

INSPECTION REPORT

**WITHERIDGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Witheridge, Tiverton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113384

Acting headteacher: Mrs Sunita Chauhan-Barker

Reporting inspector: B Matusiak-Varley
19938

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th April 2003

Inspection number: 247358

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior School
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fore Street Witheridge Tiverton Devon
Postcode:	EX16 8AH
Telephone number:	01884 860518
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Appropriate authority:	The local education authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Manning
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd May 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19938	B Matusiak-Varley	Registered inspector	English Science Art and design History Religious Education Foundation Stage Inclusion English as an additional language	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11084	Jane Hughes	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22157	Mike Roussel	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography Music Physical education Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Witheridge Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is situated in a village eleven miles west of Tiverton. The school caters for pupils aged four to 11 years. It is a small village school with 78 pupils on roll, 47 boys and 31 girls, who are taught in mixed-age classes. Children who are in the Foundation Stage of learning are taught alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Almost all of the pupils are white, with just 4 per cent of pupils of other white ethnic backgrounds. Sixteen per cent of pupils (broadly average) are entitled to free school meals. Thirty-seven per cent of pupils (above average) are on the special educational needs (SEN) register. Pupils' attainment on entry is very variable due to the small number of pupils. This year, attainment on entry is below average with several pupils having underdeveloped communication skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which has overcome previous weaknesses through the very hard work and determination of the acting headteacher, governing body and staff in moving the school forward. Overall, the school provides a good quality of education and generally meets the needs of all of its pupils who achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, especially in Years 1 to 4. Above average attainers make satisfactory progress, but could be challenged further, especially in the oldest class. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements are good. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in science and are average in English and mathematics; pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and meets statutory requirements. Teaching is good, with the best teaching seen in reception to Year 4. The leadership and management of the acting headteacher and governing body are good, with many strengths. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are rising and are above average by the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, art and design and geography. By the end of Year 6, standards in science are above average.
- The quality of teaching is good with aspects of very good teaching seen in reception to Year 4.
- Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage of learning and those with SEN is good. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and relationships throughout the school are generally very good.
- The leadership and management of the acting headteacher and governing body are good. The school has a clear educational direction.
- Relationships with parents are good and parents are seen as true partners in their children's learning.

What could be improved

- In the infants, standards in speaking and spelling. In the oldest class in the juniors, standards in most subjects, but especially in experimental and investigative science.
- The quality of teaching in the oldest class and the presentation of pupils' work throughout the school.
- The challenge of above average attaining pupils and opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of independent learning.
- Curriculum planning, with clearer identification of subject-specific skills and expectations for mixed-age classes in science and foundation subjects.
- The use of assessments to inform the next steps of pupils' learning.
- The sharing of curriculum responsibilities among staff.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors in May 2000, when it was taken out of special measures. Since then, the school has worked very hard to continue to raise standards and overall improvement has been good. Standards have risen, especially at the end of Year 2. Throughout the school there are no subjects where pupils attain below average standards. Satisfactory improvement has been made in using information from assessments to inform the next steps of pupils' learning, but there is still more work to do in this area. The good quality of teaching has been maintained, especially in Years 1 to 4. Good progress has been made in tracking pupils' progress throughout the school and in providing appropriate outdoor play facilities for children in the Foundation Stage of learning. The school is well placed to improve even further due to the hard work of the staff and the clear educational direction provided by the acting headteacher.

STANDARDS

The table showing standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests is not included as fewer than 10 pupils took the test.

Standards must be treated with caution due to the very small group of pupils taking the tests. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. By the end of the Foundation Stage, nearly all of the children attain the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in all areas of learning and their achievements are good. The 2002 national test and teacher assessments show that, by the end of Year 2 in comparison with all and similar schools, pupils attained well above average standards in reading and mathematics. In comparison with all schools, pupils' attainment in writing was above average and in comparison with similar schools, it was in line. Teachers' assessments in science indicate that pupils attained levels which were in the top five per cent nationally (high), but too few pupils scored the higher levels. By the end of Year 6, standards had improved on previous years, but in comparison with all schools nationally, standards were below average in English and science but in line with national averages in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in English and science and were below average in mathematics. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are in line with national averages in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT); standards are above average in science. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in English, mathematics and ICT, in science they are good overall, but could be better in experimental and investigative science. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and make sound gains in learning. By the end of Year 2, in speaking and listening, standards are average; in reading and writing, science, mathematics, design and technology, geography and art and design standards are above average and pupils' achievements are good. In ICT pupils attain average standards. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in all other subjects standards are broadly average. No judgement could be made on history at the end of Year 6 as insufficient work was seen. Overall standards are high enough but above average attainers could be achieving more, especially in the oldest class. Pupils with SEN make good gains in learning.

The school sets challenging targets in English and mathematics and is well placed to meet them. In 2002, the school just missed its targets for English, but exceeded them in mathematics. School data suggests that standards in both the infants and the juniors have been rising year upon year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good, but they are better in reception to Year 4 than in the oldest class, where they are satisfactory. At present there are too few opportunities for pupils to become independent learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are courteous, polite and behave well around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good. Pupils like coming to school and there is no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

During the week of the inspection, one-third of teaching was very good, one-third was good and one-third was satisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching is good with the best teaching seen in reception to Year 4 with many examples of very good teaching seen especially in literacy and numeracy. In these two classes, teachers have real verve and passion for teaching and are very creative in their approaches. They have very good relationships with the pupils and create a secure learning environment. In Years 5 and 6, the class teacher offers good explanations, but the range of methods used does not always meet the pupils' needs and this slows down learning. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Teachers teach basic skills well, but above average attainers could be challenged further, especially in the oldest class. The teaching of children who are in the Foundation Stage of learning and those who have SEN is good. Support staff contribute well to pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Good in the Foundation Stage. Broad and balanced in the infants and juniors, but skills progression, opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT and clear expectations of what all groups of pupils should be achieving in mixed-age classes still need to be refined.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are well supported and their individual education plans are carefully adhered to in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The curriculum provides many good opportunities for reflection, moral choices and development of social skills and cultural knowledge. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about the multi-ethnic makeup of our society.
How well the school cares	Very good. Pastoral care is very good and there are very good child

for its pupils	protection procedures. All staff know their pupils very well.
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Partnership with parents is good. Parents are pleased with the school and the information they receive on their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher is fulfilling her duties very well and is providing a clear educational direction for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are true critical friends and exercise their statutory duties well. They are regular visitors to the school and monitor the school development plan effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school analyses its performance well and knows its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning is very good and principles of best value are used in all purchases. Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, but accommodation is very cramped. There is a lack of storage space. The building of "the classroom of the future" ¹ will provide a very valuable ICT resource for the school and the community.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do well at school and attain good standards. • The small school ethos and good teaching. • Staff are very hard working and approachable. • Children behave well. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views, but judge extra-curricular activities to be satisfactory for a school with few staff.

¹ A planned large multi-purpose room

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Class 1 accommodates reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Class 2 has a mixed-age group of Years 2, 3 and 4. Class 3 has several Year 4 pupils in addition to Years 5 and 6. Throughout this inspection report, for the purpose of clarity, reference will be made to Classes 1 and 2 as reception to Year 4. Class 3 is referred to as Years 5 and 6.
- 2 Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is below the expected levels for the age group. Standards in communication, language and literacy and in personal and social development are below average on entry. By the time children enter Year 1, at the end of the Foundation Stage, nearly all of them attain the Early Learning Goals (ELG) in all areas of learning and their achievements are good. This is due to effective planning, good use of assessment, good quality teaching and good support provided by non-teaching staff. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that children learn through well-structured play activities.
- 3 Results of national tests and subsequent analysis must be treated with caution because the size of groups taking the tests was very small and percentage scores can be unreliable due to very small numbers. By the end of Year 2, the 2002 national test and teacher assessments show that, in comparison with all and similar schools, pupils attained standards that were well above average in reading and mathematics. In comparison with all schools, pupils' attainment in writing was above average, and in comparison with similar schools it was average. Teachers' assessments indicate that, in science, pupils attained levels which were in the top five per cent nationally, but too few pupils scored the higher levels.
- 4 By the end of Year 6, national test results showed that, whilst standards had improved on previous years' low attainment in comparison with all schools nationally, standards were below average in English and science but were in line with national averages in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in English and science and were below average in mathematics.
- 5 Over three years in the infants, the performance of pupils exceeded the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, but in the juniors, the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science fell below the national averages. Whilst test results show that the infant boys did better than girls in reading and writing, in the juniors, boys performed better in mathematics than in English and science. National comparisons are not necessarily valid. Overall, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects was broadly in line with the national trend. The percentage of pupils at the end of Year 6 attaining the higher levels was broadly average in English and mathematics, but was in the bottom five per cent nationally in science. By the end of Year 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading was in the top five per cent nationally, was well above average in mathematics but was below average in writing and science. School's data shows that the value added in relation to Key Stage 2 results, when compared to results pupils achieved in Key Stage 1, was good.
- 6 The previous HMI report of May 2000 found that, by the end of Year 2, standards in mathematics and science were in line with national averages, but were below in English and information and communication technology (ICT). At the end of Year 6, standards were below national averages in mathematics and science and were well below in English and ICT. Since then, the school has made good improvement and standards are rising. This is due to improved teaching, planning and a clear sense of educational direction provided by the acting headteacher, who leads by example as an effective classroom practitioner. Governors are now more fully aware of the strengths and areas for improvement and are regular visitors to the school.

