

INSPECTION REPORT

THORVERTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thorverton, Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113368

Headteacher: Mrs A Thavarajah

Reporting inspector: Mr P Kemble
7269

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th May 2003

Inspection number: 247355

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Sleep

Date of previous inspection: 23rd February 1998

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7269	Mr P Kemble	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Science Information and communication technology History Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9780	Mr J Massey	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3855	Mr D Langton	Team inspector	Educational inclusion, including race equality English Art and design Design and technology Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18498	Ms D Morris	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs Geography Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Thorverton Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average school situated in the Exe valley in Devon, equi-distant from Exeter, Crediton and Tiverton. There are 73 pupils on roll, with an almost equal number of boys and girls. The number on roll fluctuates from year to year from 70 to 80 pupils but is currently the same as at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are drawn from mainly privately owned housing within the school's catchment area. The socio-economic background of pupils is above average, with many professional parents working in Exeter. Two pupils (2.7 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, a figure below the national average. Pupils' levels of attainment on entry into the reception year vary from year to year but are typically average. Eleven pupils (13.9 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs, a figure which is below the national average. One pupil (1.3 per cent) has a statement of special educational need, a below average figure. All pupils are from white British backgrounds. There have been very few changes in staff since the previous inspection and figures for pupil mobility are low. The present headteacher had been in post for one week only during this inspection, the previous headteacher having retired the previous term after 13 years in post.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Thorverton Church of England Primary School is a very effective school. Standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress when compared with their levels of attainment on entry. Pupils benefit from good teaching, very effective links with parents and the local community, a varied and stimulating curriculum and very effective teamwork amongst all staff and governors. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to their work; they behave very well and form positive relationships with each other.
- Provision for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils benefit from a very caring, supportive atmosphere, with close attention to their welfare, health and safety.
- Links with parents and the local community are very effective and the school plays an important part in village life.
- Teamwork amongst staff and governors is very good; governors manage the school's finances very efficiently and effectively.

What could be improved

- Provision for gifted and talented pupils lacks formal procedures for identifying and meeting pupils' needs.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities in lessons, and in the day-to-day running of the school, to develop initiative and responsibility.
- Opportunities are missed to make more effective use of accommodation to promote pupils' physical development in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6 and to promote co-operative group activities in Years 5 and 6.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a good improvement since the previous inspection in February 1998. As a result of the previous headteacher's very effective leadership, improvements have been made to standards, curriculum provision and teachers' expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements. The majority of weaknesses identified in the previous report have been dealt with successfully. Schemes of work for all subjects are in place and these help teachers develop pupils' skills in a continuous and progressive way. There is now full coverage of the required information and communication technology curriculum. Procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning are in place, but there is still some work to be done in providing more opportunities for subject co-ordinators to observe colleagues teach. Governors are fully involved in the strategic development of the school, including the setting of long-term targets and action plans for the current academic year. There is, however, insufficient space in the school hall for physical education lessons and outdoor provision for Foundation Stage children. There have been other significant developments. The quality of teaching and learning has improved, with a greater percentage of good or better lessons than in 1998. Standards in English, mathematics and science have made a good improvement by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A major project to extend classroom space in the old School House building has been completed.

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	B	A*	A	B
mathematics	A*	A	A	B
science	A	A	B	C

Key

very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that, despite the small number of pupils who take the end of Key Stage 2 national tests each year, standards have remained consistently above the national average or higher over time. Standards have risen in line with the national trend since 1998. In the 2002 national tests, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was very high in mathematics, and well above average in English and science.

Pupils' standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education are in line with those expected of pupils of their age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and benefit from tasks well matched to their needs. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls.

Pupils' standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, mathematics and science. They are in line with expectations in writing, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress overall and achieve well in most areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1, standards exceed those expected in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Standards are in line with those expected for children's physical development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils tackle their work with enthusiasm and concentrate very well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to all adults. Lunchtimes are sociable occasions. Pupils play together well during morning break.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils of all ages are very good. Pupils share resources amicably and co-operate well in group activities in lessons. Initiative and responsibility are less well developed.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are keen to come to school and are very rarely late.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall because of teachers' good subject knowledge, the interesting and motivating activities that they plan for pupils and the high expectations they have of pupils' academic and social achievements. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good, with tasks well matched to children's different capabilities. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good or better. Pupils achieve particularly well in English because teachers make very effective use of whole-class sessions at the end of lessons to review and discuss what has been learned. In mathematics, pupils do well because they are constantly challenged by their tasks and teachers' questions so that they develop good skills of recalling number facts, such as multiplication tables, to help them with solving problems. Pupils achieve well in science because of the many opportunities for them to investigate and experiment. All pupils benefit from excellent teamwork amongst all teaching and non-teaching staff.

In the best lessons, pupils of all capabilities are challenged by the tasks planned for them. However, pupils who are particularly gifted or talented in one or more subjects do not receive enough opportunities during the year to use and extend their special skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive well-planned tasks, related to the targets in their individual education plans, from their class teachers and teaching assistants. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' very good attitudes to their work and the good progress they make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a strong emphasis on provision for the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' learning, in these and other subjects, is successfully extended by a good range of visits and visitors to school, and after-school clubs run by parents. Pupils benefit from occasions when the whole school focuses on a particular area of the curriculum, for instance during arts week.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' individual education plans contain achievable targets linked closely to classroom activities. Pupils' progress towards these targets is regularly reviewed and adjustments made where appropriate.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. Promotion of pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good; promotion of pupils' social and cultural development is good. Personal development is promoted well in lessons through co-operative group activities, but opportunities are missed to involve pupils more fully in the day-to-day running of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils benefit from close attention by staff and governors to their welfare, health and safety. This aspect of school life makes a significant contribution to the family atmosphere characteristic of the school at all times. Pupils' academic and social development are carefully assessed and recorded.

Staff and governors, led by the previous headteacher, have worked hard to establish very good links with parents and the local community. As a result, pupils benefit from very good support for their learning at home as well as significant financial support and attendance by their parents at concerts, performances and parent consultation evenings.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher had only been in post one week at the time of the inspection. However, senior staff give good support and effective leadership. All teaching and non-teaching staff carry out their many responsibilities conscientiously. Teamwork is excellent. Subject co-ordinators do not have enough opportunities to observe their colleagues teach.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors show very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and are fully involved in the decision-making process.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Procedures for gathering information about the school's effectiveness involve all staff and governors and the information is carefully analysed to establish appropriate priorities for further development.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Staffing, resources and available funding are used well to support priorities in the school improvement plan. However, accommodation is not used effectively enough to promote pupils' physical development and co-operative group work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school, make good progress and behave well. • Teaching is good, with high expectations of children's academic and social achievements. • The amount of homework is about right. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • The school works closely with parents, deals effectively with questions and problems and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are not enough activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with virtually all aspects that please parents. However, expectations of the achievements of those pupils who are particularly gifted or talented could be higher. Inspectors judge that opportunities are missed to help pupils become mature and responsible by involving them more fully in the day-to-day running of the school. The range of opportunities provided for pupils, in addition to class lessons, to enhance their learning in literacy, numeracy, the arts and sport through visits and visitors to school is judged to be good. Inspectors agree that pupils depend very much on parents to run after-school clubs but the number of these is typical of many other small schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Strengths

- Year 6 pupils achieve standards that are well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science.
- Year 2 pupils achieve standards that are above average in reading, mathematics and science.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, especially in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Area for improvement

- Gifted and talented pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and extend their skills.

1. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, make good progress overall and benefit from motivating activities and good levels of care. They receive a good start to their school life and enter Year 1 well prepared for work on the National Curriculum. During Years 1 to 6, pupils make very good progress in English, and good progress in mathematics and science, when compared with their levels of attainment on entry into reception. Pupils benefit from good teaching in all classes, especially in the promotion of basic literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, pupils' achievements in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science.
2. Pupils benefit from good levels of educational inclusion. Pupils of all capabilities, gender and background have equal access to all that the school has to offer. This is reflected in the good overall progress made by pupils throughout the school. Pupils of differing capabilities are usually well challenged by the activities planned for them, especially in English and mathematics lessons. Pupils who are especially gifted or talented do not have enough opportunities each term to extend their skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because of the good support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants in lessons.
3. Foundation Stage children settle quickly into classroom routines in reception because of the welcoming, friendly atmosphere created by staff. Their levels of attainment are assessed soon after starting school and tasks matched closely to their needs. As a result, they make very good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world, and good progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and creative development. By the time they enter Year 1, they have exceeded the nationally expected standards in these areas of their development. Literacy and numeracy skills are particularly well developed. Progress is satisfactory in physical development because of limited provision for outside play activities but, by the time they enter Year 1, children have attained the expected standards.

4. The number of children who start school each year is small and so comparison of pupils' achievements from one year to the next with all primary schools and those of similar schools is not a valid exercise. However, results of national tests and assessments by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 show that, since the last inspection in 1998, standards have remained consistently above or well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards have risen in line with the national trend. Results show that Year 6 pupils in the 2002 national tests achieved standards that were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in mathematics was very high, in the top five per cent nationally, and in English and science the percentage was well above average.
5. Data from school and national test results indicates that pupils make good progress from their levels of attainment on entry into reception. Targets set by staff are usually achieved. There are no significant differences in the attainments of boys and girls.
6. There has been good improvement in standards overall since the previous inspection. The rate of children's progress in the Foundation Stage has risen from satisfactory to good. By the end of Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science have risen from average to above average. By the end of Year 6, standards in English have risen from average to well above average. Standards in mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education have improved from average to above average. Standards in these subjects are better than before because of successful implementation of national subject guidance, higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and the setting of personal targets for pupils to achieve.
7. Inspection findings are that, by the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science are above those expected of pupils of their age and pupils achieve well. Standards in spelling, writing, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education are in line with expectations. By the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening and reading are well above average. Standards in spelling, writing, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education are above average. Standards in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education are in line with expectations. Throughout the school, pupils achieve particularly well in their knowledge, understanding and use of spelling, grammar, punctuation and number facts.
8. Pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching. In English, where progress is very good in Years 3 to 6, teachers are skilful at making lessons interesting, motivating and relevant to pupils' experiences. Pupils are successfully encouraged to use their skills to support their learning in other areas of the curriculum such as science, geography and history, and this is a key reason why, for instance, progress in geography and history is good in Years 3 to 6. In mathematics and science, where progress is good throughout the school, pupils benefit from many opportunities to work on practical activities and succeed in learning by doing. In all subjects, teachers' enthusiasm for learning and interest in the subjects are conveyed to pupils and promote very good levels of concentration and effort.
9. The strong emphasis given by the school to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is reflected in the way that subjects are timetabled each week in the curriculum. This is one of the reasons why progress is only satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

10. Overall, pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills are good. Pupils write well-punctuated sentences, often with correct spellings, and have a good knowledge, understanding and recall of number facts. Standards of speaking are particularly good and the quality of whole-class discussions and pupils' responses to teachers' questions are characterised by confident presentation of views and opinions. Handwriting standards are good. Pupils are successfully encouraged to use joined script from an early age and many pupils write neatly, even when writing quickly.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Strengths

- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, they are happy and confident and very interested in their work and play.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at play is very good and bullying is rare.
- Pupils' relationships with each other and adults are very good.
- Levels of attendance are well above average.

Area for improvement

- Opportunities are missed for pupils to show initiative and responsibility in the daily life of the school.

