over-reliance on ICT, which did not function properly, and this limited the pace of learning.
78. Leadership of the subject is currently with the headteacher but a new co-ordinator has been appointed. Recent work on developing lesson plans has been effective. The study of healthy plant growth shows clear development of ideas about 'what plants need to grow well'. Practical activities provide good opportunities for pupils to observe, measure and record. Pupils' work is marked, mostly with a simple tick, and there are comments that provide praise for work done. However, marking to promote the pupils' understanding about how well they are doing or make further improvement is underdeveloped. Tests at the end of Year 6 have been analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses. Overall, the quality of leadership and management is sound.
79. Overall, ICT is used well. There are good examples of research using the Internet and an example of the use of sensors to measure light, temperature and sound over a 24-hour period. Monitoring of teaching is carried out on an informal basis but has been effective in developing consistently good lessons. The school's capacity to improve the quality of provision even further is very good.

ART AND DESIGN

80. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is similar to that seen nationally and pupils are achieving satisfactorily because they are making secure progress in Years 3 to 5. However, they spend less time on art and design in Year 6 and progress is unsatisfactory when work in art is intermittent. Pupils spend long periods when they do little work in the subject. The schemes of work and planning for the subject are now good and have improved since the last inspection, but not all teachers make full use of available resources or guidance.

81. All pupils have sketchbooks that are a useful record of their progress but achievement is no more than satisfactory in all year groups. The quality of work in these sketchbooks, observed in classrooms and displayed around the school indicates average standards in collage, drawing, painting and work in clay. Pupils can use their sketchbooks to try out ideas and develop new techniques. They also review their work in class discussions. In Year 3, pupils explained why they liked some examples of work on clay houses, commenting clearly on colour and texture. They all made good gains in learning when pupils who had worked on an activity explained that it helped to put in the background first and explained why. Pupils are made aware of the work of some famous artists and designers, for example Clarice Cliff and William Morris, and the library has a range of books to enable them to find out more. Sketching using examples from the local area is a valuable learning activity for Year 3. Pupils discuss their work and share ideas but they only write about art very occasionally. Pupils have only limited knowledge of the work of famous artists and there is limited evidence of a range of work on styles or periods of art or of writing about them. Pupils know less about artists and styles of art than they should do.
82. Pupils have the opportunity to develop techniques in painting, drawing, printing, and work in clay. Although this does not happen often enough pupils achieve well when activities are well linked to other subjects; for example, during the inspection Year 4 pupils were able to produce vivid paper and fabric collages as part of a group activity involving the study of the Caribbean in geography. In this lesson pupils made good progress because they looked at examples of the work of artists such as Hockney, and their teacher explained and demonstrated collage techniques very clearly. In Year 6, pupils were developing skills in drawing and composition to support work in history. They were taught to look closely at how artists suggest distance and perspective. However, the size of the reproduction inhibited learning and the examples did not link well with the activity. Pupils use pastels, charcoal, pencil and colour washes, but they have difficulty in talking about how artists used different media or how designers such as William Morris have used techniques such as repeat patterns.
83. All pupils, including those with special educational needs develop skills in practical tasks because they are well supported by teaching assistants. They are also increasingly confident in assessing their own and others' work. Prior to the inspection pupils from all years had worked on batik inspired by the work of a local artist and pupils had enjoyed the range of activities available during art week. Pupils' work in ceramics is generally well developed and collage and textile work is often good. However, few classrooms have displays of artwork and art does not immediately impress the visitor to the school. Average and higher-attaining pupils can speak with confidence about colour mixing and using clay because this is taught well. However, pupils with average and below average attainment find it difficult to recall earlier work in any detail. Pupils are encouraged to share, evaluate and discuss their work and because of this they have positive attitudes to the subject. This is reflected in the willingness of pupils to attempt quite challenging activities in art and to persist when their first attempts do not seem quite correct. Teachers encourage them to choose the media used and this helps them to learn new techniques and to be more creative and independent.
84. Teaching was satisfactory or better in the lessons observed and is clearly sound over time. Most teachers are confident in explaining new skills and they demonstrate how to achieve specific effects, for example in the use different kinds of paper. Planning documents and pupils' work indicate that there is good focus on the teaching of skills in drawing and painting. Three-dimensional and textile related work is taught particularly effectively. Art is taught in a way that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, for example in a study of portraits and of art from a variety of cultures, past and present including Japanese and Aboriginal art. However, not all teachers have the confidence to promote a consistently high level of learning for pupils in all art-related activities.
85. Within the limitations of the overall provision for art and design, the management of the subject is good. It ensures that art is well resourced; basic materials and equipment are readily accessible and pupils make use of art-related computer software. When these resources are used well pupils achieve well. The quality of support for teachers and the enthusiasm and knowledge of the art co-ordinator are helping to raise attainment in the subject and ensured that all pupils are able to enjoy and value creative work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Standards in design and technology are average by the end of Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. During the inspection only one lesson was observed; other evidence of attainment and teaching was obtained from examination of work completed before the inspection and teachers' planning. In this lesson both boys and girls worked confidently together and co-operated well when making a fairground ride. Overall, written plans, which communicate ideas about what the pupils want to achieve, are underdeveloped. Some, however, do provide details of materials and equipment to be used, fixings, measurements and details of finish. The finishing techniques, used to improve the appearance of products, are good.
87. Year 3 pupils design animals that have moving parts. Year 4 pupils design and make a range of chairs for different characters, for example 'Shrek' and 'Alice' (in Wonderland). Ideas about the design are linked well to the characters. The finish on the chairs displayed is good.
88. Teaching and learning in the one lesson seen were satisfactory. The teacher gave a clear explanation of how pulleys work and how they could be used in their design of the fairground ride. Wooden frames made to support the structure were accurate and suitably strong. Pupils responded very well – they clearly enjoyed the practical nature of the activity and took care with equipment and materials. The pupils developed cutting and sawing skills with the support of the teaching assistant. However, both cutting and sawing were carried out hesitantly. There were too few workstations and this limited the opportunities for pupils to gain these essential practical skills.
89. Currently the headteacher is managing the subject on a temporary basis. A new co-ordinator has been appointed. The sample of work seen indicates that skills are not developed consistently as pupils move through the school; it shows limited use of ICT. There are, however, useful links with other subjects such as science, where pop-up books display work about the solar system. Work is marked regularly but gives little guidance about how to improve. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

90. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average. Younger pupils in Year 3 are developing map-reading skills and higher-attaining pupils can identify differences in maps from 1903 and 1974. They identify key features on the maps and can give reasons for the differences noted. Lower-attaining pupils are gaining confidence in using grid references to identify places. Pupils with special educational needs make relevant observations, using the maps with the support of a teaching assistant. Year 4 pupils study St Lucia and consider how people can affect the environment. They identify activities that cause environmental damage such as destroying forests and wild flowers. Year 5 pupils have a sound understanding of how the activities of people can affect the features of places. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have a good all-round knowledge and understanding, particularly of environmental change. There are no noticeable differences in the attainment between boys and girls.
91. Judging from the lessons and work seen, the quality of teaching and learning are good. Lessons have a clear focus and teachers have good management skills. In a good Year 3 lesson, aerial photographs and maps of differing scale were very well used. Questioning was effective and a good strategy was used for teaching grid references, using an overlay. Other good teaching in Year 5 was particularly effective because pupils were required to explain what they understood by the economic activities of a settlement. Higher-attaining pupils wrote thoughtfully about different economic activity giving reasons for personal choice. In one of the lessons observed, the learning was restricted by over-direction by the teacher. Pupils respond well to the geographical work. They are enthusiastic. Their good behaviour and attitudes are evident in all lessons. Overall, teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
92. Leadership is satisfactory. Recently, resources have been improved and these are easily accessible. The planning for the local study of Plympton is good. Skills are developed systematically and there is a good range of activities. ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning and assessment tasks across the school do not provide sufficient information about attainment. Monitoring is too narrowly focused on specific years and needs to be widened to include lesson observation across the school. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