- 7 Inspection findings show a somewhat uneven picture of attainment by the end of both key stages. This is largely due to the fact that the present high standards that pupils are achieving in reception to Year 4 have not yet fully filtered through the school. The present Year 6 is the class that had a patchy start to their education, as the school had been experiencing problems in recruiting staff and raising standards and, as a consequence, had been put in the category of special measures in April 1998. At present standards in Year 6 are in line with national averages overall but it must be remembered that in this class there is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and below average attainers. Furthermore, the present class teacher has only taught them full time since September and not all systems, such as planning and assessment, are fully in place. This obviously slows down the rates of pupils' progress. It is very likely that once the pupils start coming up from Class 2 (Years 3 and 4) where pupils' achievements are good, this in turn will have a positive effect on the standards attained in Year 6.
- 8 Inspection findings show that, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards which are in line with national averages in speaking and listening, and achievement is satisfactory. In reading, writing, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography and art and design, standards are above average and pupils' achievements are good. In ICT pupils attain average standards and their achievement is satisfactory. In all other foundation subjects (physical education, music and history) pupils attain average standards and achieve well overall in relation to their prior attainment.
- 9 In religious education, at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and make sound gains in learning.
- 10 By the end of Year 6, standards attained in English and mathematics are in line with national averages and pupils' achievement in relation to their prior attainment is satisfactory. In science, standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. At present, insufficient opportunities are provided for them to record their findings in a variety of ways and become more involved in setting up their own experiments. However, pupils have good knowledge of scientific principles in all programmes of study covered and can readily talk about how shadows are formed, why plants need light, why forces cause objects to move and what constitutes a fair test. Almost all pupils use correct scientific vocabulary and they confidently use words such as *reversible and irreversible change, evaporation, translucent, opaque and water-resistant*.
- 11 In speaking and listening by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils can make their needs known and speak clearly and audibly, but only the higher attaining pupils (approximately one-sixth of the class) use rich vocabulary. Pupils' reading skills, by the end of Year 2, are above average, whilst, by the end of Year 6, they are average. Pupils in Year 2 read with expression, verve and understanding, whilst in Year 6 pupils can read mechanically, several of the average and below-average attainers struggle to read with intonation, and higher order reading skills need attention. This is partly due to the fact that the library is under-resourced. Standards in spelling are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but too often common words and subject-specific words are misspelt. Standards of presentation are unsatisfactory and too often in the infants, pupils get away with presenting written work that is clearly not their best. Whilst pupils attain average standards in writing in Year 6, and above average standards in Year 2, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to extend their speaking skills and give detailed answers which are then transferred into writing, especially in Years 5 and 6 where pupils struggle with writing complex sentences with enriched phrases, appropriate connectives and correct punctuation. Too often, pupils do not correct their spellings, even though this is reflected in teachers' marking.
- 12 In mathematics, by the end of Year 2, pupils make good gains in learning the four rules of number and apply them well to solving problems. Pupils' achievements are good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors, where standards are in line with national averages, but insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning. However, standards in ICT have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with national averages and it is very likely that they will improve even further with the development of the 'classroom of the future'.

- 13 By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics are average, but opportunities are missed for pupils to verbalise their thinking when solving mathematical problems and pupils need to consolidate their skills of collaborative problem-solving and identifying the correct strategies through which mathematical problems can be solved.
- 14 Throughout the school, pupils' overall achievements are good but they could be better in the class with the oldest pupils where, at present, they are satisfactory. This is because higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, planning often does not reflect suitably challenging work and insufficient notice is taken of data from assessments to plan the next steps of learning. Overall progress is just satisfactory, but these pupils could be achieving more. Pupils with special education needs (SEN) make good progress overall but several of them in Years 5 and 6 need to be challenged more through the use of more varied teaching methods to match their needs.
- 15 The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory but there are plans to record these opportunities formally in teachers' medium-term planning, this should raise standards even further. Both the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have had effective implementation and have helped to raise standards from the previous inspection. Teachers have worked very hard at providing stimulating learning activities but there now needs to be more consistency in planning, in identifying subject-specific skills, and expectations for mixed-age classes in science and foundation subjects as there are times when these pupils follow the same work, preventing some of the older pupils from learning at a faster rate. A particular weakness in pupils' achievements is that they do not exhibit well developed skills of independent learning, such as undertaking extensive research, choosing their own resources and presenting their findings in a variety of ways. In spite of the heavy burden placed upon teachers to teach the curriculum to mixed-age classes in a small school, standards are rising and the school is well placed to meet its challenging targets in literacy and numeracy in 2003.
- 16 At present, there is very little time allocated for the acting headteacher to monitor standards and curriculum planning. In the limited time available, the acting headteacher has equipped herself with a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' attainment, but she is over-burdened with curriculum and management responsibilities. A more equitable distribution of responsibilities is needed if standards are to continue to rise.
- 17 Since the previous inspection good improvement has been made in raising pupils' academic standards and, whilst the rates of pupils' progress could be faster in Years 5 and 6, overall standards are high enough for most pupils with the exception of higher attainers in the class with the oldest pupils who, whilst making satisfactory progress overall, could be challenged further. The school has made good improvement in raising standards in Year 2 from being below average in English to now being above average, and from being average in mathematics and science to now being above average. In Year 6 standards have risen from being below average in mathematics and science to being in line in mathematics and above average in science. In English, standards have risen from being well below average to being in line with national averages. In both Year 2 and Year 6, standards have risen from being below average in ICT to now being broadly in line. Throughout the report in the foundation subjects standards cannot be compared with previous inspection findings because the HMI report did not focus on foundation subjects. The pupils in Year 6 exceeded their targets in mathematics and just missed their targets for English in 2002.
- 18 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. They have good attitudes to learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 19 Pupils have good attitudes to learning and like coming to school, maintained since the previous inspection. They are eager to learn and concentrate very well during lessons. They are keen to volunteer answers to teachers' questions and participate in assemblies with great gusto. Everyone sang vibrantly during hymn practice, showing how much they were enjoying themselves.

They hung on one teacher's every word as she orchestrated a role play about the significance of simnel cake at Easter time.

- 20 Standards of behaviour are good throughout the school; the infant children generally behave very well. Staff set very clear boundaries about how they expect pupils to behave and, as a result, this is an orderly community. Pupils know what is expected of them and the vast majority live up to these high standards. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and children in the Foundation Stage are particularly well behaved. They are quickly involved in every activity, whether this is clapping out the syllables in their names during literacy or very carefully practising their handwriting 'flicks and joins'. Pupils with particular behaviour problems are offered considerable amounts of one to one support and they usually integrate well into the life of the school; they participate actively in lessons. There have been no exclusions. In the oldest class, when the teaching is good, pupils are keen to listen but there are occasions when their enthusiasm wanes and, whilst they are not naughty, they are not as attentive as they could be. This is because some of the teaching methods used do not always match their learning styles.
- 21 Pupils' personal development is good because staff are constantly encouraging them to think for themselves and to become more independent. Pupils fulfil all their monitorial duties with care and are very trustworthy. In assemblies, for example, pupils expertly find the correct tracks on the compact discs during hymn practice. They represent the school well at functions outside it, and the school receives letters in recognition of this. Staff know the pupils very well and, if one child seems to be experiencing problems, and his/her learning is suffering, staff pick up on this very quickly and address the problem. Currently, although pupils undertake day trips to places of interest, there are no opportunities for them to experience a residential stay away from home with their classmates. However, also opportunities for independent learning are limited, especially at the top end of Key Stage 2. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to record their own work in a variety of ways or choose their own resources for learning.
- 22 Relationships throughout the school are very good and make a significant contribution to the caring atmosphere that characterises this school. Older and younger pupils are very supportive of one another in mixed age classes and really enjoy working with their peers. For instance, as two pupils practised their throwing and catching on the field during a physical education lesson, an older boy threw a ball gently to a child in reception. Although no adults were at hand to witness their interaction, as the younger boy finally caught the ball, the older one clapped his hands and yelled a delighted "Yes!" of approval. The younger boy beamed with pleasure. Such camaraderie is considered run of the mill here and is modelled exceptionally well by the acting headteacher herself as she charges up and down the field at break time, teasing the children and generally adding to their enjoyment with her enthusiasm. Effective deployment of very able learning support assistants also ensures that pupils form close relationships with everyone in school who can help them.
- 23 Rates of attendance are above the national average and pupils arrive at school on time. There is no recorded unauthorised absence. The good rates of attendance contribute positively to the high standards attained, especially at the end of Year 2.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 24 The quality of teaching is good overall, with examples of very good teaching seen in reception to Year 4 (Class 1 and Class 2). Teaching has a strong impact on pupils' learning and in these two classes, pupils make good progress. In Years 5 and 6 (Class 3), progress overall is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the week of inspection. Out of 28 lessons seen, 11 were very good, 8 were good and 9 were satisfactory. Most of the satisfactory teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6, and the examples of very good teaching were seen in reception to Year 4. This is a positive picture and remains a strength of the school as identified in the previous HMI inspection of May 2000.

