

INSPECTION REPORT

PLYMTREE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cullompton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113361

Headteacher: Mrs P A Fay

Reporting inspector: Deborah Zachary
2940

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 4th March 2003

Inspection number: 247353

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Plymtree Cullompton Devon
Postcode:	EX15 2JU
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sheila Wylie
Date of previous inspection:	10 th November 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Plymtree CE VC Primary School is smaller than the typical school, with 106 pupils on roll. There are more girls than boys in the school, and almost all of the pupils are of white British heritage. The remainder are of dual heritage, or of other white backgrounds. No pupils speak English as an additional language. Three per cent of pupils receive free school meals, which is a low number, and the pupils' economic circumstances are more favourable than in the country as a whole.

The pupils enter the school with a range of attainments, and because numbers are small there is significant variation of attainment on entry from year to year. This affects results at the end of Year 2 significantly. The current Year 1 and the current Year 4 entered the school with attainment that was broadly above average compared to the national picture. The current Year 3, and particularly the current Year 2 entered with below average attainment. The current Year R (reception) has broadly average attainment. Eighteen per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, an average figure. Though none of the current pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Need, some do have significant behavioural disorders, physical, visual or hearing disabilities or speech and communication difficulties. About 10 percent of the pupils started at the school later than in Year R, including a number with special educational needs. This is a higher figure than is typical of primary schools.

There has been a significant turnover of staff over the last two years, caused both by teachers arriving and leaving permanent posts and by teachers covering for maternity leaves. As a result only one of the teachers observed during the inspection was teaching the same year groups as the previous year. This means that judgements made about teaching of specific year groups on this inspection cannot be directly related to the previous year's results.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Plymtree is an effective school that gives good value for money. The pupils' achievement – their long term academic progress through the school - is good. They do not just do well academically – their personal development is very good because of the values that the school teaches. The headteacher's effective leadership ensures that all the staff work together to maintain its very good ethos. Teaching is good overall, though it varies more than it should between classes, so progress is not equally good in all year groups. Management systems to ensure more consistency, though satisfactory, could be better.

What the school does well

- The pupils' progress is very good between Years 3 and 6 and as a result standards are high by the end of Year 6.
- The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good, so pupils are learning very well in these classes.
- The youngest children receive very good teaching when they start at the school and so they settle in well.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development, and their attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The headteacher leads the school well, ensuring all share her vision of a Christian learning community that values everyone.

What could be improved

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 are not as high as they should be and were not high enough in 2002.
- The school has been improving the way it provides teaching in information and communication technology (ICT), but this provision is not yet as good as other subjects.
- The school accommodation makes the teaching of some practical subjects, such as science, art and physical education difficult; this puts extra pressure on teachers who work very hard to ensure that the pupils get the broad education they should.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. It responded well and improvement since then has been satisfactory. At that time there was an acting headteacher, because of long-term sickness, and most of the key issues were to do with leadership and management. All these have been satisfactorily addressed, and most have been addressed well. Developments have been partially constrained by frequent staff changes, but teaching has remained good overall. Significant improvements have been made in other areas, such as the provision of an ICT suite. Cost effectiveness has been improved, for example by costing the school development plan. Standards in Year 6 have risen. Even though Year 6 results were already high four years ago, they have at least kept pace with national improvements. Year 2 standards have declined since 2001, though part of this decline has been due to changing attainment on entry.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A*	A	A*	A*
mathematics	A	A*	A*	A
science	A*	A*	A	A

Key	
in the top five per cent nationally	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C D
below average	
well below average	E

When these results are compared to 1998 Year 2 results, they show excellent achievement for last year's pupils. Standards of the current Year 6 are not quite as high - above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and overall. However, the drop in standards is not a cause for concern. Achievement for Year 6 pupils is very good. It is significant that the current Year 6 has more than twice as many boys as girls, and boys' results are lower nationally, especially in English. The targets for 2003 Year 6 results were devised appropriately, but there have been changes to the pupils in the year group since they were set. They are likely to be exceeded in English but may be missed in mathematics.

Year 2 results were at least above average in 2001, for an intake that was also above average. In 2002 the results were well below average overall, not high enough for an intake that was below average on entry. Current standards of reading, writing and mathematics are also well below average overall, and this is also unsatisfactory achievement. The indications from the inspection are that the current Year 2 pupils are currently making satisfactory progress, but this is not enough to raise their standards to the level they should be, taking account of their standards at entry.