HISTORY

93. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both in Year 6. Discussions with pupils and teachers and careful scrutiny of pupils' work suggest that pupils acquire a satisfactory knowledge of all the aspects of history that they study. In Year 6, average and higher-attaining pupils understand about research methods and the difference between primary and secondary sources. They can explain why someone who lived in Plymouth during the war can provide valuable evidence about the past. Achievement is sound because pupils are studying history, whenever possible, in a local context, for example in work on the history of Plympton and Plymouth during the Blitz. They also benefit from visits to Exeter museum and from visiting experts from Plymouth museum. This enables them to look at and handle objects from the past and greatly enhances their learning. They clearly enjoy work in history.
94. Learning is effective in that most pupils can write about, illustrate or talk about their current studies in history with confidence. They all develop some awareness of chronology and change over time because they learn to use time lines. Pupils' written work shows that they have a secure foundation of knowledge about life in the past and about how historians find out about it. They know that historical evidence can be found in written records, pictures and objects that have been found in ancient sites. Study of Ancient Egypt is very limited, but they do complete artwork related to it. In considering Ancient Greece they begin by looking at its geography and at aspects of modern life in Greece. There is a good focus on comparison of Athens and Sparta and religion in Ancient Greece. The cross-curricular approach helps pupils gain a greater depth of understanding of citizenship and social and moral issues.
95. Pupils clearly make good gains in learning when given the opportunity for research using evidence from visits, a wide variety of books and other sources, including the Internet. Their written work shows that lessons on the Tudors were particularly useful in introducing pupils to the evidence from portraits and inventories. Pupils are sometimes given the opportunity for imaginative and extended writing in history and this makes a valuable contribution to their progress in English. The two lessons seen in Year 6 were particularly effective in linking historical knowledge and understanding to literacy-based tasks in reading contemporary newspapers and listening to the memories of people who lived in Plymouth during the war. However, the full potential for teaching literacy through history has not been utilised as yet in other year groups.
96. Most teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about history and the range of topics covered is satisfactory. Because of the approach used, history makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social education. However, the topic approach means that pupils do not study history for long periods and this affects continuity and progression. Pupils in Year 6 do not show good knowledge and understanding of earlier work, but they do have good knowledge of recent work. Some topics have been dealt with only in a limited way – for example work on the Victorians. When support is available, pupils with special educational needs make secure gains in knowledge, but their books show that tasks and resources are not always well matched to their specific requirements. This also affects the progress of the higher-attaining pupils who are not always given tasks that provide enough challenge. Resources are good and the school uses books and artefacts from the museums service to help pupils gain an understanding of what it may have been like to live in past times.
97. The sound management of the subject has ensured that satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection, in terms of the development of resources. However, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop expertise in the school and to focus on appropriate assessment procedures, which are underdeveloped at present.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

98. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainments were described as *in line with national expectations*. The school was described as *well resourced with computers but they are old and an inferior standard to those most pupils have at home*. Since then, the co-ordinator and the headteacher have led considerable improvements in the provision for teaching ICT, including the installation of a computer suite. In addition, other members of staff have improved their personal skills and the attainment of the pupils has been improved.

99. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, now make good progress in the development of their skills. Standards are above average overall. For example, most pupils in Year 3 confidently manipulate graphics, picture shape and size as well as varying font and font size. Year 4 pupils show more developed skills in these respects when they create a mock-up of The Daily News. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 gained early experience of using the Internet for research when they visited a website to find answers to questions about the functions of different parts of a plant. The lesson was planned and organised well and the great majority of pupils successfully found the answers to the questions that had been set.
100. The school is actively promoting the use of pupils' ICT skills to support and extend learning in other subject areas and there is good evidence of the use of digital cameras, data loggers, microscopes and multimedia software in, for example, science. However, there is much less evidence of such use in several other subject areas. Many pupils are confident Internet users both at school and at home and undertake research related to their projects. The co-ordinator leads very well through example, in encouraging this as in other respects.
101. Pupils in Year 5 confidently used a sensor-based simulation of monitoring environmental conditions and changes. They made good gains in their knowledge of data sampling over a period of time and good experience of interpreting data, for example in explaining peaks of light, sound and temperature on the graphs. They also developed well their skills of selecting part of the data representation, adding their own explanatory text and printing the result.
102. Year 6 pupils displayed a good level of confidence and competence in logging in and retrieving previously stored work. Many have good skills in the use of Microsoft Publisher, readily copying text and pictures from websites and then modifying, for example, the layout, headings, font and font size. They have clearly been required to produce work of quality and they set themselves high standards, showing high levels of concentration and perseverance in order to achieve the desired result.
103. The quality of teaching and learning are good; teachers have benefited from their training and all use computers confidently themselves. Because relationships are very good and pupils work together well it is possible to teach the whole class together in the computer suite. However, during the inspection it was often the case that as many as four computers were not working and difficulties were experienced with projectors and using the remote learning system. Although the school has been careful to buy a system suitable for its purpose reliability is not as good as it should be.
104. The co-ordinator is committed to further improvement of both resources and the use made of them and includes the creation of a school website and increasing the control technology possibilities in his action plan. His own practice of having each pupil in his class build a portfolio of their work supports on-going assessment well and is recommended for whole school adoption. There is a very good foundation for the further development of pupils' skills and their use to support learning in other subject areas.

MUSIC

105. Pupils achieve the standards expected for their age and they make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. This is a similar judgement to that made at the last inspection. Pupils clearly enjoy singing and making music and most, including pupils with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. Pupils from all year groups sing together well in assemblies, including singing in parts. During the autumn term there is a highly regarded choir that attracts in excess of 60 children and performs at Christmas events. There are satisfactory opportunities for all pupils to learn to play the recorder and tuition in a range of other instruments is also arranged. Instrument players are encouraged to play in end of term concerts and, as was the case during the inspection, to play in assemblies. Other pupils showed their appreciation by spontaneously applauding.
106. The provision for teaching music has suffered recently because of an attack by vandals on the mobile classroom used for lessons. Although teachers are making the best of a bad job, ordinary classrooms, large classes and lots of furniture do not provide the appropriate ambience for making music. The school is seeking to have the necessary repairs carried out as soon as possible.
107. Music provision is enhanced when, as shortly before the inspection, the school devotes a week to it. Visiting musicians, including parents and governors, provided good opportunities for pupils to hear and

play a wide range of music. For example, all pupils were able to play as part of the *School of Samba* percussion orchestra.