- 25 Teaching is good because the acting headteacher has monitored teaching and learning and is fully aware of the teachers' strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, pupils' achievement over time is good. When examples of very good teaching arise, as in reception to Year 4, there is very good management of pupils' behaviour, good use of time, teaching assistants and of resources. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and children learn well. There is good quality planning and assessment and there is an appropriate balance of learning through discovery and structured play engaging all of the senses. In the majority of classes, teachers use a variety of approaches and methods to maintain pupils' interest and concentration, such as planning for quick mental calculations for short bursts each day before lessons begin. In the younger classes, pupils calculate how many pupils are present and absent when registers are taken and teachers use good strategies for group work, and paired and individual work. In the class with the oldest pupils, whilst teaching is satisfactory, too much emphasis is placed upon whole-class teaching and this results in pupils from different age groups and different ability groups finding tasks to be either too easy or too difficult. Planning does not follow the format established in reception to Year 4 and, at times, learning objectives stated are not sufficiently rich in identifying particular subject-specific skills that different ability groups need to grasp. The classroom environment is too dull to attract pupils' interest levels in developing their learning. There is a lack of interactive displays and too few books are available to enable pupils to develop their skills of independent learning. At times, insufficient questioning is used to check pupils' understanding, resulting in pupils appearing to be on task, but not learning. Strategies used to motivate pupils who have behavioural difficulties do not always produce positive results and, too often, the focus on their negative behaviour is more apparent than on what they do well. Throughout the school, a more rigorous approach to challenge pupils who are higher attainers is needed to ensure that they are consistently challenged by using data from assessments to inform the next steps of pupils' learning.
- 26 Pupils respect their teachers and co-operate willingly because of the overall very good relationships. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and are given very good guidance and training in their deployment. For example, in literacy and numeracy sessions they make pupils think but they ensure that appropriate support is offered. The use of support staff and resources is good and pupils are well supported but at times, in the younger classes, especially in the teaching of practical aspects of the foundation subjects, support staff would be better deployed in targeting pupils who struggle with their work in Years 5 and 6. Satisfactory assessments are in place but the use of information gained to plan further learning is inconsistent. Marking of pupils' work is regular but, too often, pupils do not present their work neatly and their presentation skills are unsatisfactory. Satisfactory use of ICT to support learning is made but medium-term plans do not sufficiently reflect formal identification of opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT to support learning. This, on occasions, limits the rates at which pupils progress.
- 27 Teachers' knowledge of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is good. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson the teacher enabled pupils to use a broad range of connectives by modelling many sentences for them. Both strategies are well implemented, although the plenary sessions need to challenge pupils more into explaining their thinking. Tuition in the purpose and organisation of story writing and factual descriptions is good. Overall, there is good development of pupils' listening skills and those needed for reading, but further emphasis needs to be placed upon developing pupils' higher order reading skills so that they can undertake personal research. The development of fluent speech, to ensure clearly enriched answers with appropriate vocabulary and complex sentence construction, needs to be developed further. The teaching of numeracy is good but further opportunities, to consolidate skills taught in numeracy sessions in other subjects, are needed, such as science investigations, measuring distances in geography and calculating dates for eras in history, would ensure that pupils make even further gains in learning.
- 28 Medium-term planning is broken down into appropriate units of work, drawn from nationally recommended guidelines. Appropriate short-term planning identifies the learning objectives for the week. The provision for pupils with SEN is good and these pupils make good progress in all subjects. The use of individual education plans is well managed and targets identified are clear, appropriate and well supported in lessons.

- 29 All staff work hard in order to raise standards. They offer good support to each other and to pupils. The overall good quality of teaching, with examples of very good teaching, is a strength of the school. In the very best lessons in reception to Year 4, teachers produce challenging work for pupils, consistently intervene in their pupils' learning and use humour and praise effectively. This impact results in pupils' good achievements, good behaviour and good attitudes to learning. For example, in a good geography lesson the class teacher brought the subject alive by using role-play to enhance pupils' debating skills. This really fired up pupils' enthusiasm and they made rapid progress.
- 30 The SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator) role has been the responsibility of the acting headteacher. In that time she has organised the special educational needs provision and administrative duties very efficiently. Advice is given to teaching staff and teaching assistants who work with children with SEN as and when necessary. The SEN policy was reviewed and updated to meet the requirements of the new code of practice for special educational needs in September 2002 and information for parents has been published. In addition, all school policies have been reviewed to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination legislation. All staff have received training on the new code of practice for special educational needs. However, although there is good support given to pupils with special educational needs by the learning support assistants and advice and support from the SENCO, there is no additional teaching support available from external agencies. However, the teaching for pupils with SEN in class is good and planning is linked directly to the IEP (individual education programme). This is combined with the very good support given to the pupils from the learning support assistants who work as a co-ordinated team with the class teachers.

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

- 31 The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are satisfactory. The curriculum for the school is broad and balanced, based upon national guidance, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The religious education programme is taught in line with the recommendations of the Devon Agreed Syllabus. There is a policy for personal, social and health education and the provision is satisfactory overall. The school has introduced a new resource 'Health for Life' which supports the planning of long term and medium planning for personal, social and health education. Some of the health studies are undertaken in the science curriculum but advice is sought on drug education and issues relating to sex education are dealt with when they arise. The school also has focused weeks in personal, social and health education when issues, such as Food Day and Water Aid, are raised, identifying similarities and differences in different countries, thus helping pupils to gain experience in sharing their own personal thoughts and opinions on global issues. A very good display was seen in the school hall demonstrating the positive outcomes that have been gained from these learning opportunities. This work has also been followed up in Year 5/6 where pupils have been given good learning opportunities about the importance of water in our lives. In addition, and to raise pupils' awareness of healthy living further, pupils had taken part in raising funds for the British Heart Foundation. The school is visited regularly by multi-agencies, such as school nurse, dentist, visual, hearing support services and educational psychologist. All pupils, regardless of gender, are encouraged to take part in all activities. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are well supported, by both the special educational needs co-ordinator and the learning support assistants.
- 32 The curriculum for the Foundation Stage of learning is good. It is well planned and covers all the areas of learning. Appropriate provision is made for pupils to learn using their senses, and basic skills are taught well but more emphasis needs to be placed on rigorous letter and number formation, as scrutiny of children's work revealed reversals. Since the previous inspection the quality of outdoor provision has improved. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced and have been implemented well. The school has also adopted national guidance

for schemes of work in the foundation subjects and is in the process of restructuring curriculum planning to ensure that skills progression is identified. However, expectations of what pupils in mixed year groups should be achieving are not yet in place and opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT are not always formally identified in planning. The school needs to adopt a whole school approach to planning as there is variance between the reception class, Year 4 and Years 5 and 6. This makes the monitoring of subject specific skills difficult. In addition, the school is involved with four other local schools in employing a reading recovery teacher to support the development of reading in the school.

- 33 The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities for the pupils, including Latin, art and guitar clubs, with a netball club that plays regular friendly matches with local schools. There is also a sports programme that involves pupils in dance, orienteering and field events through the year. In addition, a sports initiative has involved the school with eleven other primary schools. This has a positive effect on pupils. However, although the school has close links with the village football and cricket clubs, no clubs have yet been established at the school. There is a series of planned trips for curriculum study each year, including visits to churches, village walks, river study, looking at new houses being built and the sculpture gardens. However the school has recognised that there is a need to look at the possibility of residential trips to extend older pupils' experiences away from home. The community makes a good contribution to the life of the school, including local business links and firefighters. Further visitors to the school have included artists, storytellers, dancers, Japanese drumming workshop and Indian dance, enriching curriculum provision.
- 34 Relationships with partner institutions are good overall. Close liaison is maintained with Chumleigh Community College, to support pupils' transfer to the school at eleven, and in the development of literacy and numeracy.
- 35 There is good provision for pupils' personal, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Each of these four aspects that relate to pupils' personal development is well developed by the school.
- 36 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. This is a Christian community that celebrates a variety of faiths through the curriculum and displays around the school. Some aspects of provision are very successfully complemented by visiting performers, such as the Japanese drummers, who were awe-inspiringly loud. Pupils are also encouraged to celebrate the beauty and diversity of the natural world through the use of natural materials when they make their own sculptures, supported by a visiting sculptor. Staff plan well to ensure pupils can witness the amazing ways in which a baby changes as she grows. They invite a mother and baby back to school at intervals so that pupils can measure and observe these changes. Pupils also learn to respect the environment and are able to talk about local recycling schemes in which the school participates and also in more far flung ventures such as Vision Aid in Africa for which they organised a collection of spectacles. Collective worship offers pupils opportunities to sing heartily and also time for reflection and stillness in a busy day, they respond well to these.
- 37 Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Staff encourage a sense of justice and fair play in pupils and this is evident as they work and play well together. As they work in mixed age classes, pupils readily accept the company of older or younger pupils and, along with their teachers, many of the older ones are good role models for the younger ones. They co-operate well with each other and share resources very well. In a Class 1 physical education lesson, pupils practised catching and throwing balls of differing sizes to a partner. Pupils were keen to succeed and some 'coached' their partner saying, for example, "Try not to throw the ball so high" as they attempted to catch it unsuccessfully.
- 38 Staff encourage pupils to participate in whole school events that make them feel part of a larger family, such as celebrations and drama productions. Pupils also learn what it means to take responsibility for some aspect of school life through a large number of monitorial roles. Pupils become increasingly self-aware, particularly through discussions in PSHE lessons. An effective example of this was seen in Class 3, where pupils came to the conclusion at the end of one

session that the most important persons responsible for keeping them safe as individuals were themselves.