Some of the children in Year R had been in the school only a few weeks at the time of the inspection. On this short inspection, it was not possible to make a firm judgement of whether they are on course to reach expected standards in all areas of learning. Nevertheless, their current progress is very good - on this basis they would be expected to at least reach, and, for some, exceed, expected standards before they enter Year 1 in six months time.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very happy and interested in their work. They respect their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The school is very orderly and there is a very pleasant community atmosphere. Even when pupils are not sure what they should do next they do not misbehave.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show a sensitive understanding of others' needs. Older pupils can reflect on feelings and trust each other enough to talk about these with others in the class.
Attendance	Very good, well above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of pupils' learning varies in the same way as the teaching. The quality of teaching of literacy and numeracy is also as shown in the table. The disparity between the different year groups is less marked in other subjects, where learning is sometimes good in Years 1 and 2. The strengths of the teaching in all year groups lie in the relationships and interactions between teachers and pupils. Discipline is very good throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils well and usually pitch the work at the right challenging level, meeting their needs. Pupils of all standards of attainment learn as well as each other. Introductions to lessons are usually crisply delivered and questioning catches the interest of pupils. Where the teaching is very good the pupils know exactly what they are trying to do and the teacher varies activities well whilst insisting on a fast pace.

The weaker areas in teaching largely concern organisation. Marking is not good enough in some year groups, largely affecting English and mathematics and the quality of pupils' presentation and written response in these subjects. The approach to homework is not fully consistent in the different classes. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than better, pupils are not always clear enough what to do, so time is wasted. One lesson was graded unsatisfactory. This was in ICT and related to specific issues around the use of the network room and particular work for Year R. It was not in any way typical of the teaching of this year group.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. All statutory requirements are met and the curriculum is enhanced by French, very good music provision and a well developed programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE). There are numerous trips out and extracurricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Their individual education plans are clear and their needs known by their class teachers. Some pupils are placed in classes where most of the children are younger, but the level of work in these classes is appropriate for them. The school gives very good attention to making pupils feel secure and raising their confidence, with teachers often giving time well beyond what would usually be expected.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good, with particular strengths in pupils' moral and social development. Music makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development and pupils are appropriately prepared for life in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Statutory procedures for health, safety and child protection are well met, and all adults show a concern for the children in their care.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership and satisfactory management. Arrangements to support teachers have been more effective than procedures to ensure teaching is consistently good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. The governing body is well organised and acts as a critical friend to the school. It ensures that the school meets statutory requirements and governors have a clear idea of most strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Areas for improvement have been identified and there is a strong commitment to improvement. As yet some of the planned developments - such as tracking of the progress of pupils from year to year to identify any variations - are not fully in place.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes the best use it can of its limited accommodation. It uses its money carefully; the large carry-forward of funds between 2001-02 was justified and has now been reduced. It applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is approachable and their children are happy there.• The school expects their children to work hard and they are making good progress.• The school is well led.• The school is helping their children become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents wanted better information about how well their child is getting on.

The inspection team agreed with most of the positive comments raised by parents. They agreed that overall pupils are making good progress but the progress is too variable between year groups. They judged that the school has the right procedures for informing parents about progress, but noted that the quality of reports varied between different classes with some giving targets for improvement and some not.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils' progress is very good between Years 3 and 6 and as a result standards are high by the end of Year 6.