11. At the time of the previous inspection, the standard of pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance were all reported to be good. Staff have worked hard since then to further improve pupils' personal development and, as a result, standards in all these aspects are now very good. Staff and parents are pleased with the way pupils work hard and are confident, happy learners, and report that these standards are very much due to the high expectations set by the previous headteacher.
12. Reception children settle quickly and happily into school. Their attitudes and behaviour are positive from the start and there are very few squabbles or disputes. When these do arise, staff calmly help children to achieve amicable conclusions. A significant characteristic of reception children's attitudes is their very good levels of concentration as they work hard at stimulating activities for extended periods of time. Children rapidly gain confidence in the caring, supportive atmosphere and are prepared well for entry into Year 1.
13. The very good attitudes to school established in reception are continued in Years 1 and 2. All pupils very much enjoy coming to school and are happy and cheerful. They show interest in their work and the activities provided for them and concentrate very well, right through the school day. Pupils particularly enjoy the interactive parts of lessons, where they listen very well and eagerly ask and answer questions, as seen in a science lesson as pupils explored the senses of touch and smell.
14. In Years 3 to 6, pupils often show mature attitudes to their work and these make a significant contribution to the high standards achieved in English, mathematics and science. They approach individual and group activities keenly and try hard to achieve the targets set by their teachers. The quality of whole-class discussions is invariably of a high standard in all subjects because of the confidence with which pupils offer views and opinions and the respectful way they listen to what others have to say.
15. Standards of behaviour are very good. Pupils are very polite and show respect for each other and for all adults in the school. These good qualities are largely the result of very good relationships that exist throughout the school. In group discussions,

called circle time, pupils try to see things from each other's point of view and this helps them to understand each other's feelings. Although the nature of the school community is such that most beliefs and values are shared, pupils enjoy studying different people and cultures.

16. The strong family atmosphere that pervades school life leads to pupils seeing all adults who work in the school as trusted friends; a calm working atmosphere is usually the norm in all classrooms. On the few occasions during the inspection when standards of behaviour slipped, it was mainly the result of pupils trying to work in close proximity to each other in the small classroom containing Years 5 and 6 pupils. In this room, pupils have very little space in which to spread out, particularly when taking part in group activities such as science investigations and art and design tasks, and this leads to the occasional dispute.
17. All pupils show satisfactory levels of initiative and responsibility. Older pupils help the younger ones with their reading as 'reading buddies' and also look out for and help them in the playground. However, the older children have the maturity to use more initiative and take on more responsibilities in the school.
18. Levels of attendance are well above the national average. The attendance and punctuality of almost all pupils is very good and this contributes to their very good achievements and high standards. Unauthorised absence is very low.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Strengths

- The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6 is good.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements.
- Teamwork amongst teachers and teaching assistants is excellent.
- Teachers develop very good relationships with their pupils, helping them to have very good attitudes to their work.

Area for improvement

- Teachers' plans for the year and each term do not always provide gifted and talented pupils with enough activities to help them extend their skills.

19. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was reported to be good, with about two-thirds of lessons good or better. The amount of good or better teaching and learning has improved well since then. During this inspection, 24 out of the 26 lessons seen were judged to be good or better, and eleven of those were very good or better, including one excellent lesson. The results of improvement are seen in pupils' good and often very good standards achieved by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and the steady rise in standards in line with the national trend since 1998.
20. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall in English. It is good overall in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education. It was not possible to see enough lessons to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.

21. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning are due to higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, a strong emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy skills and improvements to the quality of teachers' planning.
22. The quality of teaching and learning in reception is good. Teachers plan with a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn, and the importance of their active involvement in purposeful tasks. Children are given many opportunities to express their ideas and opinions, to work co-operatively in pairs or larger groups and to use good quality resources. Teachers and the teaching assistant successfully encourage high levels of concentration and effort. Reception age children work in the same classroom as Years 1 and 2 pupils. This is often used to advantage by staff, with the older pupils providing good role models for the younger children in their very good attitudes and behaviour. However, there are occasions when reception children's work is too formal, for instance when working on similar topics as the older pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons, and children do not have as many opportunities to develop their physical skills outside the classroom as might be expected for children of their age.
23. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good or better. Pupils benefit from their teacher's good subject knowledge and experience. Learning for the two age groups is well managed, so that there are times when the year groups are taught separately, for example in a very good numeracy lesson for the Year 2 pupils seen during the inspection. As a result, pupils benefit from close personal attention because of the small numbers involved and this makes a significant contribution to the good progress they make.
24. Activities are often interesting and motivating. For example, Year 2 pupils worked keenly during a literacy lesson where they practised selecting information from books to answer specific questions such as: 'Can a salmon close its eyes?' The teacher successfully maintained pupils' interest and motivation with her skilful questioning, and a good balance between providing pupils with help to move them on in their learning and encouragement to use their skills to find out for themselves. Whole-class sessions at the beginning and end of lessons are invariably lively as the teacher and teaching assistant encourage pupils to share views and opinions.
25. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good. Effective management and organisation of the mixed-age classes is an important factor in the promotion of good progress and achievement. Teachers' plans clearly indicate how pupils' learning in the different year groups will vary. Teaching assistants are used very well in this respect to work with different groups of pupils, or a whole year group, so that the class teacher can focus attention on the other pupils. This was a characteristic of all the English and mathematics lessons seen during the inspection.
26. All teachers work very well as a team to plan lessons. This arrangement is successful in helping pupils to develop skills in a continuous and progressive way as they move through the school. In all the lessons seen, it was rare for pupils not to be busy and active because teachers sustain a good pace to learning. Teachers maintain regular contact with individuals and groups of pupils, making sure that they have the resources and information necessary to complete their tasks. Pupils have developed very good working habits as a result of this approach so that, during independent group activities, pupils not under direct supervision by the teacher at any one time work hard and achieve well.

27. Teachers use national guidelines for all subjects of the curriculum effectively as a basis for planning lessons. Literacy and numeracy lessons are used well to teach basic skills so that, for example, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of spelling, grammar, punctuation and number facts. Teachers rarely use worksheets for pupils to complete, and this means that pupils soon become used to writing quickly and carefully, presenting their work neatly and making very good use of skills learned in literacy lessons. Homework is used well in all classes to reinforce and extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in particular, but is also effective in extending research and information and communication technology skills.
28. Where teaching is less effective, but is nevertheless satisfactory, pupils of differing capabilities work on similar tasks. This approach is successful when activities are adjusted so that pupils' particular needs are met. This is so in literacy and numeracy lessons, but is not always the case in, for instance, science, geography and history lessons. Consequently, tasks are sometimes too hard or too easy for pupils of particular capabilities. Whole-class sessions, especially at the start of lessons, are sometimes too long and pupils become restless and inattentive.
29. Teachers plan lessons for pupils with special educational needs well, using the knowledge of individual education plan targets they have drawn up for each pupil. Work is invariably suitably matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with behavioural or emotional problems receive very good levels of care and attention from all staff. Teachers monitor changes in pupils' personal development or behaviour closely and take action to avert any likely problems. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the support for special educational needs pupils and show considerable patience and expertise when working with individuals or small groups.
30. Pupils' past work shows that higher attaining pupils are generally well challenged by their work in English and mathematics. Sometimes, in subjects such as science, geography and history, they have to tackle the same work as other pupils before moving on to more difficult tasks. This limits the number of times when pupils are able to follow their own lines of enquiry, devise their own experiments or solve problems. Teachers are aware that some pupils have particular gifts and talents and a start has been made in adjusting curriculum provision to extend their learning, but there are no formal procedures to identify and plan for these pupils.
31. Overall, teachers promote the aims of the school very well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils' contributions are valued in lessons and assemblies. As a result, the atmosphere in classrooms is harmonious and industrious and makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievements.

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

Strengths

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Learning is extended well by a good range of visits, visitors to school and after-school clubs.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Areas for improvement

- The way subjects are timetabled each day does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop skills in the creative arts.
- Provision for gifted and talented pupils is largely informal.

32. The school provides a good, educationally inclusive curriculum which meets all statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced, with generous provision for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Morning lesson times for these subjects are above average. The curriculum has improved well since the previous inspection through the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours and new schemes of work for other subjects, based on the latest national guidance, and this, in turn, has led to improved planning across the curriculum. Provision for information and communication technology, mentioned as a weakness in the last inspection, has improved, and all key issues relating to the curriculum have been addressed. Provision for aspects of physical education, notably swimming and moving over floor apparatus, has also improved, though difficulties in delivering the full curriculum, caused by weaknesses in the school's accommodation, have still to be resolved. A rolling programme of subject review within the school improvement plan ensures the curriculum is regularly monitored and revised.
33. The weekly time allocation for the curriculum is above average for children in reception and Years 1 and 2, who have a long afternoon with no formal break, and below average for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Time allocated for lessons in the morning session is devoted almost exclusively to literacy and numeracy, with sessions lasting longer than national guidelines recommend. Opportunities are consequently missed to timetable subjects more imaginatively so that pupils' well-developed literacy and numeracy skills are used more effectively to support learning in other subjects.
34. Thorough curriculum planning ensures that the learning of skills in subjects such as art and design, design and technology, geography and history is continuous and progressive, successfully addressing a weakness identified by the previous inspection. The curriculum is enhanced by good quality learning opportunities such as a creative arts week, a French club, tuition in woodwind instruments, after-school clubs, visits and visitors. A science and technology week is planned. A two-year rolling programme of classroom themes and projects successfully provides for the different age groups found in all classes.
35. Children in the reception year benefit from a good range of interesting and motivating practical activities and experiences. Children share the same classroom as Years 1 and 2 pupils, but tasks are usually well matched to their particular needs and differ from those of the older pupils. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn. As a result, children soon develop very good attitudes to school, concentrate and co-operate well with each other. Provision for outside activities is satisfactory, but the lack of a secure outside play area limits provision for children's physical development.
36. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and these pupils make good progress towards their individual targets. Provision has improved since the previous inspection. Arrangements for the new Code of Practice have been fully implemented. Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed and the information gained is well used to improve their achievements and build on earlier skills. Commitment to pupils with special educational needs is high amongst all staff and these pupils are educationally included in all school activities.

37. Strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are good, and are helping to raise standards. Teachers provide many opportunities to strengthen pupils' skills, for example in morning registration through mental work on absentee and lunch numbers, in daily guided reading, and in whole-school reading sessions involving staff, parents and 'reading buddies'. Literacy skills are well supported through writing in a variety of styles in subjects such as science, history and religious education.
38. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good overall, and is especially strong in musical and physical activities. There are visits from speakers such as a modern day pilgrim, a regular weekly visit from the local church ministry team and a performance by members of a drum workshop. Pupils benefit from visits to museums in Plymouth and Exeter, historic houses, the theatre, and Plymouth Aquarium, and these add significantly to the quality of pupils' learning. A residential visit, or activities week, is arranged for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
39. A wide range of clubs is available to pupils, some of which require pupils to pay to attend. These are run almost entirely by parents, who give very good support to their children's education. During the inspection week, French, netball, choir and football were available, and approximately half of all pupils receive tuition in a woodwind instrument. A significant number of parents has expressed concern that the school itself does not offer to run any clubs and this is found to be the reality. The school grounds are being increasingly improved to support the curriculum, for instance with development of an environmental area.
40. Staff work hard to provide equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to the curriculum, irrespective of pupils' ability, gender or background. Underachieving pupils are identified through assessment and given appropriate support. Where pupils are withdrawn from lessons, perhaps for music tuition, teachers ensure that they catch up with the class on their return and try to minimise the loss of academic work. However, the school recognises that it has yet to establish a register of its gifted and talented pupils, and set more appropriately challenging tasks for higher attaining pupils. Higher attaining pupils in Years 1, 3 and 5 are able to work at a higher level with the older age group in their class, but this is not possible for pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6.
41. The school generally shows good awareness of educational inclusion, for instance with whole-school reading sessions and outings, and the Friday assemblies to which parents, playgroup pupils and siblings are invited. Extra-curricular activities are open to all pupils and, during the inspection, girls and boys were observed playing well together in the netball club. School drama productions involve every pupil. There is a very strong feeling of togetherness and a family atmosphere within this small village school community.
42. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good overall, though the new policy and scheme of work are still being developed, and the policy for race equality has yet to be ratified. Effective drugs awareness and sex education lessons, involving the school nurse, are provided. Pupils are encouraged to support charities such as Red Nose Day. Provision for citizenship is developing for younger pupils, including the establishment of good relationships and respect for the different views of others. There is a successful focus on health issues. Group discussions about personal matters, called circle time, have been introduced, though their use by teachers is inconsistent.