- 39 The school consistently encourages pupils to be honest and to live by an agreed set of rules. Staff are good role models for pupils and take great interest in all they say. They provide a safe environment in which pupils are happy to express their own thoughts and reactions. At the end of one outdoor activity, pupils were left to put resources away. One pupil started to be rather awkward and another threatened to report him to the teacher. A girl immediately intervened and calmed the situation by saying "We're a non-telling school here!" and everyone calmed down and just got on with their jobs. Teachers ensure that all pupils are well-integrated into every aspect of school life and pupils are very used to this. They are considerate of others and respectful of their needs. They carry on quietly with their work if someone becomes rather disruptive and this helps to minimise lost time. Teachers establish good links with a range of charitable concerns and pupils regularly raise large sums of money to send to organizations such as the British Heart Foundation and Red Nose Day. Pupils also write to support the cause of vulnerable creatures such as the letters they wrote to Greenpeace about the plight of the whales. They are becoming increasingly sensitive to the needs of others in society.
- 40 Good opportunities for cultural development mean that pupils are able, for example, to respond with enthusiasm to a variety of artistic endeavours. Great care was taken, for instance, when pupils made and coloured their own paper taking inspiration from a visiting artist. Staff supported this activity very effectively and ensured that the final pieces were carefully displayed for the whole school to appreciate. Class teachers organise local study trips to support various areas of the curriculum, such as history and geography, and this enables pupils to grasp more clearly aspects of their own cultural heritage. Good use is made of local aerial photography to give pupils a flavour of what their locality used to be like and how it compares to the present day. They are also given opportunities to participate in a Victorian Music Hall concert and to celebrate more recent anniversaries, such as the visit of the Princess Royal to the school at the time of the Queen's Jubilee. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in a range of drama productions. In a video viewing of Cinderella (a production in which all pupils participated) it was evident that pupils had been given opportunities to learn how the art form of drama can engage an audience. This was good provision for pupils' cultural development. This school has maintained the good standards in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since the previous inspection.
- 41 Staff also make sure that pupils have opportunities to explore aspects of other cultures. Events such as the Indian dance display and Japanese drumming are spectacular examples but there are other equally important studies such as the comparison of water supplies in the United Kingdom, Tanzania and Uganda. Pupils are learning to appreciate the differences that exist between various cultures and beliefs and study six different faiths in school. They learn, for example, about the Buddhist 'Path to Enlightenment' and make their own illustrated books. More excitingly, staff enable pupils to experience aspects of different cultures such as during World Food Day celebrations, or during Chinese New Year festivities. The school has maintained its good provision identified in the previous report.
- 42 All pupils with special educational needs receive a full curriculum entitlement and their specific needs are identified with a programme of support drawn up on an IEP (individual education programme). These IEP's have identified targets and are produced electronically. When written these IEPs become important to the class teacher when planning lessons to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. All IEPs are reviewed regularly and new targets are set once targets on the IEP have been achieved, a necessary procedure to ensure progress is maintained over time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 43 The standard of pastoral care is very good and is a strength of this school. The school provides a safe learning environment from within which pupils develop high self-esteem. Pupils enjoy the vibrant learning environment established by the acting headteacher.

- 44 Very secure child protection procedures are in place. The acting headteacher is the designated adult responsible for this area; she has undergone recent training and ensures that all the staff know about policy and procedures. Learning support assistants receive useful guidance on how to identify indicators of areas such as neglect and this ensures that children's welfare is very well monitored by adults. The well-being of pupils who are looked after by the local authorities is equally well addressed by the school, staff are very mindful of the significant personal problems these children have to overcome. The acting headteacher is determined to find as much support as possible for families with problems, particularly where inadequate respite care is offered.
- 45 Health and safety issues are very well addressed and all members of the school community are aware of what they should do in an emergency. Regular risk assessments are carried out and all the required documentation is in place. Accidents are carefully recorded and parents are well informed of any medical concerns. The school buildings are clean and bright, in spite of the ongoing building work.
- 46 Satisfactory procedures are in place to monitor and promote good attendance among pupils. Registers are carefully completed and amended as appropriate. Almost all pupils arrive at school on time and parents are conscientious about informing the school of any reasons for absence. Currently, no member of staff actively monitors attendance throughout the year but parents are routinely contacted on the first day of absence by the administrator if there is no known reason for a pupil's absence.
- 47 All the adults working in the school set consistently high standards for pupils' behaviour. The code of conduct is well known to staff, pupils and parents and pupils know what is expected of them. On some occasions when teachers and support staff do not set challenging enough activities, some pupils can become rather boisterous but this usually subsides quickly. The school's policy on bullying and anti-social behaviour is clear; during the inspection, no instances of inappropriate behaviour were seen. Lunchtime staff also encourage pupils to behave well and lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions where children of all ages mix together at the dinner tables.
- 48 Class teachers and support staff know the pupils well and have a clear understanding of their backgrounds. Any individual needs or concerns are identified quickly and appropriate support is offered. Staff offer good levels of guidance to support pupils' personal and educational development. Clear targets are set for pupils and parents to follow and these are reviewed regularly.
- 49 Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Assessment and recording was a key issue in the last inspection and, since then, the school has put in satisfactory procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress over time; sound improvement has been made in this area overall. Pupils' assessment results are entered on to 'Assessment Manager,' a computer program to collate all assessment records. Baseline assessment is undertaken in the first term in school. Reading tests and end of unit tests are taken in foundation subjects. Years 3, 4 and 5 undertake the optional SATs and procedures are in place for the assessment and recording of pupil progress in English, mathematics and science. Analysis of these assessment outcomes leads to targets setting. The use of assessments to guide planning is variable but satisfactory overall. It could be refined even further to ensure that pupils make even better progress. At present targets set for pupils are too general and need to be more specific so that above average attaining pupils are challenged even further. The procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are good and this is demonstrated in the range of activities and responsibilities undertaken to enable pupils to engage in these opportunities confidently.
- 50 Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for. The school has a system of early intervention when pupils showing cause for concern and likely to require extra learning support are identified in their first term in the school. In addition, other procedures are adopted to identify an area of concern through analysis of pupil assessments. Further advice and support is obtained through other agencies, such as the speech and language therapy and visual impairment service,

including the school educational psychologist who undertakes assessments and gives advice to the school in regards to pupils needing extra support in their learning. At the present time there are no pupils with statements of special educational needs and therefore no annual reviews are required.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 51 Almost all parents expressed positive views about the school. In the questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting, parents agreed that their children like school, they make good progress, the teaching is good and staff have high expectations that their children will work hard. Parents feel that they can approach staff freely with any concerns and that they will be listened to. The small numbers of parents who expressed any concerns about the school are particularly concerned about the range of extra-curricular activities, the amount of homework given and how closely the school works with parents.
- 52 Inspectors concur with parents' positive views of the school. They investigated the small number of parental concerns but do not agree with those parents. The extra-curricular programme is judged to be comparable to that found in most similar sized schools. Staff offer parents every opportunity to come into school to talk about their children's progress and also provide good quality information about what is happening in school. There is an appropriate amount of homework set for pupils to support the curriculum. However, a significant number of parents do not support the school's efforts in this area and fail to emphasise to their children just how important it is for them to complete their homework regularly and to take pride in how they present it.
- 53 There is good quality information for parents about the life and work of the school and the progress their children make. All parents receive, and sign, a copy of the home school agreement and the majority upholds its values. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are useful documents. In particular, the governors' annual report provides a really good flavour of what has happened in school over the past year. Parents receive guidelines on how to help their children read and improve their handwriting at home. Reading diaries provide a useful home school link for parents.
- 54 Class teachers send good quality written end of year progress reports to parents and these paint a clear picture of what children can do and what they need to next to improve in English, mathematics and science. Comments in the other subjects are brief and often lack clear evaluations about exactly what it is that children can do.
- 55 Parents make a satisfactory contribution to the school overall although many still do not play an active enough role in their children's learning. For example, many do not value the homework set for their children. They are happy for pupils to take back poorly written work on scrappy pieces of paper and this does not help their children to take pleasure and pride in their work.
- 56 Home visits made by reception staff ensure an effective induction process into school for pupils. Parents gain useful insights into the school's expectations and staff are able to make early interventions if they spot potential problems for learning.
- 57 Most parents are generous with their time and offer help with specific projects; their involvement in the work of the school is good. For example, they decorate classrooms and recently helped to reclaim part of the garden. Some help each week in the library and also with extra-curricular art and netball clubs. The lunchtime supervisors are also parents of pupils at the school. At the last parents' meeting, every parent attended and was able to discuss their child's progress and targets with the teachers.
- 58 The 'Friends of the School' association is very active and raises large sums of money. Amongst other things it has recently paid for musical instruments, netball posts and coaches for last summer's school outing: such contributions have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