1. The pupils who left Year 6 in 2002 were in Year 2 in 1998. They took National Curriculum tests that year in reading, writing and mathematics and their average points score was 14.9. The year group took more National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 and their average points score for the English and mathematics elements was 30.8. This means they had moved on 15.9 points over the intervening 4 years. The nationally expected progress rate is one National Curriculum level every 2 years, which equates to a much lower 12 points in 4 years. The cohort was not quite the same as some pupils had left and others arrived, but the evidence the school has about the attainment of new arrivals compared to leavers shows that overall the changes do not contribute to higher results. The progress made by last year's Year 6 was excellent.
2. The 2002 results show that pupils who were in the middle band of attainment when they were younger did particularly well. Compared to other schools that had the same Year 2 results, the proportion of pupils who reached level 5 (the level that is better than would be expected for the pupils' age) was very high in English, mathematics and science in 2002. This shows that most pupils who had been average for their age in 1998 had significantly exceeded what is expected in 2002.
3. The current Year 6 pupils were in Year 2 in 1999. That year, points scores were higher in the Year 2 tests, but there has been significant change since then to the pupils in the school. The effect of leavers and arrivals since Year 3 has been to lower the attainment levels of the year as a whole. Taking this into account, the current standards of the Year 6 pupils, which are well above average overall, show at least good progress and very good progress for some. Groups of pupils who have made particularly good progress vary between the different subjects. In science, for example, current assessments show that lower attaining pupils have done particularly well to reach their current standards.
4. The current Year 6 pupils were studying area in mathematics during the inspection. Almost all were able to divide a composite shape up into two or more rectangles so that they could use the formula for the area of a rectangle to solve the problem. This is a higher level task than would be typical attainment at that age. In science both Year 5 and Year 6 were dissecting a daffodil to identify the parts of the flower. They were not just identifying the parts, but were willing to apply both creative thinking and their previous knowledge to identify the probable use of features of those individual parts – for example, the usefulness of the trumpet shaped flower part on the daffodil as a guide to make sure a bee became properly covered by pollen. The encouragement of this questioning and reflective approach is also leading to higher standards than would be expected in English. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated that they had a good understanding of the use of persuasive words in formal argument or debate.
5. No first hand conclusions can be drawn on this inspection about the causes of the very good progress made by pupils over a period of years, because the teachers seen teaching during the inspection did not teach the same year groups last year. Nevertheless, these rates of progress are unlikely to have taken place without sustained high quality teaching, at least in Years 5 and 6. The ethos of the school is unlikely to have altered recently; the current ethos is such as to give pupils a huge confidence in their own abilities. This contributes significantly to the progress they make and thus to the high standards they reach.

The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good, so pupils are learning very well in these classes.

6. On this short inspection the teaching judgements are not just based on the lessons seen, which were a very small sample, but also scrutiny of pupils' work, both in books and displayed in classrooms. Pupils' work was also discussed with them. In making the judgement that teaching is

very good in Years 3 to 6 the scrutiny of work was particularly important. Pupils' English and mathematics books showed that marking is detailed and regular, offering very helpful comments on how to make the work better. When pupils get their books after they are marked they look immediately at the comments, and want to understand them in order to improve. The mathematics books of most Year 3 pupils show very good progress since the end of Year 2, and those of Year 5 and 6 show that the teacher demands high levels of presentation and of understanding. The Year 6 English books show marking giving clear assessments of standards, with very helpful remarks showing pupils how they might reach the next level. The pupils' writing shows that they have had a good range of interesting work and that a good amount is regularly covered.

7. Work displayed in classrooms shows some of the imaginative teaching methods that are being used. In the Year 3/4 classroom, for example, a range of photographs of pupils working on projects to do with materials and structure are enhanced by speech balloons that show the sort of thinking pupils have done. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show that they are used to reflecting on their knowledge. In a discussion about ICT, pupils showed that they are not only confident in their basic skills but have been taught to think for themselves about the use of ICT in the modern world. They were able to comment perceptively about possible dangers of the Internet, for example.
8. The teachers of Years 3 to 6 know their pupils very well and often vary seating and groups to get the best out of individuals. They are well aware of pupils who have special needs and meet these needs either with the help of support assistants or through individual tasks. Some of the pupils in the school have very demanding needs, and teachers go well beyond what would be typical in meeting these. Teachers throughout the school, not just in Years 3 to 6, have very good relationships with pupils. They get pupils' attention immediately they want to start the lesson and pupils are ready to concentrate and work hard for them.
9. A feature of lessons for most pupils in Year 3 to 6 is that the teachers make what pupils should be trying to do very clear to them. This means that little time is wasted and pupils are involved in their own learning. The teachers are adept at changing activities to keep the pupils working with full concentration and at top pace. In Year 3 to 4 mathematics and English lessons, very good features were the teacher's dynamic approach and demand for pace. The pupils responded with great effort and were very keen to complete the tasks. In a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson a brisk variety of activities at the start included questioning, work in pairs and a quick session of 'fractions bingo', all of which kept pace and interest high. In this lesson, too, particularly careful planning meant that the resources that the teacher had prepared worked extremely well in getting the concept across. A 'stick on' rectangle covered by 'stick on' individual squares ensured that the introduction gave pupils a depth of understanding of what area means.

The youngest children receive very good teaching when they start at the school and so they settle in well.