43. Parents are positive in their views that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. However, although pupils are given responsibilities within the classroom with jobs such as watering the plants, given the maturity of many of the pupils in all classes, opportunities for initiative and responsibility linked to the day-to-day running of the school are limited. Mixed-age classes and the 'buddy' system, enabling older pupils to help younger pupils to read, contribute significantly to social development.
44. The school's links with the local community are very good, and contribute very positively to the pupils' learning. Village activities, such as those on Pancake Day and a vintage car rally, are well supported. A chess club is available for pupils in the home of a local resident, and a football club is provided by the village. The Village Trust has funded an improvement to the school library. Local residents help in the school and the fire service visit regularly, though there has been no recent visit from local police. School and village are very important to each other and support one another well. Staff plan to make provision for the community to share its new computer facilities. Links with the village church are good. Pupils' services, including the school carol service and a leavers' service, are held each year. Pupils visit the church as a learning resource, providing them with experience of ceremonies such as christenings and weddings.
45. Relationships with other schools and establishments are good. Within the local academic council, links with the secondary school to support subjects, such as science and technology, are well established, sports fixtures are played with other schools, and musical and other activities shared with other primary schools. There are good arrangements for teachers from the local secondary school to visit Year 6 pupils and for pupils to visit their new school before they transfer. A regular Friday club enables children from the local playgroup to become familiar with the school before they start formal education and, as a result, children's transition from playgroup to school is made very smoothly.
46. Provision for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall, and has improved very well since the previous inspection.
47. Provision for the promotion of pupils' spiritual development is very good. The strong Christian ethos of the school supports pupils' spiritual development well. Assemblies provide opportunities for reflection, for instance focusing on a lighted candle, and for consideration of other religions, as well as social and moral topics. Music by Debussy and art by Monet were well used in one assembly seen, to create moments of spirituality. Pupils reflect on things and places special to themselves. Opportunities are provided for pupils to enjoy spiritual moments in subjects such as science, music and art and design, but especially in religious education, as seen in the Years 3 and 4 class, where pupils reflected on what they would put into their special individual boxes, for example 'the breath of my grandpa, the nibble of my hamster and the friendship of my best friend'.
48. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils abide by a clear code of conduct and adults are good role models. An effective system of rewards and sanctions is in place. Pupils make up their own classroom and playground codes such as 'Help anyone, and look after the little ones', and generally live well by them. Teachers have high expectations of conduct and anti-social behaviour is dealt with firmly. Assemblies are used well to promote moral issues such as a radio broadcast assembly on the subject of 'Owls', which contained a strong moral message for pupils. Honesty, fairness, caring for others and respecting their views are strongly emphasised. Circle time is used well to discuss moral issues.

49. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Within the mixed-age classes, pupils of two, and sometimes three, different age groups work well together. Boys and girls generally work well together in pairs or small groups. The 'buddy' reading system encourages relationships between older and younger pupils and these contacts are developed beyond the learning situation. A 'buddy bench' is to be placed in the playground to encourage such friendships. Older pupils learn to take responsibility for their younger charges. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils, especially those in Years 5 and 6, to take responsibilities and show initiative. A 'thank you' book is well used by lunchtime supervisors to promote and reward good playground behaviour, co-operative play and general helpfulness such as one pupil staying to keep another company when she didn't feel well. Pupils are very supportive of each other's achievements, as seen in the spontaneous applause given in a Years 3 and 4 lesson after a pupil had read out his work to the class.
50. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils' awareness of their own culture is strongly supported by art and music, through displays around the school and provision made in assemblies. Provision for pupils' understanding of other cultures is satisfactory. One good display by older pupils was seen, with information about the Torah, the Shabbat and Hanukkah, but pupils generally have insufficient awareness of other cultures, and focus on this aspect around the school is limited. Other religions such as Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism are studied in depth in religious education lessons. However, because of their location, pupils are unable to mix with children from other religions and cultural backgrounds, and there are no arrangements, such as a link with an inner city school, to extend pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Strengths

- Pupil's welfare, health and safety are given a high priority by staff and governors.
- Procedures for promoting good behaviour and for minimising oppressive behaviour are very good.
- Systems for monitoring and improving attendance are very good.
- Teachers assess pupils' academic and personal development well and use the information effectively to plan daily lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Although informal awareness is very high, formal arrangements for child protection are not fully in place.
- Registration does not always take place as soon as school starts in the morning.
- Assessment information is not used to formally identify pupils who may be gifted or talented.

51. At the time of the previous inspection, provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare was reported to be good. These high standards have been successfully maintained. Teachers know the pupils very well and those pupils who have particular problems are very well understood and given good support.
52. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health, safety and security are good. Pupils readily go to teachers if they need help. Pupils see teachers and other adults as

confidants, a part of the life they share with friends and neighbours in the village. The safe and secure atmosphere contributes to pupils' confidence, their very good attitudes to work and play and the very good relationships which are a strength of the school.

53. Child protection procedures work well informally because the teachers and other staff know the pupils very well, but formal procedures, based on the local education authority's guidelines, have yet to be fully introduced. Health and safety procedures are very good. Formal health and safety inspections take place each term and fire evacuation procedures are regularly practised.
54. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and responsible attitudes are very good. Teachers and non-teaching staff use praise and encouragement very effectively, so that sanctions are rarely needed. Those few pupils who have behavioural difficulties are helped by their teachers to adopt the very good behaviour of their classmates. There have been very few recent recorded incidents of bullying. When questioned about this, pupils confirmed that they were not concerned by bullying or unkind behaviour because it is rare and, if it occurs, is quickly dealt with. Awareness of racial harmony is satisfactory.
55. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The main reasons for authorised absence are sickness and holidays taken in term time. Unauthorised absence is rare. Registration procedures meet the basic requirements in that pupils' attendance is recorded twice a day. However, on those mornings when parents stay for guided reading, registers are completed after this session, which means that for the first half hour of the day, there is no record of which children are on site.
56. The school has a very close relationship with the local playgroup, which helps children, and their parents, when they first join reception. Liaison arrangements with the secondary school are very effective, and Year 6 pupils move confidently on to the next stage of their education as a result. Relationships and co-operation with external professional agencies, including the education welfare officer and educational psychologist, are very positive and helpful.
57. The school's arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are good, and have improved well since the previous inspection. They are very well developed in the core subjects of English and mathematics. For example, a recent whole-school assessment task, to show progression in pattern as part of the numeracy strategy, is being used effectively to inform and improve teachers' planning and pupils' standards in this aspect of mathematics. Procedures in science, and in the non-core subjects are satisfactory.
58. Information and communication technology is used well by staff to record assessments and to monitor and track pupils' progress over time. The analysis of data from standardised tests is thorough and is being well used to set targets for whole-class improvements, as well as for individual improvement, particularly in English and mathematics. Targets are used effectively in planning to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress over time. Assessment in the non-core subjects is developing well, and regular evaluations of how well groups of pupils achieve in lessons are used by subject co-ordinators to monitor learning in their subject. Teachers complete useful evaluations for almost every lesson.

59. Profiles for children in the reception class have recently been introduced and contain detail descriptions of each child's progress throughout the year. A new assessment policy is helping to improve practice across the school. Assessment is well used to identify pupils with special needs and provide individual education plans for them. It is less successful in identifying pupils who may be gifted or talented in a particular curriculum area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Strengths

- The school's partnership with parents is very good.
- Parents are very pleased with the life and work of the school.
- Information provided for parents about school life and their children's progress is very good.
- The parents', teachers' and friends' association provides very good practical and financial support.
- Pupils benefit from parents' very good contribution to their learning in school and at home.

60. At the time of the last inspection, the school's relationship with parents and the local community was judged to be very good and this favourable position has been successfully maintained. Parents have a very high opinion of the school and the education it provides for their children, leading to the school intake being currently oversubscribed.
61. Comments made at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection, and the results of the parents' questionnaire, show that parents are very pleased with the education and care provided for their children. Parents consider the school to be well led and managed, and that teachers and other staff are easily approachable when they have concerns, which are dealt with sympathetically. Suggestions from parents are welcomed, although some parents commented that the response to new ideas has sometimes seemed conservative. They are pleased that their children like going to school, and that they make good progress, behave well and are helped to become mature and responsible.
62. Most parents are pleased with the information they receive about their children's progress, particularly at the interviews during parents' evenings which they find more informative than the written reports. They are pleased with the quality of teaching and like the fact that teachers have high expectations of their children. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are closely involved in annual progress reviews and report that they are kept fully informed of the contents of their children's individual education plans. Parents are generally satisfied that their children get the right amount of homework. Some parents expressed regret that after-school activities were run entirely by parents, with no involvement of school staff.
63. Inspectors largely endorse parents' positive views. However, although they agree that pupils are helped to become mature and responsible, inspectors judge that opportunities are missed to involve pupils more fully in the day-to-day running of the school. Inspectors note that staff are rarely involved in running after-school clubs but judge that the programme of extra-curricular activities planned for pupils, and carried out by teaching staff each year, makes a significant contribution to standards in several areas of the curriculum.

64. The quality of information provided by the school is very good and keeps parents well informed about forthcoming school events and curriculum developments. The prospectus, subject of a key issue in the previous report, and the annual governors' report to parents are informative, well produced and contain all the required statutory detail. Parents appreciate the 'open door' policy established by the previous headteacher, and express the hope that this policy will continue to operate under the school's new leadership. Parents' attendance at school events, concerts and productions is very good and they give very good support to their children's work in this respect.

65. Virtually all parents help with their children's learning at home, mostly by hearing them read and with spelling and number work. The parents', teachers' and friends' association is very active in organising social events, which help to promote and maintain very good relationships between parents, the local village community, the church and the school, as well as raising very valuable funds for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Strengths

- There is a shared commitment amongst all staff to school improvement; teamwork is excellent.
- Governors are very involved in planning the future development of the school and have a very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths.
- Pupils benefit from the effective use of staffing, resources and available finances.

Area for improvement

- Subject co-ordinators have very few opportunities to observe their colleagues teach.