- 59 Partnership with parents of pupils with SEN is good. Pupils and parents are invited to contribute to the planning and review of IEP targets. The school sees the links with parents with pupils with special educational needs as crucial and parents are very supportive and attend all reviews and parent interviews.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 60 The leadership and management of the acting headteacher and key staff are good. The acting headteacher is fulfilling her duties very well and is providing a clear educational direction for the school. She has worked very hard at developing the curriculum, keeping governors informed of the progress made in relation to the school action plan, and ensuring that they are actively involved in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of their spending decisions. The acting headteacher is an effective classroom practitioner who leads by example and has been instrumental in co-ordinating the curriculum to ensure that all pupils have full access to the learning opportunities offered to them. Since the previous inspection, she has ensured that the school has made good progress overall in relation to the key issues identified. Standards are rising and there are no subjects where pupils' attainment is below national averages or expectations. Teaching is carefully monitored and staff are given guidance on improving the quality of their teaching. Provision for outdoor play area for the youngest age group has improved. Pupils' progress is tracked effectively, although more emphasis needs to be placed upon using information from assessments to plan the next steps of pupils' learning, especially those pupils who are capable of higher attainment.
- 61 The acting headteacher has had very little time to undertake her management responsibilities because of her heavy teaching commitment and the co-ordination of the majority of subjects, but she has done a really good job at ensuring that staff are aware of pupils' progress. Performance management objectives are clear, although formal reviews have not taken place fully. Appropriate training has taken place for staff undertaking co-ordinators' roles but their performance has not yet been formally evaluated.
- 62 The school's provision for, and management of SEN are good. The acting headteacher has ensured that clear education plans are drawn up and that support staff are generally appropriately deployed to help these pupils to access learning. Pupils' needs are identified early and there are good working relationships with external support services. Pupils' self-esteem is boosted by effective learning programmes and use of praise, but, on occasions, pupils with SEN would benefit from receiving more help from support staff who work in the infants. Overall, pupils with SEN are well managed and cared for and make good gains in learning. All confidential documents are well filed and kept in a securely locked filing cabinet. A good start has been made to bring the procedures in line with the new SEN code of practice. The governors are very supportive to the SEN provision. The present governor allocated to SEN is new, but has already received training and meets the special educational needs co-ordinator termly, when a specific focus is identified for the meetings. The learning support assistants are very effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and they work as a co-ordinated team. Resources for the teaching of these pupils are sufficient, but there is a need to increase and widen the range of resources, especially in the use of ICT which is presently underdeveloped.
- 63 The leadership and management of the governing body are good. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and contributes effectively to shaping the direction of the school. The astute and supportive chair of governors gives consistently loyal support and has been a steady influence through the school's significant changes. Governors give good commitment to developing the school's aims and ensuring that the school is the focal point of the village. They appreciate the good information given by the acting headteacher to help them undertake strategic decisions. There is a shared intention for improvement and the school has good capacity to succeed. The reflection of the school's aims and values in its work is good and is evident in all aspects, particularly for the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The governors' annual report to parents is clearly written, giving a good account of how the school meets its responsibilities. The good school ethos is reinforced through very good respect for

individual differences and its all-inclusive provision to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEN, have full access to the curriculum. The school complies fully with the Acts for Sexual Discrimination, Race Relations and Disability. The school's development plan prioritises aspects of the school's progress carefully, identifying key personnel and costing initiatives. The plan is regularly evaluated by all governors and staff, and updated frequently so that the good monitoring of the school's performance ensures effective action. Very good financial procedures are undertaken by the very efficient school administrator, who always has a cheerful smile for pupils, parents and staff. The budget is very well managed and strategic use of resources including specific grants and funding, is satisfactory. Daily administration is efficient and unobtrusive due to the very effective work of the industrious administrator. New technology is used effectively to inform governors and parents.

- 64 The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is satisfactory. A sound programme for the professional development of teachers has raised the quality of teaching significantly since the previous inspection and increased confidence and effectiveness in the promotion of educational inclusion. The emphasis the school places on creating a secure, safe and interesting learning environment is at the heart of its success with inclusion.
- 65 Resources are satisfactory and generally teachers use them well to help pupils learn. However, library stock is limited and there is a lack of space for pupils to undertake quiet reflective study. Physical education mats need replacing, as they are well worn, more resources need to be purchased to ensure that there are sufficient tools for construction projects, and there are too few multi-cultural musical instruments in school. Extensive building work is being undertaken to complete 'the classroom of the future' (a well equipped ICT suite). This will further improve access to computers both for pupils and the community. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but it is cramped. Teachers make the best use of it but there is a lack of storage space. The physical education hall is very small, resulting in staff having to rely on good weather to carry out team games and gymnastics with the oldest pupils.
- 66 Accommodation is satisfactory overall, although there are some inadequacies in the provision. The hall is not large enough to deliver the full Key Stage 2 gymnastics curriculum, although the school ensures that pupils do not miss out on covering the full range of skills, but this is largely dependent on fine weather. There have already been some discussions about building an extension to solve this problem. The space allocated to the library is insufficient to meet the needs of pupils; there is no space in school for quiet, reflective study. The swimming pool in the school's grounds has now been condemned. The school site is very clean and well maintained by the caretaker. There is a hard play area and a large field. Teachers make the best of the accommodation and mount attractive displays in classrooms and around school. At the time of the inspection, the school was well into its building work and this posed several problems for staff. They have coped admirably as have the pupils who have had to adjust, for example, to a very small cloakroom area for a considerable length of time.
- 67 Financial systems are very good, highlighted by the excellent audit report from the local authority auditors, with the minor recommendations related to the audit immediately being addressed.
- 68 The work of the school administrative officer is of high quality and is enhanced by the effective links maintained with the local authority financial advisor who supports matters related to the school budget. Spending decisions are closely linked to the priorities for improvement and the school has good systems to ensure the cost effectiveness of the goods and services that it purchases; it appropriately seeks several quotations for major items of expenditure before making a choice. The governing body is very supportive of the provision of special educational needs, ensuring that all funds delegated for pupils with special educational needs are used correctly. Furthermore, the governing body adds extra funding from the school budget to employ the learning support assistants to support pupils with special educational needs. All financial matters are monitored and entered on to the computerised system by the administrative officer who, as the clerk to the governors, prepares a monthly budget monitoring statement for the governors. The school office is very well run and provides a positive welcome for visitors.

- 69 There is an adequate number of suitably qualified teachers and well trained support staff to teach the National Curriculum. Class teachers and support staff work very well together to offer good levels of support for pupils; all members of staff are equally valued. Teaching assistants offer particularly effective support to pupils with special educational needs and these children make good progress. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 (Class 3) would benefit from the provision of an additional teaching assistant to support daily literacy and numeracy sessions. There are appropriate systems in place to ensure new staff members are offered good levels of support and guidance.
- 70 The school uses the principles of best value comprehensively and the auditor's report was very complimentary of the school's systems. The school is effective in its undertakings, and overall outcomes of behaviour and pupils' achievement are good and provide good value for money, an improvement from the previous HMI inspection where it was satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71 Whilst recognising the improvements made to the school with the support from the local education authority, to address the issues arising in this report, the acting headteacher, staff and governing body, in conjunction with the local education authority, should:

(1) Raise standards further by: 11, 26, 27, 87, 88, 90, 104, 118

In English

- ensuring that all pupils are given more opportunities to improve their speaking and writing skills by:
- helping pupils to extend and sustain their talk by insisting on more detailed answers to questions and ensuring that they read with expression;
- being explicit about appropriate terminology for discussions, including the conventions of drama, debate and interviews;
- providing opportunities for more challenging plenary sessions where pupils have to justify their opinions;
- extending children's vocabulary by ensuring that they focus on subject-specific words;
- increasing the writing of complex sentences with enriched phrases, appropriate connectives and correct punctuation (Years 5 and 6);
- practising strategies for checking spelling;
- improving presentation skills throughout the school.

In Mathematics in Years 5 and 6 13, 95

- ensuring that pupils are asked to verbalise their thinking and that plenary sessions are improved;
- providing more opportunities for collaborative problem-solving and identifying mathematical strategies through which problems could be solved;

In Science and foundation subjects (Years 5 and 6) 10, 89, 105

- ensuring that appropriate emphasis is placed upon the progressive development of subject-specific skills in foundation subjects;
- placing more emphasis upon building on the high standards pupils attain in Years 3 and 4;
- ensuring that, in science, pupils have more hands-on experiences in conducting their own experiments, recording their findings in a variety of ways, and participating in more activities that place demands on pupils to develop their research skills.

(2) Improving the quality of teaching in the class with the oldest pupils by ensuring that: 7, 14, 20, 22, 25, 77, 94, 95, 99

- a whole-school approach to planning is followed;
- there is more variety in the range of teaching methods used, for example, use of overhead projectors, development of interactive class displays and more effective questioning which insists on pupils' verbalising their thinking, placing more emphasis on group work, more frequent checking of pupils' understanding, praise is used more frequently to encourage those pupils who are, on occasions, reluctant to learn;
- more use is made of ICT to support learning in all subjects and aspects of control technology and word processing are more frequently taught;
- all pupils are aware of their targets;
- further opportunities are provided for pupils to become independent learners;

- more use is made of support staff working in the infants, and in the juniors, as and when the need arises, to support pupils experiencing difficulty in learning;
- the use of plenary sessions focuses on what pupils find easy, what they find difficult and what they need to do in order to improve.