10. As this was a short inspection only a small number of lessons were seen involving the youngest children. One of these was not typical, and is reported below under the provision for ICT. The other two lessons were both very good. The teacher showed a very good understanding of the needs of young children, for example using a lively action song before a period of necessarily more sedentary activity. The teacher and support assistant work well together, for example both modelling speech sounds very clearly. As a result the children in the literacy lesson were very alert to sounds, enjoying repeated text and sound effects such as "splash!" and "splosh!", 'swishy' and 'swashy'.
11. In a very good personal and social education lesson, the teacher ensured that the children of wide ranging abilities could all follow what she was doing by using a set of prepared 'picture-and-word' labels. She questioned very well, including all. Inclusion and care for people's feelings was an important part of the simple yet well handled follow-up activity in which each child had to say "I'd like (name) to sit next to me", before the person named moved across the circle. The teacher insisted that children used the full sentence and spoke clearly yet did not interrupt the flow of the game. Although this was the end of a wet day, the concentration of even the four year olds was exemplary.

The school provides very well for pupils' personal development, and their attitudes and behaviour are very good.

12. The Chair of Governors, writing in the prospectus, describes Plymtree as 'a very special place where everyone is involved' and there are plenty of examples of the way the school does successfully involve pupils in making it a better place. The pupils themselves draw up class rules, and they also discussed the whole school's behaviour and discipline policy when it was being drafted. The pupils who have been elected as members are also involved in reviewing its effect through the school council. They take responsibilities in other ways, not just through the council; for example, Year 6 act as prefects, and also as 'buddies' to Year R. All of these activities develop pupils' sense of morality and their obligation to the community as well as supporting their social development. The latter is also supported through the trips and extracurricular activities, as well as activities involving parents such as the 'walking bus'. The exercise session attended by all staff, including the headteacher, forms a pleasant corporate start to the morning. The sense of the school as a community is reflected in displays around the buildings including some particularly impressive cross-curricular work in the Class 2 room. Here the idea of belonging is extended beyond the school community to the idea that 'belonging to a religion means that you accept a way of life'. The pupils have created individual shield-shaped badges portraying important things in their lives, with well-produced collages and artwork illustrating their ideas.
13. There are various examples of ways the school goes out of its way to help the pupils gain the sort of self confidence that comes from feeling valued and liked by one's peers. Pairs of pupils spend playtimes inside, in rotation, supporting friends who find the whole-school play session too challenging. Pupils in two classes, Year R/1 and Year 3/4, also demonstrated that they were willing to make friends and understood the importance of friendship in effective 'circle time' sessions in PSHE. Very effective artwork on the theme of 'portraying relationships' produced largely by Years 1 and 2 shows that they too have developed a good understanding of this. The self-confidence and the sense of being valued stand the pupils in good stead in their academic learning as well as in their social development. The current pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 demonstrate their confidence and security through their willingness to experiment and seek answers. Year 4 pupils worked with great concentration in groups to find patterns in the sums that could be made by adding consecutive numbers. Year 5 pupils working in a mathematics lesson in a group without direct teaching were discussing their different methods without prompting, eagerly asking each other 'How did you work it out?'. The pupils' ability to work independently is greatly supported by their positive attitudes to school.
14. The pupils' cultural and spiritual development are greatly enhanced by the standards of music. About a third of the pupils take instrumental lessons, and the quality of the music they produce was evident in assemblies during the inspection. The pupils' singing is also of a high standard, and there are three separate choirs in this small school. There is a creative arts week every year, and pupils visit galleries during the residential visit to London. Pupils' understanding of the multicultural nature of society is satisfactorily developed even though they themselves are largely of one ethnic group. As well as the visit to London, which gives teachers the chance to discuss the variety of people who live in Britain in context, the pupils study the celebrations of a variety of religions.

The headteacher leads the school well, ensuring all share her vision of a Christian learning community that values everyone.

15. The headteacher was appointed after a period of long term sick leave of the previous headteacher, during which time there had been an acting headteacher in post. Since her appointment there have been numerous staff changes, including temporary teachers covering maternity leave. Well supported by the governing body and especially the chair, she has ensured despite the changes that the school's ethos of inclusion and care for all has been maintained to a high level. The headteacher also takes direct responsibility for pupils with special educational needs. This provision is particularly effective because of the individual help and support pupils are given, often by the headteacher or classteacher in time outside of lessons and beyond what might usually be expected.