66. At the time of this inspection, the headteacher had been in post for one week only and so it is not possible to make judgements about the quality of her leadership and management.
67. Using evidence gained from discussions with the previous headteacher prior to the inspection, and discussions with governors, staff, parents and pupils, it is possible to judge that the school's good improvement since the previous inspection is largely due to the clear educational direction provided by the previous headteacher to the life and work of the school. He promoted the school's aims and values very well through his participation in assemblies and the time he gave to individuals and groups of pupils when they had problems or worries, reflecting the strong emphasis in the school on pupils' personal, as well as their academic, development. The results of his effective leadership are seen in the very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, the good breadth and balance of the curriculum and the good progress made by pupils.
68. The teamwork amongst all staff and governors is excellent. For example, curriculum subjects are reviewed as a team, with the teacher responsible for a subject taking the lead in staff meetings. Views and opinions are sought from governors, teaching assistants and pupils and this helps to promote consistent implementation by all staff of decisions made and policies agreed. The benefits of this democratic process are seen, for example, in the improvement in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology standards since the last inspection. The commitment to raising standards further is very good.
69. The school is very well managed. The headteacher and teaching staff all have classroom commitments which give them little time each day to monitor and evaluate the life and work of the school. However, the procedures for gathering information about the effectiveness of the school's work are good and an improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Subject co-ordinators work hard, looking at pupils' work, monitoring lesson plans and gathering the opinions of colleagues about standards. However, they have few opportunities to see colleagues teach, in order to strengthen their knowledge of how well teachers' plans are put into practice. The headteacher maintains an overview of school improvement and leads staff in analysing the information gathered about standards and the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, pupils have benefited from improvements to resources, for instance in information and communication technology, to the provision of many

interesting visits and visitors to school and improvements to the school buildings and grounds.

70. An important element of the way staff look to improve standards is in the good quality of assessment procedures. Teachers have implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy very well and monitor and evaluate their effectiveness on a regular basis. Analysis of school and national test and assessment information, in conjunction with evaluation of lessons and the following, or tracking, of individual pupils' progress, means that staff have a good knowledge and understanding of strengths and areas for improvement in English and mathematics. Other subjects of the curriculum are reviewed less often but, at various times, as part of a well-planned three-year programme. However, assessment procedures are in place for each curriculum subject and provide staff with useful information about standards.
71. The management and support of pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs works closely with members of the local education authority advisory services, who are very supportive of the school. Similar good liaison with the local secondary school ensures that transition is smooth and expertise shared. Arrangements for the new Code of Practice have been fully implemented. Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed and the information gained is well used to improve their achievements and build on earlier skills.
72. The management of teaching assistants is very good. Their time is effectively organised so that each pupil who requires help receives good quality guidance and support. During the inspection, lessons were characterised by very effective liaison between teachers and teaching assistants, working together to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. Governors have a good oversight of provision for special educational needs and support all staff well. The good policy for special educational needs is well used to drive practice and ensure that the needs of these pupils are fully met. There is, however, a lack of identification and provision for those pupils who are gifted or talented in a particular area; this inhibits higher achievement by these particular pupils.
73. At the time of the previous inspection, governors were judged to be insufficiently involved in the strategic development of the school. Improvement has been good since then. Governors play an important part in shaping the future direction of the school. This is evident in their close involvement in the compilation and review of the school improvement plan, in which aims and objectives are documented for up to three years ahead. Led by an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and hardworking chair of governors, members of the governing body have established a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement through informal and formal visits to school, through curriculum links with staff and attendance at, and involvement in, school events.
74. The school improvement plan is a good working document which helps governors to regularly assess how well they are achieving the set priorities. The plan identifies responsibilities, targets, success criteria and budgetary allocations. The success criteria are especially important to governors in clearly stating what it is that priorities are intended to improve and the factors that will indicate that action has been successful and has had an impact on standards. This good practice is evident in the minutes of the governors' meetings, which record careful analysis of a wide range of information before decisions are made.

75. Governors manage the school's finances very well. Effective forward planning is successful in setting future priorities and provides a basis for efficient financial planning. For example, governors anticipated that the budget for 2003/2004 would be lower than the previous year and, although the shortfall was considerably greater than had been predicted, sensible financial accounting meant that the impact on staffing and resources was considerably reduced. Additional finances are used well, for instance in extending the old School House and there is good liaison with the parents', teachers' and friends' association in deciding how funds raised can be most effectively spent. For instance, outside play equipment was purchased with these funds to help raise pupils' standards in physical education.
76. Governors apply the principles of best value very well. They compare the school's results with those of others and look for good value for money when making purchases. The school's income per pupil is high, reflecting its small size, but it uses resources very well and gives good value for money.
77. There is a good match of teachers and teaching assistants to the demands of the curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants are trained appropriately for the ages of the pupils with whom they are working, and to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. Teaching assistants work very well with class teachers. Financial restraints mean that pupils in the class containing reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils cannot always be taught in two classes, and one teacher is currently on a fixed short-term contract. This has a negative impact on planning and standards. However, the school makes the best provision it can under these circumstances. Where two teachers work together within one class, good liaison ensures appropriate sharing of information and continuity of learning for the pupils.
78. Lunchtime supervisors are effectively trained and provide good support for pupils, ensuring that high standards of conduct are maintained in the dining room and in the playground. Length of service is a feature of staffing generally. The same lady who cooks for the children also cleans for them and, along with many other staff, has given loyal and dedicated service to the school. Administrative staff provide very good support, ensuring the smooth running of day-to-day management. There has been considerable stability of staffing, both teaching and non-teaching, over a long period of time. This high level of experience contributes significantly to the overall effectiveness of the school.
79. Procedures for performance management and staff appraisal are effective and well established. Arrangements for the induction of teachers new to the school are very good. A trained mentor works closely with newly qualified staff, identifying areas for development, monitoring teaching and ensuring a good start to the teacher's professional career. Release time is granted daily for preparation, and visits to other schools are arranged to observe further examples of good practice.
80. The standard of accommodation is largely satisfactory, but some parts of the school are not used effectively enough to support pupils' learning. The main school building remains much as it was at the time of the last report. The two classrooms are of adequate size, but the classroom containing reception children still lacks a secure outdoor play area, an issue highlighted in the previous report. The small school hall continues to house the library, a piano and resources for music and physical education. The remaining space, with obstructions around the edges, is too small and cluttered to be used effectively and safely for energetic indoor physical education and restricts the progress that pupils make in their physical development.

81. The classroom in the old School House has been increased in size since the last inspection by the addition of an extension, which has increased the space available. However, the L-shaped layout makes it difficult for teachers to monitor the whole space without the help of an assistant. During the inspection, there were occasions when the learning of the Years 5 and 6 pupils was hindered by the limited space available to them, the physically largest pupils in the school, for example when pupils were required to take part in group activities. Movement around the classroom between the tightly packed desks and chairs is not easy and requires very careful management and organisation by staff. The new headteacher and staff have some useful ideas for making more effective use of the accommodation in both buildings, which could take effect from the start of the next academic year.
82. Externally, playgrounds are good sized and provided with interesting play equipment but the split layout makes it difficult for the one person available to monitor and ensure safety while the other lunchtime supervisor is in the dining room, supervising those children who are eating their meal. There is an old and somewhat dilapidated swimming pool which is very little used now that better facilities are available in Crediton. The school is giving thought to how best to free up and use the space the pool occupies. Pupils benefit from a good sized playing field, and a woodland environmental area which is a valuable resource and is used well to support learning in science, geography and to promote pupils' personal development.
83. Resources overall are satisfactory in both sufficiency and quality. Reception children are benefiting from increased provision of good quality large play equipment. A recent audit of resources by staff has resulted in the addition of materials and equipment to support individual units of study in many subjects. The number of computers and books per pupil is generous for a small school, but there are insufficient books in the library about other religions and cultures, and this limits the progress pupils make in their cultural development and their awareness of racial harmony. The school is fortunate to have a library area and makes good use of it, though its location in the main hall, along with resources for music and science, restricts space for physical education lessons.
84. Resources for science are particularly well organised – colour coded, labelled and centrally accessible, and a model for other subjects to follow. Elsewhere, there is need for some tidying and improvement in organisation. Small individual whiteboards are used effectively in many lessons to support pupils' learning. The school is aware of a need to build up the stock of artefacts to support pupils' learning in history and religious education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

85. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Formalise procedures for the identification of, and provision for, gifted and talented pupils;
(Paragraphs: 2, 30, 40, 59, 72, 100, 114, 132, 139, 146, 181)
 - (2) Provide more opportunities for pupils to be more involved in the day-to-day running of the school;
(Paragraphs: 17, 43, 49, 63, 87)
 - (3) Make more effective use of the accommodation by:
 - i) creating a secure outside area for children in the Foundation Stage;
 - ii) creating more space in the hall for physical education lessons;
 - iii) looking for ways to give the oldest pupils in the school more room in which to work.
(Paragraphs: 5, 16, 22, 32, 35, 80, 83, 88, 96, 193, 196)

Other matters for consideration by the school

1. Ensure that morning registration each day takes place as soon as the school day begins.
(Paragraph: 55)
2. Provide opportunities for subject co-ordinators to observe their colleagues teach.
(Paragraphs: 69, 163, 203)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	10	13	2	0	0	0
Percentage	4	38	50	8	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three 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)	73
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	5	7	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (91)	100 (91)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

NB: Separate boys' and girls' results are not published because fewer than ten boys/girls took the tests.

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	9	5	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Total	13	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	93 (100)	86 (100)	93 (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	71 (100)	86 (100)	93 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

NB: Separate boys' and girls' results are not published because fewer than ten boys/girls took the tests.

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	73	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.1
Average class size	19.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	180,656
Total expenditure	167,958
Expenditure per pupil	2,153
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,480
Balance carried forward to next year	27,178

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.9

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	158
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	38	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	53	45	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	49	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	57	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	64	33	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	67	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	21	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	52	0	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	36	52	10	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	61	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	41	20	17	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Strengths

- Children make good progress and achieve well in most areas of learning and are well prepared for work in Year 1.
- Children benefit from consistently good teaching.
- Activities are often interesting and motivating.
- Children benefit from working with older pupils in the class.

Areas for improvement

- Tasks are sometimes too formal, with not enough opportunities for children to make choices.
- The school does not have a secure outside play area.

86. Provision for the Foundation Stage of learning in reception is good and children make good gains in academic and social skills. On entry to school, just before their fifth birthday, most children already achieve the expected levels of attainment for their age. During their time in reception, they make very good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress is good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics and creative development so that, by the time they start in Year 1, they exceed the nationally expected standards, called early learning goals, in these areas of their development. They make satisfactory progress in their physical development and, by the time they enter Year 1, have achieved the expected standard.
87. Children entering reception join pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the same class, and benefit from working with older peers. The classroom atmosphere is warm and welcoming, and a good range of activities is provided as part of everyday school life. Staff are skilled at including all children in the tasks so that they feel happy and secure in their learning. At times, however, the approach is too formal for such young children. Occasionally, they are expected to sit still for too long and there are too few opportunities for them to choose activities for themselves or move freely from one activity to another. This leads to frustration and a lack of opportunity for each child to follow their own interests and extend their skills further.
88. The accommodation is satisfactory; it is well presented and inviting. However, there remains a lack of a secure outdoor play area and play opportunities for these children. Provision has improved slightly since the previous inspection; there are now a few large wheeled toys and some outdoor playground climbing equipment. During the inspection, these were rarely used and, too often, children are offered a Key Stage 1 model of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

89. By the time they enter Year 1, children have made good progress and achieve above the standards expected. On entry to school, children are independent in many ways. They quickly take responsibility for their own belongings and frequently take part in tidying the classroom and organising their resources. They play well together, take turns politely, and talk confidently to adults and peers. The quality of teaching and

learning is good. Teachers and the teaching assistant provide good role models for children to follow. Children benefit from the good range of collaborative activities planned so that they learn to interact well and help others.