(3) Improving curriculum planning even further by: 7, 27, 32, 49, 107, 115, 127, 138

- ensuring that there is a whole-school approach to planning based upon the effective practice seen in reception to Year 4;
- defining clear expectations for all subjects, for all groups of pupils in mixed-age classes;
- clearly identifying subject-specific skills and opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT in medium-term planning;
- ensuring that data from assessments are used to plan the next steps of pupils' learning, especially for group work and the challenge of higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6;
- ensuring that there is an equitable distribution of curriculum responsibilities among staff, so that the acting headteacher is not over-burdened with the responsibility of monitoring and developing most of the subjects of the National Curriculum.

(4) Throughout the school ensure that: 14, 21, 25, 94, 95

- higher attaining pupils are more effectively challenged;
- higher expectations are set by teachers on the standards of pupils' written work.

The following minor issues should also be considered: 54, 55, 66, 90, 116, 124

As and when funds allow:

- improve the hall so that pupils can have full access to all programmes of study of the physical education curriculum in inclement weather;
- ensure that the library is extended so that pupils can undertake private study and have the opportunity to reflect upon their learning;
- improve the range of books to support all subjects;
- improve the resources for design and technology to ensure that there are sufficient tools for construction projects;
- purchase more physical education mats and multicultural instruments;
- improve annual reports to parents to cover the foundation subjects in more detail;
- continue to work with parents to ensure that they see the value of homework.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	8	9	0	0	0
Percentage	0	39	29	32	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. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

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)	78
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	28

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	N/A	N/A	Under 10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (89)	89 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	N/A	N/A	Under 10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (56)	79 (56)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (44)	71 (56)	71 (67)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

As fewer than 10 pupils took the test, results are not reported.

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
65		
2		
1		
2		

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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.76
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

Financial information

Financial year	2002
	£
Total income	215 135
Total expenditure	212 403
Expenditure per pupil	2 870
Balance brought forward from previous year	17 226
Balance carried forward to next year	19 958

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	77
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	26	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	34	4	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	42	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	68	30	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	32	4	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	17	8	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	17	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	55	36	8	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	21	9	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	36	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	45	23	2	8

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

- 72 The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. These children are taught alongside Years 1 and 2 pupils in Class 1 by the class teacher and support assistant. Provision for outdoor play is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Although these children are few in number, their attainment on entry is below that expected of the age range of four years plus, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Staff work very hard to create a stimulating learning environment and, as a result, children settle quickly into school routines and are happy and confident. 'This is largely due to the very positive relationships, good planning, teaching and effective use of assessment to inform the next steps of children's learning. Children's progress in learning is good and they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. By the time they begin formal schooling in Year 1, they have attained the Early Learning Goals (ELG) in personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical development, in knowledge and understanding of the world, in physical development and in creative development.
- 73 Children have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Throughout, children with special educational needs (SEN) are identified early and there is good use of outside specialists to give extra guidance on how to address their needs. As a result, these children make steady progress and receive good support.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 74 All children attain the expectations in personal, social and emotional development and make good gains in learning. The class teacher and support staff have a warm and friendly approach which ensures that children are happy to come to school. In the mornings, parents are welcomed into the classroom to settle their children and immediately, the children undertake some game or look at a book and become purposefully engaged in learning. Parents say that their children cannot wait to come to school in the mornings. Children play well together, they are encouraged to choose their own resources for learning and very quickly learn to become independent. The quality of teaching is good. Activities organised are imaginative and designed to increase independence and ability to make choices in structured play. This contributes to good attitudes and effective working habits.

Communication, language and literacy

- 75 All children attain the ELGs at the end of the Foundation Stage and make good gains in learning because the classroom is a very literate environment and every opportunity is taken by the staff to develop children's skills of this area of learning. The quality of teaching is good with examples of very good practice. For example, when reading 'Handa's Surprise', the class teacher relentlessly pushed children to remember the correct order of events of animals pinching fruit from Handa's head-basket. Much of the children's learning is developed through stories and very good opportunities are created to stimulate children's imagination and the unfolding of a plot through role play. Children carry out instructions with a good level of understanding and listen attentively.
- 76 A strong interest in books and a love of stories is encouraged. Basic skills of reading, writing and phonic awareness are taught well. Children form their letters correctly and love writing in the 'writing corner'. They write lists, receipts, menus, letters, and they speak clearly to one another when acting out stories that they have heard. In a very good literacy lesson, the teacher taught children to find initial letter sounds in the text, followed up by writing a letter to Handa. Children clearly identified medial vowels in what they had written. Children are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. They are encouraged to listen attentively in order to identify initial sounds and they are taught correct letter formation. A few higher attaining children are beginning to write in full sentences and can read simple fiction books.

Mathematical development

- 77 All children attain the ELGs in mathematical development and make good progress. They love chanting number rhymes, counting to 50 and their recognition of numbers up to 20 is secure, although when writing them about one-third of the children reverse numbers 3, 7 and 9. Children can order numbers on cards on a number-line and can match appropriate dots to equate with the number. They can name shapes and have a good mathematical vocabulary of comparison, for example, they know the meaning of *smaller than*, *bigger than*, *the heaviest*, *the lightest*, and their knowledge of positional language is good. Children enjoy counting games and using common shapes and jigsaws so that they make good gains in oral learning. The teaching of mathematical development is good with very good features. Plenty of opportunities are provided for children to learn through structured play, for example, whilst working in the sand and water tray, children are encouraged by the good quality of teacher intervention to develop their vocabulary of capacity, for instance by identifying containers which are *fuller*, *emptier* and the *same*.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 78 All children attain the ELGs in this area of learning and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, due to the good teaching that they receive. By the end of the Foundation Stage children can identify sounds and can explain whether they are heard far away or near. They know that people of Islamic faith believe in angels and that the Q'uran is a holy book. They are fascinated by magnets and know that young babies grow into toddlers and then become adolescents. They know that *push* and *pull* are forces and that Witheridge has a fire station. When using a computer, children can identify a repeating pattern and they use the mouse appropriately, knowing several functions of keys on the keyboard. They explore the school grounds looking for a variety of creatures in their natural habitat and they have a secure understanding of why birds normally build their nests high up in the trees.
- 79 The quality of teaching is good. The class teacher uses stimulating resources to grab children's interest levels. Parents are encouraged to bring babies into school for bath time and every opportunity is taken by teachers to encourage children's love of the natural world. The very good relationships between teachers and children create a secure learning environment from within which children want to explore and find out more.

Physical development

- 80 Children attain the ELGs by the time they enter Year 1 and make good gains in learning whilst in the reception class. Children's spatial awareness, co-ordination, balance and control are effectively developed when using the outside play area. Outdoor toys are put to effective use and children develop strength in their upper arms when climbing, and good control and sense of space when riding wheeled vehicles. Children are given frequent opportunities to use paintbrushes and a range of tools to develop dexterity with their fingers. They have satisfactory control with scissors, to cut paper and materials, to sequence their pictures of stories they have heard in class. Pencils, felt tip pens and crayons are used frequently and children's control of writing implements is good.
- 81 The quality of teaching is good. Children are encouraged to participate in all activities and praise is used effectively. Modelling by staff of what is expected of children encourages them to have a go at using different construction and art materials. This contributes to the good opportunities provided for these children to develop their physical skills.

Creative development

- 82 Children attain the ELGs by the time they are ready for formal education in Year 1, and they make good progress. They really enjoy art and creative role play. Children sing well, they can identify a rhythm and are intrigued by mixing paint and undertaking collage work, using natural objects. Through structured play, children are encouraged to develop independence and make their own creative responses rather than be expected to reproduce someone else's work. Children

participate well in all musical activities and love playing percussion instruments and singing in acts of collective worship. Children show a good awareness of rhythm and beat.

- 83 The quality of teaching is good because children are encouraged to use their imagination and their personal responses are valued. Teachers assist children in all of their endeavours and, in the role play they model correct responses which encourage children to want to continue developing imaginative play. Children are encouraged to be independent and this has a positive effect on their self-esteem because they know that they can succeed.

ENGLISH

- 84 Analysis of results in National Curriculum tests must be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils involved. The national test results and teacher assessments of 2002 showed that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading were well above national average both in comparison with all schools and in comparison with similar schools. In writing, in comparison with all schools, standards were above average and, in comparison with similar schools, standards were broadly in line. In reading, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was in the top five per cent nationally, whereas in writing, too few pupils attained the higher levels and pupils' performance was below average.
- 85 Over three years, the performance of pupils exceeded the national average for their age group in both reading and writing. Boys did better than girls both in reading and writing, but this was not evident during the week of inspection.
- 86 By the end of Year 6, in comparison with all schools, standards were below national average in English and, in comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average. Over three years, the performance of pupils fell below the national average for their age group. There was no difference in attainment by gender. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was broadly in line with the national average.
- 87 Previous inspection findings showed that, by the end of Year 2, standards were below national average and well below national average by the end of Year 6. Since then, improvement has been good because of the focus in the school development plan to raise standards. Present inspection findings show that the best progress has been made in Reception to Year 4. By the end of Year 2, standards are above national average in reading and writing and are broadly in line in speaking and listening. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain average standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Overall standards in spelling are just about average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, but written work shows that they do not pay sufficient attention when checking their spellings and, too often, they do not spell subject-specific words correctly.
- 88 Standards in speaking and listening are average overall, but pupils struggle with giving detailed information in their responses to questions. Pupils in both the infants and juniors generally listen well and respond appropriately to the content of what they hear. In Year 2, they recognise letter blends and word endings and give examples of other words with the same sounds. They confidently ask for clarification if they do not understand something that the teacher says. They are less confident when explaining or expanding ideas. They use a limited range of vocabulary and often offer just a few words or phrases and simply constructed sentences. They need help and encouragement from their teachers to add detail to what they say. In Year 6, pupils generally listen well to their teachers, but their spoken responses lack complex and sophisticated phrases and, occasionally, pupils mix up their tenses. Teachers do not pay sufficient attention to extending pupils' talk by insisting on more detailed answers to questions and guiding pupils to develop appropriate conventions of speaking further by using drama, debate and interviewing techniques. Although some good examples of these aspects were seen in Years 2, 3 and 4, where the class teacher set high expectations for the quality of debate by engaging pupils in role, this was not consistent throughout the school.