16. The headteacher implemented the recommendations of the last report and has carried through a variety of other improvements such as rolling programmes of work based on national schemes but amended for mixed age classes and the improvement of the playground. She ensures that new requirements such as the need for a policy on race equality are acted on. The prospectus and school improvement plan state the Christian aims of the school with clarity. The latter identifies most of the areas in which development is needed, and the three main areas for improvement identified in this report had been identified already. Writing was a particular area for improvement last year and there is evidence that progress in writing for this year's Year 2 is better than it was last year, though not yet good enough.
17. As many teachers this year are teaching age groups whom they did not have experience of last year, the headteacher's emphasis has been on supporting the teachers in adjusting to the standards of work needed. She has been effective in making teachers feel supported, and she has the confidence of the staff, parents and governors. This is partly because she has an open consultative style, which makes it clear that others' opinions are valued. Staff give their views through weekly minuted staff meetings, and have also completed more general questionnaires on how well the school is operating. Parents and pupils are consulted on specific issues such as behaviour and discipline, or the development of the school grounds. Parents describe the school as 'not resting on its laurels', and the headteacher's enthusiasm and commitment is a large part of this.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 are not as high as they should be and were not high enough in 2002.

18. The current Year 3, who were Year 2 last year, entered the school with standards that were below average. By the end of Year 2 they had not achieved well enough and their standards were well below average overall. It is not possible to comment on the reasons why the standards of the current Year 3 were not high enough last year, as there was no first-hand evidence about the quality of teaching because teachers have changed. The current Year 3, however, are now making at least satisfactory progress, and most are making very good progress.
19. The current Year 2 also entered with below average standards, in fact with a lower average baseline score than the previous year. However, they too have not achieved well enough and the standards seen on inspection were also well below average. Again, it is not possible to identify all the reasons for the lack of sufficient progress, because of a lack of first hand evidence about previous teaching. The teaching they are now receiving is satisfactory, leading to satisfactory learning, but this is not good enough to catch up lost ground.
20. Year 2 pupils are currently in a challenging class with some pupils from Year 1 and a very small number from Years 3 and 4. This is an appropriate arrangement of year groups because of the standards of the pupils involved. Discipline is very good and the class is orderly. This is particularly praiseworthy because there are pupils with significant behavioural needs in the class. Their very good behaviour during the inspection demonstrates the strength of the relationships the teacher has forged with them. These very good relationships between the teacher and the pupils bring particular benefits when the teacher is questioning the class together, demanding quick answers well. Additional adults are used well in the class, for example for hearing readers. However, the records of this work do not give enough detail of progress and the sessions would be improved by a sharper focus on what should be learnt next by the pupils in their reading. The work is pitched at broadly the right level, but there was little evidence in books of work designed to really challenge pupils in Year 2. In mathematics, for example, there was limited evidence of work on investigating patterns. In English the writing the Year 2 pupils are producing is not for a wide range of purposes and they need to write at greater length to reach higher standards.
21. The aspects of teaching that need to be improved to bring it up to the same high standard as the rest of the school are largely to do with organisation and clarity. Sometimes pupils are not given clear enough directions about what they should be doing, so they waste time. Sometimes the final

session of the lesson is too brief or not used to summarise with pupils what they have learnt. Marking is also not as good as elsewhere, because there are very few comments in language the pupils can understand to help them to improve, and very few supportive comments to make the pupils feel their written work is valued. As a result, the pupils' presentation of work is not as good as it could be. Some of the marking of a temporary teacher contained errors and had not been checked.

22. A few Year 2 parents feel that homework is not set regularly enough. It was not possible to check the regularity of the homework set during the inspection as homework diaries have just been changed. As a result this year group does not at the moment record what is set consistently. However, the school has produced an appropriate draft homework policy that should clarify for parents what to expect.
23. Teaching throughout the school is monitored regularly, but monitoring has been focussed on areas of lessons that the school is trying to improve, and has recently been carried out by subject co-ordinators, reporting to the headteacher. Feedback to teachers is then given, to support them in improvement. This approach is effective in evaluating how well the school is improving in areas it has identified, but without some regular direct monitoring of whole lessons by the headteacher more general areas for improvement can be missed. There is evidence, however, that monitoring of lessons last year was effective in identifying general areas of teaching that needed to improve for staff who were then present in the school.
24. The school has identified the need to monitor the progress of pupils more effectively and has bought in an appropriate information management system. This is not yet in use, and at the moment progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science is not routinely analysed from year to year. Similarly, the school has identified that recent timetable changes to utilise the ICT suite fully have resulted in too little time being spent on literacy in Year 2. If this continues it will restrict progress.

The school has been improving the way it provides teaching in information and communication technology (ICT), but this provision is not yet as good as other subjects.