Communication, language and literacy

90. Provision and teaching for communication, language and literacy are good. As a result, children make good progress in speaking, reading and writing skills throughout the reception year. By the time they start in Year 1, children have exceeded the expected standard. Children are keen to look at books and enjoy listening to stories told by the teacher. They relate many familiar rhymes and stories in their own words, and many are beginning to read simple text. Almost all children write their own names, and many are beginning to write simple, phonetically accurate words and sentences to illustrate their pictures.
91. Teachers encourage interaction, particularly during the literacy hour, and effective questioning is helping children to think carefully about their work. Many children identify initial sounds in words, and a few also find the end sound. Very good links with parents enhance provision and there is a positive partnership between home and school, which is much appreciated by parents.

Mathematical development

92. Provision for mathematical development is good and children make good gains in learning about numbers, shapes, space and measures. Many children exceed the expected standards by the time they start in Year 1. Daily opportunities to join in with number rhymes and songs help to develop confidence and enjoyment in mathematics. Children quickly learn to recognise numerals to 10 and beyond, and almost all children in the group add one more to a given number. They use the language of number well when working with shapes, describing a square as having 'four sides', and they are beginning to show understanding that all the sides of a square 'are the same'.
93. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good and children benefit from working in a small group with an adult each day. This gives them frequent opportunities to join in, answer questions and form opinions. Staff show an interest in what they are doing and so children feel proud of their work and want to do more. Number stories, such as 'The Three Little Pigs', are a regular part of the curriculum and increase children's confidence and enjoyment in learning. Occasionally, lessons are too teacher directed and this inhibit opportunities for children to explore numbers for themselves so that they can learn about number, shapes and space through investigations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

94. Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good and almost all children exceed the expected standards well before they start in Year 1. For example, during a lesson about their local village, many children could name places, streets and shops from photographs. Their use of geographical vocabulary was very good as they described buildings as semi-detached, thatched or made of bricks.
95. Good teaching and provision of resources is helping children to learn about the world around them in an exciting and realistic way. Evidence of past work shows that children have benefited from a range of visitors to the class to talk about different lifestyles and cultures. They have used a range of materials to create houses from

Mexico and Africa, and have learned how to look after a pet. During a topic on 'The Three Little Pigs' story, children investigated the materials that might have been used to build the little pigs' houses.

Physical development

96. Children make satisfactory progress in physical development and, by the time they start in Year 1, achieve the expected standards. Teaching during physical education lessons is good, with a wide variety of activities to promote improvements in physical ability. However, there is no opportunity for children to choose outdoor play each day as part of their learning programme. This is because of the lack of a free access from indoors to outdoors and this limits children's rate of progress.
97. Children benefit from good role modelling by older pupils in the class. For example, during a physical education lesson, children were observed running, skipping and hopping with enthusiasm, practising and improving their skills as they worked with older partners. Children are developing good awareness of the need to exercise and understanding of the health benefits. For example, they were able to 'find their hearts' after running around the playground, commenting on how fast they were pumping. Children enjoy using equipment such as balls, hoops and beanbags, and throw and catch carefully. They do not have sufficient opportunity, however, to use large wheeled toys. There are too few of these to enable the development of play skills, and there are no pedal toys to help improve pushing skills.

Creative development

98. Children make good progress in their creative development and, by the time they start in Year 1, exceed the expected standards. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide a wide range of activities to promote exploration of paint, colour, materials and sounds. Children have created paper sculptures, designed and made a coat of many colours for Joseph and used the computer to 'paint' pictures. Their drawings and paintings show good use of colour and texture. The classroom contains appropriate areas for role-play and use of puppets. Children were observed in the playhouse outside the classroom role-playing with each other sensibly and imaginatively.

ENGLISH

Strengths

- By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are well above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Pupils' reading skills benefit from very good support from their parents at home.
- Teachers make very effective use of national guidelines to plan interesting and stimulating lessons.

Area for improvement

- Gifted and talented pupils are not formally identified.

99. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment in English are above the national average. This is good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were reported to be satisfactory. Pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills are well

above average, and writing and spelling standards are above average. Handwriting standards are average.

100. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment overall is well above average. It is well above in speaking and listening, and in reading, and above average in writing, spelling, and handwriting. This represents very good improvement since the previous inspection, good achievement since Year 2 and very good achievement since pupils joined the school with average levels of attainment. Pupils have benefited from the effective introduction of the literacy hour, very good and experienced teaching, small classes, well-planned lessons providing for the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment, and the very good attitudes which pupils bring to their learning. Pupils with special educational needs have achieved equally well through the good support and provision made for them. Provision for gifted and talented pupils, however, is underdeveloped.
101. Standards reflect results from national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in the present Year 6, where there is a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs, are not expected to achieve as well as last year's Year 6 pupils, and targets have been set appropriately lower. It is likely that the targets will be met.
102. Care must be taken when considering the performance of small cohorts of pupils. However, in the 2002 national tests, Year 6 pupils achieved well above average results and the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average. In the 2002 national tests, 50 per cent of Year 2 pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading, which is well above average, but only eight per cent reached the higher level in writing, which was in line with the national average. Over the last four years, standards have been consistently well above average and show a rising trend. In comparison with similar schools, standards are above average. There are no significant differences between boys and girls.
103. The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy. Pupils enter the school with broadly average skills and achieve very well during their time in the school. Teachers are aware of the need to seize opportunities to develop literacy skills such as seen in one class when the teacher used a pupil's name – Hannah – to explain what a palindrome is. Good links with other subjects help develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, pupils write from the viewpoint of characters in history and in religious education, and use writing skills well when recording investigations in science.
104. Standards of speaking and listening are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils listen very well to teachers and to one another. They are taught from an early age that it is polite to listen. These very good attitudes contribute significantly to pupils' learning. Lesson plans include specific provision to develop speaking and listening, and teachers make good use of open-ended questions, which encourage pupils to form well-considered and full sentences in reply. Other opportunities for speaking occur in assemblies, in whole-class discussions, with other adults around the school, at playtime and during lunch. Pupils' well-developed language and vocabulary skills help them achieve above average standards in subjects other than English such as religious education.
105. In the mixed-age group classes, younger pupils soon pick up vocabulary from older ones. Contact with pupils in Years 5 and 6, and with parents and other adults in shared reading sessions, helps to accelerate language skills. Years 3 and 4 pupils showed a good command of vocabulary when describing degrees of fear, moving from 'frighten' to 'terrify' and 'petrify'. When presented with a moral dilemma to debate in a religious education lesson, Year 6 pupils spoke clearly and effectively, presenting

well-considered views. Pupils spoken to by inspectors showed confidence, courtesy and maturity of expression.

106. The very good provision made for the teaching of reading ensures that pupils' standards of attainment are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Staff use a variety of reading material from different commercial schemes, as well as other reading books, all carefully colour coded to ensure appropriate coverage and progression. Pupils who were heard reading during the inspection had challenging books which were successfully helping them to learn new words.
107. Daily guided reading sessions enable teachers to focus on specific reading comprehension skills, with books well matched to pupils' different levels of attainment, and to hear all pupils read individually within small groups, addressing a criticism of the previous inspection. The twice-weekly whole-school shared reading sessions, involving all pupils, reading with 'buddies', staff and parents, is especially effective. 'Buddies' and parents receive training for their tasks. This is a unique occasion, with a strong communal and inclusive atmosphere, with a good learning 'buzz' throughout the school. Older and younger pupils clearly value highly and enjoy the 'buddy' system.
108. Parents give generous support to pupils' reading in school and at home. Books are taken home on a daily basis and records of pages read, and the quality of the reading, are kept in reading diaries, which provide a good means of dialogue with parents. Year 2 pupils talk knowledgeably about the authors, illustrators, plot and characters in their stories. Higher attaining pupils understand what a 'blurb' is and all use knowledge of letter sounds and syllables to break words down correctly. They read 'brilliant' and 'frightful' correctly. They make good use of punctuation and picture clues to support their reading. They have a good understanding of the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and know how to access an index and reference books from the library. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils are fluent and independent readers.
109. Standards of writing by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. An average Year 1 pupil spells words such as 'naughty' and 'brother' correctly. Another writes a complex sentence, using capital letters for proper nouns in the middle of the sentence and an apostrophe correctly: 'My favourite part in 'Jack and the Beanstalk' was Jack getting the beans because it's a magical part'. Some teachers make pupils copy out spelling corrections and this good practice helps pupils develop good spelling standards.
110. Years 1 and 2 pupils' handwriting is of uniform size and letters sit evenly on lines. Year 2 pupils have a good grasp of the use of exclamation and question marks and many correctly punctuate direct speech. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils improved their reading research skills well by answering challenging questions such as: 'Do arachnids have bones inside their bodies?' Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils benefit from using a writing table, where headed paper for 'The Thorverton Times' and weather reports is available, but such good practice is not found in other classes.
111. In Years 3 to 6, pupils write for a variety of purposes such as play scripts, poetry, stories and write from a given individual's viewpoint such as seen in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, when Year 3 pupils wrote about a shared adventure from a boy's point of view and Year 4 from that of his father. In this lesson, pupils successfully identified and discussed personal and possessive pronouns, before using paragraphs correctly in their writing.

112. Pupils' standard of spelling is above average. From Year 3, almost all pupils write in a neat, legible joined-up hand, and handwriting is practised regularly. Presentation of written work, generally, is of a high standard. Pupils take pride in their work. Pupils' knowledge and use of grammar and punctuation are above average. During the inspection, a Year 3 girl rightly pointed out – 'It's not me and my Dad – it's my Dad and I.' Year 6 pupils wrote persuasively, analysing each other's work, one observing – 'It's a good letter, because the style used was formal.'
113. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall, a good improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have very good subject expertise and they use the literacy hour well to give support and guidance to extend pupils' learning. Teachers use a variety of effective and often imaginative methods to maintain pupils' interest. They make good use of teaching assistants. In all of the lessons seen, there was a positive and enduring working atmosphere.
114. Teachers include pupils of all capabilities well in their planning, their questioning, and in whole-class sessions at the end of lessons when reinforcing learning objectives. Targets are set, both individual, and for a whole class. Marking is generally good, but does not always sufficiently advise pupils on how to improve their work. Planning generally ensures that the needs of all differing ability groups are well met but teachers generally make insufficient provision for gifted and talented pupils, and higher attaining pupils in Years 2 and 4 are not always sufficiently challenged.
115. Leadership of the subject, which was previously in the hands of the recently retired headteacher, is in transition. The Key Stage 1 co-ordinator has responsibility for literacy within her age group and has a good grasp of standards and ways to develop the subject.
116. Staff make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and information is used well, for example to raise standards of boys' writing. Classroom displays, which are a good mixture of celebrating pupils' work and helpful information, emphasise the importance attached to the subject and its effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
117. The parents', teachers' and friends' association contributes generously to the library, and the local Village Trust has helped fund new shelving to improve the library. The library is well used. The school has a good stock of well-used story bags for younger pupils. There is an annual Christmas dramatic production which involves every pupil, but provision for drama within lessons is underdeveloped.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths

- Pupils show good recall of number facts which helps them with mental calculations and problem solving.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are very good and make a significant contribution to the standards achieved.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Teachers use assessment information well to match work to pupils' differing capabilities.