- 89 By the end of Year 2, pupils read well with expression and enthusiasm and know how to break up words into appropriate sounds. Pupils enjoy reading and have a love of literature because of the lively and interesting manner in which their teachers use text level work to teach reading. Pupils have a good sight vocabulary and use picture and phonic cues successfully. They read with expression and know how to sequence the events in stories and understand how characters interact with one another. All groups of pupils read well in relation to their prior attainment, but higher attaining pupils could be challenged more to develop their skills of finding meaning beyond the literal.
- 90 By the end of Year 6, pupils read with understanding, but their reading is mechanical and lacks intonation. Pupils struggle with developing their skills of inference and deduction to explain events, such as the motivation of characters and to predict what might happen to characters in the future. In the class with the oldest pupils, plenary sessions are not sufficiently well developed to enable them to comment on which parts of the text they struggled with and too often, in the oldest class, the overhead projector is not sufficiently used to enable pupils to extend their knowledge of subject-specific words. Not all pupils can scan text to find evidence to illustrate their views and their research skills are not sufficiently well developed to enable them to organise their own work. This is largely due to the lack of reading books to support learning in all subjects and the lack of library space for reflective study. Pupils are gaining a sound awareness of the structures associated with different texts and of ways in which authors have used vocabulary and language to create effects.
- 91 Standards in writing are above national average by the end of Year 2 and are in line with national average by the end of Year 6. It must be remembered that the pupils in Year 6 have many gaps in their learning because they were Year 2 pupils when the school went into special measures and, whilst they have made satisfactory progress, they still have basic gaps in their knowledge of spelling and sentence construction, especially in the writing of complex sentences with enriched phrases, appropriate connectives and correct punctuation.
- 92 By the end of Year 2, pupils sequence events and recount stories appropriately. They use a range of descriptive vocabulary, such as *bulgy*, *focused* and *glazed*, and when writing about Handa's adventures, based upon the book 'Handa's Surprise', they are able to use interesting sentences to create settings which hook the reader by saying that "In Kenya, the sun shines brightly" and "The animals love pinching the fruit in Handa's baskets." Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 write in complex sentences with enriched vocabulary, but standards of presentation, both in Years 2 and 6, are untidy and unsatisfactory overall. Too few pupils have sufficient strategies or give sufficient attention to checking spellings. Pupils with SEN make good progress because they receive good help from support staff. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning, especially in drafting and presenting text.
- 93 Overall, pupils' achievements are good in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. This is because the quality of teaching is better in the two youngest classes. Overall the quality of teaching is good. In all classes, the teachers have good, secure subject knowledge. They understand the principles underpinning the teaching of the National Literacy Strategy well but, as yet, the quality of planning is inconsistent throughout the school, with the best examples seen in the two classes which cater for pupils from reception to Year 4. In both the infants and juniors, teachers give pupils clear examples and explanations allowing them to succeed and make good, short-term gains in learning. Teachers manage their pupils very well and use support staff effectively, contributing to pupils' good attitudes to learning. There are occasions, however, in the oldest class in the school where more examples of constructive praise would enable pupils to reach even higher levels, especially a minority of pupils who are not always interested in finishing their work.
- 94 Overall, lesson objectives are clear and pupils understand what is expected of them. In a very good lesson seen in the class with the youngest pupils, the class teacher relentlessly challenged her pupils to "reach for the stars" by asking them to explain their thinking when trying to find information in the text of 'Handa's Surprise'. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace using methods that capture pupils' interest and actively involve them. Every pupil has a target to achieve, but in

the oldest class these targets need to be more specific and checked regularly so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. At times, there is insufficient attention paid to using data from assessment to inform the next steps of pupils' learning and this limits progress, especially in the oldest class. Furthermore, a more varied approach to teaching methods used would engage pupils even more. At present too few opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in group work, verbalise the difficulties they experience in learning and use the overhead projector for explaining sentence construction in text. Satisfactory use is made of literacy across the curriculum, for example, in design and technology pupils are encouraged to write formal instructions, in religious education good links are made with the Bible in helping pupils understand the genre and language used.

- 95 Overall, pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well, but there is an element of "off-task behaviour" by a minority in the oldest class because the range of teaching methods used does not always fully engage them in learning. The recently appointed co-ordinator is an effective classroom practitioner and is being mentored by the acting headteacher in undertaking her role as subject leader. She is both willing and enthusiastic, but as yet, her role is not fully developed to enable her to monitor the quality of teaching, although she has undertaken a scrutiny of examples of pupils' work. Overall, the co-ordination of the subject is good. Resources are satisfactory but there are too few overhead projectors, the library is under-resourced and there is a lack of quiet space for learning. With the completion of the new classroom of the future, this will be resolved. By having a strong focus on literacy in the school development plan, staff are being successful in raising standards and the quality of assessment has improved since the previous inspection and is good overall, but as yet, not all teachers are using assessment data to plan the next steps of pupils' learning and, as a result, above-average attainers could be making even better progress.

MATHEMATICS

- 96 Analysis of results in National Curriculum tests must be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils involved. National test and TA assessments show that, in comparison both with all and with similar schools, standards were well above average. At the end of Year 6, in comparison with all schools nationally, standards were in line but were below average in relation to similar schools. In year 6 the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was broadly average. Inspection findings show that standards are above those expected nationally by the age of seven and in-line by the age of eleven. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. However, older junior pupils who are higher attainers should be doing better, their work is not challenging and they are not stretched, although progress is often more rapid in the lower juniors and infants. There is an upward trend overall in national test results in mathematics, but a particular weakness is the percentage of pupils gaining the upper levels. In national test results at Key Stage 2 girls did better than boys, in Key Stage 1 there was no difference and during the inspection no differences in attainment by gender were found.
- 97 The planning for numeracy is in line with national numeracy strategy and the programmes of study are covered sufficiently. However, because of the mixed ages in the classes there is inevitably a range of coverage across the years and, in some plans, there was similar work being covered by all pupils, and some older higher attainers were not always sufficiently challenged and quickly became restless because they found the work too easy. Progress in data handling throughout the school is satisfactory with some good examples seen on display where pupils had collected data and then produced their findings in a range of graphical representation. For example, in the infants pupils had undertaken a survey of what items they use at home that could be recycled. After completing their data collection on tally sheets a large graph was constructed to present their results. Other examples show pupils who gathered data from investigations and then used computer programs to represent it graphically.
- 98 In the infants lessons begin with an oral session to develop pupils' mental skills. Pupils in the reception group can count in 2s and count in 10s to 100 and back again and know their number bonds to 10. Year 1 can count in 2s to 30 and Year 2 can count backwards in 5s from 100. The work is well matched to the needs of all pupils and the higher attainers are challenged. For example, reception higher attainers can add $9+6=15$, Year 1 higher attainers can calculate simple

sums such as $5 - 4 =$ and can independently make lots of different sums for themselves to calculate. Year 2 higher attainers know that you can change multiplication into division, and all abilities make good progress overall. Very good support is given to groups of pupils by the teaching assistant who works as a co-ordinated team with the class teacher. Good progress continues into the next class where pupils know their x 3 and x 10 tables, they can count on in 3s and 10s to 100. However they do find more difficulty in counting backwards from the higher numbers. Pupils in the older classes are expected to round up and estimate and at times choose their own methods of calculation. In one lesson the same task was set for Years 4 and 5 which, although slightly modified for Year 6, was too easy for the higher attainers who quickly became bored and unable to move on independently because the lesson was completely teacher directed. Apart from the evidence seen in the younger classes the use of ICT to represent graphical data is undeveloped in the Year 5 and 6 class.