25. ICT has been an area for development identified in both the 2001-2 school improvement plan and that for 2002-3. The co-ordination of the subject has been affected by staff changes, but there is now a sound scheme of work in place that allows for appropriate rotation of topics for the mixed age classes. Resources have been improved over the last year, and although some computers are more up-to-date than others, there are sufficient to teach the subject effectively. Staff received training in the teaching of ICT in 2001-2, but recent changes mean that not all staff currently in the school are fully trained and not all are confident in their abilities to teach the subject.
26. Year 6 pupils are currently reaching expected standards for their age in ICT. This appears to be similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection, but nationally standards have been redefined over the intervening years and expectations have risen. The developments that the school has undertaken, including the provision of the ICT suite, have enabled it to keep pace with national developments. Nevertheless, the standards that the pupils are reaching by the end of Year 6 are not as high as their standards in English, mathematics and science, nor as high as their standards in music.
27. The teaching of ICT in the ICT suite seen during the inspection was more effective for older or higher attaining pupils than for younger or lower attaining pupils. Those who are confident in turning on the machines and loading software are able to make a brisk start on their work. Those who are less confident waste time because there are not yet any visual aids to remind them what to do, and they are dependent on the teacher to help them individually. The task set for the youngest children during the inspection was not appropriate, because it demanded literacy skills at too high a level for them to succeed. The long period spent at the moment by the youngest pupils in the ICT suite is also not an appropriate use of time for them. It demands that they sit doing one type of activity for longer than is productive.

The school accommodation makes the teaching of some practical subjects, such as science, art and physical education difficult; this puts extra pressure on teachers who work very hard to ensure that the pupils get the broad education they should.

28. The school has no hall suitable for physical education so this subject must either be taught outside, in the village hall, or at the local swimming pool. The use of the village hall means that time is inevitably wasted in travel. The swimming lessons do mean that the children get the chance to learn to swim at a younger age than is required, but again is time consuming. Some of the classrooms, including the upstairs classroom used by the oldest pupils, have no sinks. This means that art and design and science activities have to be particularly well prepared and access to water has to be arranged by the use of buckets. Again, this is not restricting pupils' learning because of the trouble teachers take to ensure the pupils have all that they need. Nevertheless, the lack of facilities puts extra pressure on teachers' time. The headteacher and governors are working with the Local Education Authority in planning for improvements to the accommodation.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

29. To raise standards and achievement and the quality of provision in the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should carry out the key actions listed below.

- (1) Improve pupils' achievement by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
- ensuring that pupils are always clear on the tasks they have been asked to do in lessons, so that the pace of lessons improves;
 - planning some work, with support as necessary, at a level that is higher than might be expected, to give pupils the opportunity to reach higher standards (this might include a greater emphasis on investigation in mathematics);
 - making better use of a plenary session at the end of lessons;
 - improving marking of written work;
 - continuing to support these improvements in teaching, but also setting direct targets for their completion, and monitoring these;
 - improving the range of writing and the quality and quantity of writing pupils produce;
 - ensuring that sufficient time is given to literacy each week;
 - tracking the progress of pupils year by year in order to take immediate action if pace drops;
 - improving the tracking of reading from the reading sessions and the focus on what should be learnt during them; and
 - ensuring that parents know what homework has been given so that they can help.

(These points are explained in paragraphs 18 - 24)

- (2) Further improve the provision for ICT by:
- continuing to raise the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject so that all are confident in the use of ICT in the network room and in classrooms;
 - varying the activities the youngest children have in the network room, or reducing the time they spend there; and
 - providing visual support material for pupils to help them become more self sufficient in their work in the network room.

(These points are explained in paragraphs 25 - 27)

- (3) Continue to bring the school's deficiencies in accommodation to the attention of the Local Education Authority.

(This point is explained in paragraph 28)

The school has already identified the need to improve these three key areas.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	14
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	9

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	6	4	1	0	0
Percentage	0	21	43	29	7	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 seven percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	106
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	18

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
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 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	6	8	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (94)	79 (94)	79 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (94)	79 (94)	79 (94)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (88)	85 (88)	85 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (94)	92 (100)	100 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

The numbers of boys and girls reaching these nationally expected levels are omitted in both tables because there were less than 11 of each in the year group.

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	91	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.8
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
	£
Total income	247193
Total expenditure	243310
Expenditure per pupil	2340
Balance brought forward from previous year	17783
Balance carried forward to next year	21666

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

106

Number of questionnaires returned

41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	39	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	38	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	51	7	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	46	12	2	2
The teaching is good.	46	46	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	12	61	24	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	27	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	42	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	37	54	0	0	10
The school is well led and managed.	56	32	5	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	37	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	61	10	5	5