Area for improvement

- Gifted and talented pupils are not formally identified in order to extend provision for them.

118. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be in line with the national average. Improvement has been good since then. Teachers have made very effective use of national guidelines to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above the national average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
119. Standards by the end of Year 6, as shown by the results of national tests, were above or well above average between 1998 and 2002. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in the 2002 national tests was very high. It is likely that pupils in the present Year 6 will achieve similar standards in the 2003 national tests.
120. The 2002 national test results show that the percentage of pupils in Year 2 achieving the expected Level 2 or more was very high, in the top five per cent nationally; the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was average.
121. Staff have worked hard to raise standards and maintain them at levels above, and often well above, those found in most other primary schools nationally. They have made very effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines to improve provision. For example, mental sessions at the beginning of lessons are used well to stimulate pupils' thinking. As a result, pupils are keen and ready to undertake individual and group activities later in the lesson. Whole-class sessions at the end of lessons are used well to discuss what has been learned and for both teachers and pupils to assess how successful the lessons have been.
122. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have acquired a good range of skills, knowledge and understanding across the required curriculum. A particular strength is their recall of number facts such as multiplication tables, which they apply effectively to other mathematical tasks such as solving problems and calculating addition and subtraction of money. For example, Year 2 pupils were observed completing a chart by entering data as they worked out, for example, how many toes two three-legged monsters had between them. Most of the pupils worked quickly and very few required counting equipment to help them. Two higher attaining pupils completed the task accurately and used their previous knowledge and understanding well to mentally calculate many of the answers.
123. Pupils are developing a good awareness of pattern in number and are quick to inform their teacher when they see a pattern emerging in columns and rows of numbers. In the Year 2 lesson observed, higher attaining pupils used emerging patterns well to reduce the amount of calculation required to complete answers in their charts, whereas others made incorrect assumptions before testing the pattern and needed the help of their teacher to point out their error.
124. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop very good attitudes to mathematics. This is largely due to the way they are encouraged to talk about their work and explain their methods. Whole-class discussions are of a high standard as pupils share ideas and methods confidently because they know that their views will be respected and valued.
125. Throughout Years 3 to 6, these very good attitudes are sustained and good progress and achievement are maintained. Year 3 pupils made good gains in their knowledge

and understanding of interpreting graphs as they worked in groups to prepare questions for other pupils to answer. They were well supported by a teaching assistant, and the use of personal whiteboards was helpful in assisting pupils to write questions down quickly and to make changes as they discussed how the questions might be improved.

126. Year 4 pupils used laptop computers to support their learning as they practised how to enter information into a database. Higher attaining pupils were quick to spot if rows of numbers did not add up correctly because they had given inaccurate instructions to the computer. Lower attaining and special educational needs pupils benefited from good support from the class teacher and her effective use of a large monitor screen to demonstrate skills and techniques to help them.
127. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of fractions, percentages and probability. They competently round three digit numbers to the nearest 10 or 100, and four digit numbers to the nearest 1000, have a good awareness of perimeter and area and know the names of regular and irregular two- and three-dimensional shapes.
128. Year 6 pupils were observed revising their knowledge and understanding of negative numbers. The teacher had provided a challenging negative number game. Pupils played the game keenly and used their previous learning well to succeed. During a whole-class discussion about negative numbers, pupils offered several examples of where negative numbers are used in real life and this was helpful in making the activity relevant. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards of attainment are above average overall, with a small number of higher attaining pupils working at levels well above average.
129. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are characterised by activities that are interesting and motivating. Activities are often linked to work in other subjects such as science, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this well to challenge pupils of different capabilities with questions and problem-solving situations.
130. One of the main reasons why pupils do so well is because teachers use assessment information effectively to adjust planning from day-to-day to meet individual needs. Virtually all lessons are evaluated on a daily basis so that tasks for the following day can be altered or amended. School and national test and assessment data is analysed carefully over time so that pupils are set demanding but achievable personal targets, and this helps them to make good progress.
131. Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are very good. Consequently, there are often light-hearted moments in lessons and these help to create a relaxed working atmosphere. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils were delighted when their teaching assistant proudly announced that she had managed to enter data into a laptop computer accurately for the first time. The subject is used well to promote pupils' moral and social development through co-operative activities, sharing equipment and whole-class discussions.
132. Two members of staff share the co-ordination of the subject and lead their colleagues well. They have helped staff to implement national guidelines effectively and they make sure that resources are of good quantity and quality and readily available. A new commercial mathematics scheme was introduced about two years ago and its

impact on standards is regularly reviewed and assessed by the co-ordinators. Pupils' learning is extended by a range of additional activities, for example through links with the secondary school, entry into national mathematics competitions and subscriptions to mathematical magazines. Co-ordinators are aware that some pupils are especially gifted and talented. Although some activities are planned for these pupils, they have not been formally identified in order to focus more time and resources on their needs.

SCIENCE

Strengths

- Pupils are developing good skills of scientific enquiry in all classes.
- Pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding across a wide range of areas of study.
- Work is well presented and pupils record results of investigations very carefully.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The scheme of work helps teachers to plan interesting, stimulating lessons.

Area for improvement

- Opportunities are missed to provide especially challenging tasks for higher attaining pupils.

133. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' standards were reported to be in line with the national average. There has been good improvement since then. Adjustments to the scheme of work, more effective procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve mean that, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards are above average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well.
134. During Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills. This is due mainly to the good quality of teaching and learning and pupils' very good attitudes to their work. As a result, Year 1 pupils know the five senses. They are familiar with the life cycle of a frog and the conditions necessary for a seed to develop into a healthy plant. They are familiar with simple classification as they sort materials and their properties.
135. Year 2 pupils know that a range of appliances use electricity to produce sound, light and heat. They make and draw simple circuits. Their knowledge and understanding of materials is successfully extended by interesting and motivating tasks such as investigating whether or not it was a good idea for Cinderella to have a slipper made of glass. Pupils benefit from effective use of the school site to develop their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. By the end of Year 2, they show good levels of general knowledge about a wide range of scientific areas. They are developing a good awareness of the fact that tests must be carried out fairly in order for results to be valid. They complete a good quantity of well-presented drawings and writing and higher attaining pupils in particular include significant amounts of detail as they write about their investigations.
136. The good rate of progress established in Years 1 and 2 is successfully maintained in Years 3 to 6. Pupils benefit from the experience of carrying out a wide range of experiments and investigations. This strong emphasis on learning by doing makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved. Pupils' past work shows that

investigations and experiments support all areas of the required curriculum. An important consequence of this work is that pupils develop good skills of prediction and of drawing conclusions from results. This was evident in a lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils. They made sensible predictions about possible variations in the effectiveness of different methods of separating materials.

137. By the end of Year 6, all pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of how to set up fair experiments. They have a broad range of factual knowledge, for instance about food chains, evaporation, condensation and light. They speak confidently about their work, using appropriate scientific vocabulary, and carry out investigations carefully and sensibly.
138. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' practical approach to science is successful in stimulating pupils' interest and, as a result, attitudes to work and behaviour in lessons is consistently very good. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed experimenting with their senses as they felt objects inside a bag. They were eager to have a turn and participated very well in discussions. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed excellent levels of concentration and effort as they studied photographs of animal skulls to see if they could identify the creatures and draw conclusions about their diet by studying their teeth. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 organised themselves very well as they collected equipment and resources in order to find the best way to separate materials. These lessons were all characterised by teachers' thorough planning, provision and use of good resources and high expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements.
139. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress well by testing pupils before and after each unit of study. They record these results carefully and use them to make adjustments to future lessons. Generally, pupils are well challenged by the activities set, but there is a tendency for all pupils to tackle the same task, so that, for example, higher attaining pupils complete the same work as other pupils before they are given more demanding tasks. Teachers share information and plan together and this helps the co-ordinator to be aware of standards. However, assessment information is not formally put together and analysed to provide an overall picture of strengths and areas for improvement in pupils' standards, so that, for example, planning could be adjusted to provide more demanding tasks at times for the higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils.
140. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has been especially effective in leading staff in adapting national guidelines and including these in a good quality scheme of work. Pupils in each year group tackle investigations and experiments based on interesting and stimulating questions such as 'How did the Hungry Caterpillar change into a butterfly?', 'Can you make a raft or a parachute for the Gingerbread Boy?' or 'Why are bridges different shapes?' These themes are linked very effectively to other subjects of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy, design and technology and personal, social and health education and help to make activities relevant to pupils' daily work. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning. Shared enjoyment and excitement of discovery and working together to complete activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very well. Resources are well organised and easily accessible to staff and pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths

- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum, with effective links with other subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good.

Area for improvement

- Work set does not always meet the needs of pupils' different capabilities.

141. It was not possible to observe any art and design lessons during the inspection, and so it is not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Judgements about standards are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and from discussions with teachers and pupils from Years 2 and 6.
142. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with nationally expected standards. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when similar standards were recognised. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
143. Year 2 pupils, copying pictures of a variety of buildings, make rough drawings first before using crayons to make effective colouring. They have created silhouettes of roofs of buildings with a sunset background. Red and yellow paint has been mixed effectively to create the sunset effect. Cutting and pasting skills have been used well to draw buildings with a white pen on black card and to stick them onto the background. Pupils print patterns using a variety of stamps and show good awareness of how to mix colours, knowing, for example, that red and brown make purple, and black and white make grey. They make collages from playground texture rubbings, and paint in the style of Paul Klee, using a computer program well to draw shapes. Pupils benefit from a well-balanced study of shape and pattern, use of information and communication technology, observational drawing and a study of the works of other artists such as Lowry and Monet.
144. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 draw animals in their sketchbooks, following a visit to Paignton Zoo. Their work shows close attention to detail. They produce colourful examples of Chinese paintings and Islamic art. By the end of Year 6, pupils work well in textiles, enlarging a smaller design pattern and then roller printing onto fabric. They know the names of Van Gogh, Picasso and Monet, and some details of their lives, but are unsure of their works or styles of painting. They have used charcoal for their sketches, created masks, used pastels and chalks to draw landscapes and, as a joint venture, have painted the backdrop for the school Christmas production. They have a good understanding of how shapes fit together but have made little use of information and communication technology in their artwork and have no sketchbooks.
145. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership and gives good support to colleagues as they plan their lessons. Since the previous inspection, she has led the adoption of the latest national guidelines for the subject and the incorporation of these into a new policy and scheme of work, which are helping to broaden the curriculum and raise standards. For instance, there are good links with other subjects such as history and geography. The subject is taught in time blocks of one afternoon a week for half a term. Although this is only just in line with the minimum time recommended, subject skills are taught progressively between year groups.
146. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory. Pupils' work is assessed informally after each topic. Staff have begun to compile a portfolio of samples of pupils' work but this

has yet to be completed and samples levelled against national criteria. The co-ordinator has introduced the use of good quality sketchbooks, which pupils will take with them as they progress through the school. These are already beginning to show good achievement by younger pupils and are helping to raise standards. However, insufficient provision is made for higher attaining pupils, particularly any who may be gifted or talented, because lessons tend to be whole class, with pupils of different capabilities tackling similar tasks. The subject co-ordinator has not yet been able to monitor teaching and learning within the classroom in order to extend her knowledge and understanding of pupils' achievements.

147. The subject strongly supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development. For example, pupils benefit from taking part in local and national competitions. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and well distributed in individual classrooms. The school shares a kiln with another school, and all pupils have recently made clay heads as part of a local arts exhibition.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils are provided with a wide range of design and make activities.
- Tasks are linked closely to classroom projects, which help to make them relevant for pupils.