108. During the inspection the quality of teaching and learning was invariably good and all pupils were actively included in the lessons and made good progress. Pupils in Year 3, for example, improved their response to rhythm and beat while learning the words and actions to accompany *Waddaly Atcha*. Most pupils showed that they could keep the words, beat and actions together as they performed in groups of six. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils identified patterns in the melody of the song that they were learning and added a rhythm accompaniment. They clearly understood and used correctly terms such as *melody, duration, pattern* and *dynamics*.
109. Pupils in Year 5 were skilfully led to explore the contrast created by the solo and chorus parts of *Green grow the Rushes, O!* They developed their performance well and added accompaniment, using both untuned percussion and pitched chime bars. Because the teacher was sharply focused on accuracy and improvement most pupils made good gains in their practical skills, knowledge and understanding.
110. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, based on expertise and enthusiasm. He recognises the need to raise the profile of classroom music and to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. These intentions are included in the school's development planning. There is also a need to make more use of ICT resources and to improve pupils' compositional skills. Overall, however, the important part that music can play in the life of the school is widely recognised and the present position provides a good starting point for necessary improvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. By the end of Year 6 pupils' overall attainment is in line with national expectations; in some respects, including swimming, some games skills and gymnastics, the performance of a significant minority of pupils is above average. Since the school has re-entered competitive sport, all pupils, but particularly the more able boys and girls, have had more and better opportunities to improve. This is good and the school is already making its presence felt in inter-schools competitions. Physical education in the school now has an appropriately high profile and benefits from good leadership and the expertise and enthusiasm of several members of staff. Parents are supportive and the school benefits from the involvement of local hockey, basketball and diving clubs. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making at least satisfactory progress.
112. The co-ordinator has spent money wisely and well and the school is now well resourced. Provision is enhanced by an on-site open-air swimming pool, a school field and a school hall of adequate size. Physical education is a priority in the school development plan for next year. The need to update the scheme of work and to provide appropriate staff development in some areas, for example dance, has been recognised.
113. All classes have weekly swimming lessons during the summer term and almost all pupils are confident in the water and achieve the national expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated their skills at backstroke and breaststroke and were able to 'rescue' a float using life-saving strokes.
114. The main focus of other lessons was on games skills and all took place on either the school field or the hard surface of the playground. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed a well planned and organised lesson focused on improving throwing, catching and hitting skills in the context of rounders. Pupils exercised their skills of striking and fielding and are starting to appreciate strategies in terms of finding the gaps in the field and working together as fielders. All pupils were fully involved and improvement was good. Year 5 pupils also played rounders and showed a satisfactory level of improvement compared with younger pupils. A significant minority of them, however, do not have good throwing, catching and hitting skills and need more practice in these before they can fully develop their strategic contribution to the game. Pupils in Year 4 improved their athletic skills in respect of the discus, javelin, shot, hurdles and triple jump in another well planned and organised lesson that made good physical demands on the pupils.

115. The teacher of the Year 6 class was very well focused on accuracy and improving cricket skills and catered very well for the differing ability levels within the class, for example encouraging some pupils to bowl over-arm rather than under-arm. She made good teaching interventions with individual pupils and this promoted good learning in terms of skill and strategy development. Around half of the class showed above average hand-eye co-ordination when batting and there were good example of bowling and catching.
116. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers dress appropriately for lessons and conduct effective warm-ups and cool-downs. Pupils in Year 6 showed good knowledge of muscle groups and how to stretch them, and of the importance of being warm before stretching; there has clearly been good teaching at earlier stages. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. The school is in a better position to raise standards than it was then because of improved leadership and commitment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

117. By the end of Year 6 attainment is in line with that expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 have good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Judaism. Their knowledge and understanding about other faiths such as Sikhism and Hinduism is much less secure. The pupils can identify some common elements in these and other religions and name some of the distinctive features. Year 4 pupils write about many of the stories from the Old Testament and use these to make links with moral values such as kindness, honesty and friendship.
118. There are some good examples of research. For example, Year 4 pupils find out about the work of aid agencies. Pupils use the Internet and CD ROMs to locate and research information.
119. The teaching and learning observed during the inspection were always good or very good. Overall, it is good, and there are strengths in the teaching of Christianity in particular. Discussions with pupils and samples of their work indicate that other religions, particularly Hinduism and Sikhism, are not taught in as much depth. In a very good lesson, pupils in Year 6 approached the study of Christianity through art. The teacher provided an excellent range of pictorial resources and through careful management, evoked a response of very high quality. For example, in one picture showing an angry looking face, the pupils decided that it could be an image of Jesus when he discovered that the temple had been changed into a place for money lending. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in their learning and make good progress.
120. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a sound understanding of attainment in the school. An audit of the subject has identified some areas that need to be improved, for example monitoring through regular lesson observations, the use of artefacts to support teaching and the development of assessment practice that will guide lesson planning. Resources have been recently updated, and these are now good. Visits to Exeter Cathedral and Buckfast Abbey make a valuable contribution to learning in the subject. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The capacity for the school to make further progress is good.