Area for improvement

- Pupils' skills of evaluating products and adjusting their designs are not as well developed as their making skills.

148. Only one design and technology lesson was seen during the inspection, and so it is not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Judgements about standards are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and from discussions with teachers and pupils from Years 2 and 6.
149. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with nationally expected standards. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
150. Years 1 and 2 pupils benefit from tackling a wide range of design and make activities. For example, they design and make Joseph's coat of many colours, with pieces of fabric sewn together and embellished with coloured strips. They make paper sculptures and model houses. They test materials such as straw, sticks, bricks and plastic, which they use in the construction of a house for the mother of the 'Three Little Pigs'. All these activities help pupils to develop satisfactory skills of cutting, fixing and manipulating small equipment such as scissors and needles.
151. Pupils' cultural development is promoted well as they design and make tepees and African round houses, torah scrolls and Mexican flags and masks, using a variety of materials and fabrics. In food technology, they produce, and enjoy testing, a fruit salad. Their work is closely linked with other subjects of the curriculum such as science, geography and religious education and this helps to add relevance to their tasks. However, pupils' design skills are more advanced than their ability to evaluate a product.
152. In the one lesson observed, in the Years 3 and 4 class, the teaching, learning and attitudes of the pupils were excellent. The teacher used a stimulating and imaginative method, creating 'bread world' in the classroom. Pupils took the role of visiting delegates discovering different types of bread. Results were recorded in a database, using information and communication technology skills to good effect, and skills learned in a mathematics lesson from the previous day. The same class has made excellent paper sculptures, for example a Dalmatian dog, using papier-mâché, and purses for different groups of people. They accurately label their diagrams and make simple evaluations and suggestions for improvements.
153. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made slippers using a template for their designs, embellishing the finished product with a variety of imaginative designs such as a Union Jack or images of cats. In food technology they have made bread. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to make wheeled vehicles or moving mechanisms, using electrical or mechanical components or to disassemble products to discover how they work.

154. The co-ordinator was, until recently, the previous headteacher and so leadership of the subject is in a transition stage at present. Since the previous inspection, staff have successfully adopted the latest national guidance for the subject, and a new policy and scheme of work are in place, which are helping to raise standards. A two-year rolling programme of topics ensures that there is no unnecessary repetition of activities. The co-operative group work that characterises many of the activities planned promotes pupils' social and personal development very well.
155. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Teachers assess pupils' achievements after each completed topic, an improvement since the previous inspection, but assessment information is not used well enough to plan activities that regularly challenge pupils of differing capabilities, especially higher attaining pupils.
156. Resources are adequate but in need of reorganisation such as labelling and being made more readily accessible. Food technology is well provided for, but the use of information and communication technology to support the subject is inconsistent and the use of different types of tools is less well developed.

GEOGRAPHY

Strengths

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements.
- Activities are supported by a good range of resources which help to stimulate and motivate pupils.
- Effective use is made of the local environment to extend pupils' learning.

Area for improvement

- More could be done to challenge pupils of the very highest capability.

157. Standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 2 are similar to those expected nationally and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their lessons. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards above the national expectations and they make good progress throughout Years 3 to 6. Good attention is paid to the systematic development of literacy skills through geographical studies. No judgement was made about standards at the time of the previous inspection. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, and so there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.
158. Pupils in the Years 1 and 2 class enjoy geography and show good prior knowledge of the local environment. In one lesson, they were observed eagerly discussing local photographs, identifying places and names of different streets. They showed satisfactory observation skills as they commented on the different features of buildings such as the church, their local school and the houses. They demonstrated good awareness of geographical vocabulary, naming physical and human features accurately.
159. By the end of Year 2, pupils draw a simple route map to track their own route to school, marking local features around the village. The successful organisation of the class by age helps pupils to achieve at an appropriate level, but the lack of extension tasks for the very highest ability pupils inhibits higher standards.

160. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a good range of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. In depth accounts in their books show evidence of research and information gathering, both from books and information and communication technology sources. During a study of the Ancient Egyptians, as part of a history project, pupils researched different routes to Egypt, trying to find the best and quickest way.
161. They have also undertaken a study of mountain ranges around the world, learning how mountains were formed. They have focused on the impact that mountainous regions have on population such as the development of tourism in the Alps. Pupils use their skills well to present information gathered both graphically and in writing. Their awareness of the world around them is good, and they demonstrate clear understanding of the impact of geography on people's lives and the impact of humans on the various localities that they study.
162. The quality of teaching in geography in the one lesson observed was good. Evidence from the scrutiny of planning and of pupils' past work indicates that teachers in all classes have high expectations and help pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Teachers plan lessons well and enhance learning with the use of good resources and additional enrichment activities. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils benefit from a residential experience annually, with a geography focus. Pupils are also encouraged to use the local environment to improve their knowledge about the impact of geographical features on the way local villages and towns have developed. Teachers' planning clearly identifies the geographical skills that will be taught as pupils move through the school, and this contributes significantly to the good progress that pupils achieve.
163. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership. Limited monitoring has been undertaken; for example the co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to observe her colleagues teach but, in such a small school, excellent teamwork means that teachers have access to the co-ordinator's support on a daily basis. Regular assessment of pupils' achievements at the end of each completed topic has been introduced. This is helping teachers to make changes to their planning and to further improve skills, although the tendency for all pupils to work on the same materials in lessons limits challenge for pupils with especially well-developed skills.
164. The subject is used well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The good displays of work around the school contribute to the subject's success and help pupils to feel proud of their work.

HISTORY

Strengths

- Pupils develop good skills of historical enquiry, drawing sensible conclusions about life in the past from different sources of evidence.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and show great interest in their work.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- A good range of extra-curricular visits and visitors to school extends pupils' learning.

Area for improvement

- When marking work, teachers rarely record ways that pupils might improve.

165. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, and so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. Judgements about standards are based on the one lesson seen, a study of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils.
166. At the time of the previous inspection, there was no scheme of work to support teachers' planning and to provide for the continuous and progressive development of pupils' skills between year groups and key stages. Standards were reported to be in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been a good improvement since then. Pupils benefit from well-planned, interesting lessons based securely on a good scheme of work. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are in line with expectations, and are now above expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6.
167. In Years 1 and 2, pupils benefit from the effective use by teachers of pictures, artefacts, books and videos to develop their enquiry skills. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining factual knowledge of historical events and develop a firm interest in finding out about the past. In this way, they are well prepared for their work in Years 3 to 6.
168. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the difference between the past and the present, for instance through their work on looking at similarities and differences found when studying modern domestic appliances and those used in the past. Timelines, showing significant events in pupils' lives from birth to the present day, help all pupils to gain a good awareness of chronology. They begin to make simple deductions about life in the past. For example, pupils devised a series of questions to ask a visitor to school such as: 'What did you write with?' and 'Did you have a book bag?' They then discussed the responses and drew some conclusions about school life in the past.
169. In Years 3 to 6, teachers build effectively on the interest promoted by teachers in Years 1 and 2. Historical topics are studied in considerable depth and, where possible, learning is supported by visits to places of historical interest, drama or visitors to school. One significant strength of provision is the many opportunities given to pupils to write about life in times past from the viewpoint of people living at the time. This requires pupils to conduct research to find out what life was like and successfully develops good skills of historical enquiry. Pupils are confident users of books in the school library, books from home, CD-Roms and the Internet to gather details about the periods of history studied. The results are often of a good standard. For example,

one Year 6 pupil wrote about a day in her life as a dancer in Ancient Egypt, and another wrote about how important the River Nile is to sustain life on a daily basis.

170. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good range of general knowledge about events and people in the past and offer well-considered views and opinions in discussions. For example, in the lesson seen, Years 5 and 6 pupils studied pages from the 1851 census. The teacher led them skilfully to see how they could organise ways of collecting specific information from the census about life in Thorverton at that time. Pupils became more and more engrossed in the task as they began to realise how a simple tally chart was helpful in, for example, seeing how many people were employed in particular jobs. Pupils wanted to know what some of the jobs were, such as a draper's assistant, and suggested sources that they might use to find out more. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils worked on more complex pages from the census and were successful in extracting useful data which would lead to further research in a subsequent lesson.
171. Teachers are successful at planning interesting tasks for pupils and taking advantage of pupils' very good attitudes to the subject. Pupils' past work shows that teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' achievements, with a strong emphasis on writing and drawing, and very limited use of worksheets, successfully promoting pupils' literacy skills as a result. All pupils' work is generally well presented and handwriting is neat, showing a positive response to teachers' expectations. Very little pupils' work is marked or contains helpful developmental comments, for example indicating how work might be improved, and this is a weakness. Teachers use the subject well to promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development, especially through discussions about the reasons why people in the past acted the way they did such as Guy Fawkes in planning to blow up the Houses of Parliament.
172. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. She provides good support for her colleagues as they plan their lessons. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and help teachers to develop a good knowledge and understanding of pupils' strengths and areas for improvement. However, topics tend to be taught through whole-class lessons, and this means that pupils of different capabilities tackle similar tasks. As a result, not enough is always demanded of higher attaining pupils in particular.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve particularly well with wordprocessing skills.
- The quality of teaching is good and teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to use computers.
- Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.

Area for improvement

- Pupils' progress is hindered by problems associated with access to the Internet and the local education authority's website.

173. At the time of the previous inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards. It was reported that there was no scheme of work and that computers were not used as regularly as they could be to support pupils' learning. There has been good improvement since then. Pupils have regular, well-planned access to computers and information and communication technology is used

effectively to support pupils' learning in several areas of the curriculum. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards are in line with those expected. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

174. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 are confident users of computers. For example, they are given many opportunities to wordprocess simple sentences to accompany illustrations in geography and history topics. Higher attaining pupils wordprocess stories containing several sentences and competently correct errors such as spellings and incorrect punctuation, using the appropriate keys. Pupils use an art program to produce attractive pictures and designs. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were observed making a pictogram by entering data they had collected about the different ways pupils travel to school. Pupils showed good levels of skill as they clicked on pictures, dragged them and placed them correctly on the graph axis. Pupils successfully extended their knowledge and understanding of data handling and counting skills as a result.
175. Pupils are familiar with computers as a resource for learning and know that information can be accessed from CD-Roms. They handle the mouse and the keyboard with ease and concentrate hard as they guide the cursor on screen, for example to control a number game program. Pupils develop very good attitudes to information and communication technology and are well prepared for their work in Years 3 to 6.
176. Teachers make effective use of pupils' interest and confidence in using information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6. Much work is carried out using laptop computers, which are set up in classrooms when required and packed away after use. This means that teachers have to plan their use very carefully and management and organisation of lessons involving the laptops are very good.
177. Pupils enjoy using the laptop computers and benefit from their regular use to support learning across the curriculum. For example, during a Year 4 design and technology lesson, pupils worked quickly and carefully to enter data into a program. They used a skill learned in a previous lesson to total numbers in horizontal and vertical columns on a spreadsheet. The teacher was keen to have data from all the separate groups entered into her laptop before the end of the lesson. Pupils responded to the challenge and showed good computer skills as they worked hard to complete their task so that a final overall assessment of the data collected could be made.
178. By the end of Year 6, all pupils' main strengths are in their wordprocessing skills and use of CD-Roms to access information. Pupils' past work shows good examples of wordprocessed poems, explanatory labels for folder work, illustrations for geography and history topics and information downloaded from the Internet. Virtually all the pupils in Year 6, and in the rest of the school, have access to computers at home and this makes a significant contribution to the confidence with which they use information and communication technology equipment.
179. Standards by the end of Year 6 are no better than satisfactory overall because pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their skills by exchanging and sharing information, for example through the use of e-mail, and using equipment, such as sensors, to support learning in subjects such as science. The school has a set of programmable toys with some sophisticated extras but these have not been brought into regular use to extend the skills of higher attaining pupils in particular.

180. The quality of teaching is good overall. Since the previous inspection, staff have worked hard to improve their subject knowledge and confidence. The scheme of work has been reviewed and rewritten and provides teachers with a good basis for planning, and information and communication technology activities are included in lessons for virtually all curriculum subjects. Teachers make very good use of large monitor screens to demonstrate skills, especially during whole-class lessons when specific skills and techniques are being taught. Pupils' personal development is promoted very well by staff in the way that pupils are successfully encouraged to share resources, work co-operatively on activities and evaluate their own and others' achievements from reception onwards.
181. Assessment procedures are good and teachers use the information gathered to plan activities on a daily basis that are well matched to pupils' different capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the use of helpful programs in literacy and numeracy lessons, and gain confidence and develop self-esteem as a result. Pupils who are especially skilful at using information and communication technology have some opportunities to tackle challenging tasks, for example when producing a school newspaper, but opportunities are missed to demand more of them by setting the occasional special task or activity.
182. The subject has been led until recently by the previous headteacher and so is in a period of transition whilst a new co-ordinator takes over. The good improvement in provision and standards since the previous inspection is largely due to his very effective leadership. Computers situated permanently in classrooms are in regular use, and there are very few occasions each day when the laptops are not set up in one of the three classrooms. The school experiences some problems with access to the Internet and the local education authority's website. These difficulties are having a significant impact on limiting pupils' achievements, particularly in their use of e-mail and use of the Internet for research. Pupils have access to televisions, videos, CD players and cassette players, all of which are generally well used on a daily basis.

MUSIC

Strengths

- Pupils have very good attitudes to musical activities and show evident enjoyment when performing together.
- Good standards are achieved in singing.
- Pupils benefit from the opportunity to learn to play the recorder.
- A good range of musical experiences are planned for pupils by the co-ordinator each year and make a significant contribution to the musical life of the school.

183. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was possible to see only one class lesson during the inspection. However, evidence from this lesson, observation of pupils receiving recorder tuition, pupils' musical contributions in assemblies, a study of teachers' planning and discussions with staff are sufficient to judge that pupils attain nationally expected standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
184. Pupils benefit from well-planned opportunities to perform together, in classrooms, in assemblies, in school concerts and performances and in the local community. As a result, pupils achieve well at singing and parents report that they are pleased with the good standards achieved by their children in public performances.

185. Pupils have very good attitudes to singing. During the inspection, the whole school attended a singing practice assembly. They listened carefully to the teacher leading the session and tried very hard to achieve the standards set. They showed evident enjoyment as they practised hymns for a forthcoming assembly and sang tunefully and with enthusiasm. Pupils showed a good awareness of diction. They sang a peaceful hymn tunefully and with a good awareness of dynamics, and the performance was well received by staff, who praised pupils for the quality of their singing. Pupils of all capabilities were successfully included in this session.
186. In the lesson seen, Years 5 and 6 pupils showed remarkable confidence and, for the vast majority, a mature approach to the task as they worked in groups of three and four to compose music by making sounds with various parts of their bodies. The teacher sensibly allocated pupils parts of the school grounds in which to practise and rehearse, and this meant that they had ample space and privacy so that their efforts did not disturb each other. Pupils worked hard and co-operated very well, concentrating on working together as teams to produce a complete composition.
187. There was evident enjoyment amongst pupils as they watched and listened when each group performed their compositions. Pupils showed considerable imagination and ingenuity in the way they used voices, hands and feet, plus body movements, to link various sounds together. The object of the lesson was to maintain a steady beat and most pupils achieved this successfully. Both boys and girls performed with very little embarrassment, and a small number of immature pupils contained their excitement well, almost to the end of the lesson, before the teacher closed the session in order to prevent them spoiling the lesson's overall success by their lack of concentration.
188. Teachers vary in their subject knowledge and expertise but, overall, pupils benefit from teachers' confidence and high expectations. Teachers make good use of the subject scheme of work and the knowledge and expertise of the subject co-ordinator when planning their lessons. Pupils receive a broad and balanced coverage of the required curriculum as teachers make effective use of CD-Roms and tuned and untuned instruments in lessons. Pupils develop good listening skills as they sit quietly in lessons and assemblies listening to selected pieces of music. Literacy skills are promoted well as pupils offer views and opinions about pieces of music and extend their art and design skills as they sketch and paint in response to music. Teachers use music well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through reflection, group activities and experience of music from other parts of the world.
189. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory and teachers are becoming increasingly more skilful at using the information to plan activities that match pupils' differing capabilities.
190. The co-ordinator leads staff well. She works hard to provide pupils with an interesting range of musical experiences throughout the year. Pupils benefit from listening to, or taking part in, performances by visiting musicians. A significant aspect of the musical life of the school is the opportunity for all pupils to learn to play the recorder. Over half the pupils from reception to Year 6 attend tuition lessons led by a visiting music teacher. A small number of girls in Years 5 and 6 play treble, descant and tenor recorders confidently and to a high standard. A good number of pupils receive private tuition on string, woodwind and keyboard instruments and they often play their instruments in school, especially during school concerts and performances. Pupils

take part in the musical life of the village by singing in the local church and performing during village events.

191. Resources are of good quality and quantity and there are sufficient tuned and untuned instruments for each pupil in a class to play an instrument during lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths

- Pupils benefit from a wide range of additional activities.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and are keen to keep fit.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are promoted very well.

Area for improvement

- The limited hall space is not used effectively enough to fully extend pupils in some aspects of their learning.

192. Standards in physical education are in line with those expected of pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.
193. Physical education is given a high priority in the school, with a clear emphasis on fitness. Pupils value these opportunities and benefit from the good range of additional sports activities that take place. Provision remains similar to that at the time of the previous inspection and, despite the addition of some good quality outdoor climbing equipment, there remains a lack of safe indoor space and equipment to cover the physical education curriculum adequately.
194. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils show a good understanding of what happens when they warm-up. They describe the effects of exercise on their breathing and heart rate. They show an appropriate degree of control and co-ordination as they move around the playground, and they work well in twos and as a small group. Pupils benefit from watching others and improve their own skills through observation and practise. They run, skip, hop and control small equipment with enthusiasm. They show good awareness of the rules of a game, and are beginning to take simple responsibility for organising resources.
195. As they move in to Years 3 to 6, pupils develop more confidence and continue to improve their games skills. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, almost all pupils achieve the national standard in swimming. Pupils develop their enthusiasm for sports through many different experiences. They develop their games skills through a variety of different team and group sports such as football, netball and rounders. These help to foster positive relationships and self-esteem. Pupils observe others, evaluate their own performances and suggest ways of improving. They show a satisfactory understanding of the need for exercise and work hard to achieve their aims. At times, the behaviour of a small minority of mainly older boys inhibits the learning of others and lowers the standards of which pupils are capable.
196. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and teachers focus well on the health benefits of exercise. Good attention is paid to the development of skills and this helps

pupils to make good gains during lessons. Over time, however, progress in physical education is satisfactory. This is due to major difficulties in accommodation, which inhibit provision for some aspects of gymnastics and, on wet and wintry days, does not allow sufficient safe indoor space for movement activities. Teachers use the space available with close attention to health and safety and they manage pupils very well. This leads to overall good behaviour and positive attitudes to the subject. Effective questioning and demonstration enables pupils to think carefully about their movements and initiate improvements.

197. The co-ordinator was, until recently, the previous headteacher and so leadership is in a period of transition. There has been very little formal monitoring of teaching or of standards, but recent improvements in the way that pupils' achievements are assessed are helping teachers to measure improvement in skills as pupils move up through the school. The main strengths of provision are the effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and the wide range of enrichment that takes place, through after-school clubs and involvement in local sporting competitions and activities. For example, pupils benefit from some exciting experiences such as residential activities including canoeing and abseiling, sports clubs with matches against other schools and tuition by local experts.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths

- Pupils show maturity in discussions and are good at expressing their views and opinions.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils benefit from close links with the community and the local church.
- Pupils' good attitudes make a significant contribution to the standards achieved.

Area for improvement

- Opportunities are sometimes missed to provide especially challenging tasks for higher attaining or gifted and talented pupils.

198. No judgements on standards of attainment, nor on pupils' progress, were made at the time of the previous inspection. Standards now are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2, and above expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well.
199. Year 2 pupils identify their own feelings and experiences, reflecting on what their special place is, why it is special and when they go there. One pupil refers to an area at the bottom of a field, another to their bedroom, or a cupboard, where they can be quiet and alone. They discuss their special place with a partner, developing skills of speaking and listening well.
200. In a lesson for Years 3 and 4 pupils, they were asked to consider what special things they would put into special boxes made prior to the lesson. They showed a mature and enlightened approach to the task, suggesting 'a tail feather from a phoenix', as well as the more predictable 'a pure gold watch'. Their wide range of vocabulary and good command of language helps them to attain standards above those expected for pupils of their ages, and there was a strong degree of spirituality in this lesson. Pupils in Year 6 show maturity in discussion about a moral dilemma,

before reaching a decision on how we live, and how we make choices based on our own particular values, following a story about a shopkeeper who was robbed by children.

201. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers plan lessons well, making good use of time, and developing learning in progressive stages. In two of the three lessons seen, teachers shared personal details with pupils, modelling expectations, and building very good relationships. As a result, pupils wanted to please teachers and worked with enthusiasm and determination.
202. Whole-class sessions at the end of lessons are well used to reinforce learning objectives and share examples of good work, in one case resulting in spontaneous applause. Resources selected for this lesson, such as the top of a wedding cake, family photographs and a theatre programme, provided a powerful and imaginative stimulus for pupils who responded well to a 'guessing game' challenge. The good and sometimes excellent attitudes of the pupils contribute significantly to the quality of their work and their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported either by teachers or support staff, and they achieve equally well.
203. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. Teachers' planning follows closely the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. A two-year rolling programme of study units provides continuous and progressive teaching of skills, and no unnecessary repetition of topics. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning but does not have the opportunity to observe her colleagues teach.
204. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievements are satisfactory, though the school has not begun to assess the level of pupils' work against the criteria in the locally agreed syllabus. All classes contain pupils of more than one age group and tasks are not always set appropriately for pupils of differing capabilities. Sometimes, all pupils follow the same work and this means that higher attaining pupils, in particular, are not always sufficiently challenged by their tasks.

205. The subject promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well, especially in whole-class and group discussions, and in the periods of reflection characteristic of most lessons. Pupils study other religions such as Hinduism, Judaism and Buddhism and this is helping them to gain a better understanding of other cultures, but there is insufficient awareness of other cultures in displays around the school.
206. Effective use is made of visitors such as the weekly assembly speaker from the church ministry, and from a modern parent pilgrim who travelled to the tomb of St James in Spain. Good use is made of the village church as a source of information and experience. Services for the pupils are held there throughout the school year, and help to reinforce classroom learning. Resources for the subject are satisfactory but the school recognises the need to continue to purchase further artefacts as the emphasis on Christianity is stronger than it is on other religions.