- 99 The quality of teaching in the infants and lower juniors is good; it is satisfactory in the upper juniors. The National Numeracy Strategy is generally in place in all lessons. In the best lessons, the teachers use good questioning skills at a range of different levels backed up by the use of resources, such as practical equipment and number lines, to develop pupils' mental and oral skills and their understanding of number. The good start to the lessons sets a brisk learning pace and high expectations, which the pupils respond to during their follow up work. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of learning is often too slow and lacks challenge, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. Too few opportunities are provided for collaborative learning and for pupils to verbalise their thinking, particularly in identifying mathematical strategies to be employed to solve problems. Plenary sessions are often underdeveloped and do not focus on what pupils have found difficult and what they need to do in order to improve. These lessons are uninspiring and do not challenge and extend the more able pupils because the expectations of what the higher attaining pupils can achieve are not high enough. In these lessons pupils are consolidating learning rather than being extended. A common feature in lessons is the good provision for those pupils with special educational needs, who are often well supported by teaching assistants. Planning is generally satisfactory. Where it is at its best, it identifies different learning intentions for groups of pupils in the class. A good feature, which is consistent in the best teaching observed is the management of the pupils' behaviour which reflects on the pupils good attitudes to learning and because they want to learn. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place and the quality and consistency of teachers marking is generally sound. Pupils learn well and have positive attitudes to learning although the rates of progress are faster in reception to Year 4 than in the oldest class. Plenary sessions are satisfactory overall but they could be improved by ensuring that pupils are given opportunities to discuss the aspects of learning that they found difficult.
- 100 There is no named co-ordinator and the acting headteacher has worked hard to monitor the teaching and learning in the subject. The use of ICT is satisfactory overall, but with the completion of the new 'classroom of the future' this will help in raising the profile of ICT in the mathematical curriculum. Presently, with only one or two classroom computers, it makes it difficult for pupils to work independently on mathematical programs at regular intervals. Resources are sufficient. Numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, especially in design and technology but formal opportunities are not sufficiently identified in teachers' planning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good due to the implementation of the numeracy strategy and the effective monitoring of teaching by the headteacher.

SCIENCE

- 101 Analysis of results in National Curriculum tests must be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils involved. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above the national averages and, overall, pupils' achievements are good. This represents good improvement on previous inspection findings, when standards were in line with national average at the end of Year 2 and were below national average by the end of Year 6.
- 102 The 2002 teacher assessments for Year 2 show that pupils' attainment in science was in the top five per cent nationally in relation to the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above. (Level 2 equates to average levels for these pupils). However, too few pupils attained the higher levels

(Level 3). National test results for 2002 show that, by the end of Year 6 in comparison with all schools, pupils attained levels which were below the national average and, in comparison with similar schools, standards were well below national average. Too few pupils attained the higher levels (Level 5). These results must be treated with caution because the groups of pupils taking the test were very small. There were no differences in attainment by gender at the end of both key stages.

- 103 The better standards seen during the inspection are due to the teachers' good subject knowledge and overall good quality of teaching, focusing on ensuring that pupils understand scientific skills of prediction, observation and hypothesis.
- 104 By the end of Year 2, one of the stronger points of pupils' learning is the way in which they collaborate well in groups to form a hypothesis. Pupils can describe how plants grow in different conditions and know what happens to them if they are deprived of water and sunlight. They have good knowledge of fair testing, but do not always use a variety of different ways to record their findings. They know what happens to a shadow during the day and they know that *push* and *pull* are forces. They know how to construct a bar chart, to show the length of a shadow at different times of the day and they know which materials are magnetic. Their knowledge of which materials will be attracted by magnets is usually correct. Pupils know the difference between various types of rocks. When undertaking experiments on observing the length of time it takes water to soak through different types of rock, pupils eagerly explain that, with some rocks water gets soaked up before your very eyes. All groups of pupils in Year 2 have plenty of hands-on experiences in setting up experiments, but their recorded work is not always neatly presented. They have good collaborative skills and can explain that *obsidian* is a very strong rock because water will not pass through it. When exploring different sound sources, pupils know that sounds are generated by objects vibrating, and they take great delight in measuring the difference in the rates of travel between sound and light. These types of opportunities for collaborative problem-solving contribute to pupils' skills of very effective group work.
- 105 By the end of Year 6, pupils have good scientific knowledge of all aspects of the science Programmes of Study but they do not have sufficient opportunities to plan their own experiments. They are very reliant on the teacher telling them what to do and this restricts their development of pursuing and perfecting their skills of scientific enquiry. Pupils have good knowledge of food groups, they can compare their pulse rates when undertaking a range of physical activities, and use ICT appropriately to support their learning. They can name and label bones of skeletons and can explain which food is needed for the development of healthy bones. They know about reversible and irreversible changes and they know which powders dissolve in water. Pupils explain in good detail, the principles of gravity, but their written work shows uniformity of setting up experiments, most of which have been demonstrated by the class teacher with too few opportunities provided for pupils to present their findings in a variety of ways. Whilst most of the pupils make good progress, including those with SEN, some who are capable of higher attainment make only satisfactory progress over time because they undertake the same work as their peers. A weakness in their learning is that they do not undertake extensive research and they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills of independent learning.
- 106 In both the infants and the juniors, pupils have good attitudes to learning, they behave well and look after equipment, but in the oldest class there is a lack of interactive displays and this limits opportunities for these pupils to develop their natural curiosity even further.
- 107 The quality of teaching, over time, is good in both the infant and the junior classes. When teaching is good, with very good features (as seen in reception to Year 4), teachers take time to build pupils' understanding and use of key vocabulary. Displays in these classes are interactive and include searching questions. In both the infants and juniors, teachers present key vocabulary well, but sometimes they do not bring pupils' attention to the incorrect spelling of these words in pupils' written work. The present medium-term planning does not sufficiently highlight the progressive development of science skills, such as those of recording, observation, hypothesis, prediction and evaluation of experiments. This prevents teachers from planning challenging work of pupils capable of higher attainment in mixed-age classes. Teachers ensure that pupils' ideas and

their work are highly valued, contributing to pupils' personal development. Teachers have good questioning skills, but pupils would benefit from being asked to explain their responses in more detail. All teachers and learning assistants diligently assess pupils' responses which they share systematically in order to plan following lessons. Generally teachers use ICT appropriately, but more use could be made of linking ICT to recording pupils' results of investigations in a variety of ways. Teachers' medium-term planning does not sufficiently highlight formal opportunities for the development of skills learnt in literacy and numeracy. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and satisfactory resources are used to ensure pupils' interest in the subject.

- 108 The acting headteacher has managed the subject appropriately. The school has adopted National Curriculum guidelines for its scheme of work, and the school is now in a position to evaluate how well the scheme meets the needs of the pupils and identify opportunities for skills' progression. Assessments are satisfactory overall, but their use to inform the next steps of learning are underdeveloped, the school has recognised that this is an area for improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

- 109 Pupils' attainment, by the end of Year 2, is above the nationally expected levels and, by the end of Year 6 it is in line with the nationally expected levels. Overall, pupils' achievements are good.
- 110 In reception to Year 4 there are strengths in the quality of pupils' collage work, printing, batik work, clay modelling, fine line drawings, use of colour to express emotions, and observational drawings. Art and design is appropriately linked to literacy and with environmental issues. For example, pupils in all year groups discuss Andy Goldsworthy's work using natural resources. The art club run by one of the parents, contributes to the good development of pupils' skills. It is well attended by pupils from all year groups and they eagerly await the sessions. Pupils have produced some detailed clay tiles with intricate designs, and great care and painstaking detail have gone into producing intricate Chinese lanterns. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have studied repeated patterns in art and ICT, and have studied the work of Gustav Klimt, William Morris and Charles Voysey. By the end of Year 6, art and design is used well to support a range of different subjects; for example in geography, pupils have used different textiles and tissue paper to explore pattern shape and colour when creatively creating a journey from home to school. In religious education, pupils have worked from artistic impressions of Jesus to deduce what kind of a man he might have been, contributing well to their emerging skills of literacy. The use of sketchbooks is satisfactory overall but there is a lack of progressive development of skills apparent. Pupils are encouraged to participate in many trips. They have been to Broomhill Sculpture Park and they have visited several art museums. This has contributed positively to their good attitudes to learning. Pupils try their very best and their work shows that they are capable of improving on their previous best performance. For example, by the end of Year 6, pupils depict relationships between people by using the media of chalk and charcoal. Pupils in both the infants and juniors are proud of their work and readily discuss the artistic process they undertook to create the desired effect for their work.
- 111 No teaching of art was observed due to timetable restrictions, but pupils were observed working in the art club, where they made good progress because of the very positive relationships between the parent helper and pupils, and the modelling of skills enabled pupils to make good short-term gains in learning.
- 112 As this subject was not inspected in the HMI visit, comparisons between standards cannot be made, but it is evident that the curriculum is broad and balanced, time is used effectively, and resources and assessment are satisfactory overall. Further identification of skills' progression in medium-term planning, together with clear identification of expectations for mixed-age classes, is needed in order to raise standards even further. The use of ICT is generally satisfactory with pupils using a range of computer programs to support learning but it is uneven across the school with more use being made in the two younger classes than in the older class. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and the subject is overseen by the headteacher who is very keen to develop pupils' creativity and imagination.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 113 Standards by the age of seven are above, and by the age of eleven are in-line with, those of pupils of a similar age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress over time.
- 114 Displays across the school demonstrate a good quality of work overall. There was a display of musical instruments that had been made from recyclable materials and excellent display of pop-up story books in Year 3 and Year 4, with a display of slippers that had been designed and made by pupils in Years 5 and 6 (Class 3). By the end of Year 2, in a story-book project pupils had developed their knowledge and understanding of the use of mechanisms, such as levers and linkages to move parts on the pages of their books. They were able to cut, fold, score and stick pop-up objects on the pages of their stories; a good example was of a shark opening its jaws as the pages were opened which added great interest to the reader and brought the stories to life. These books were designed and made for an audience of younger pupils and, in the lesson observed, pupils were evaluating their partners' books and were preparing for making a short presentation to younger pupils. The project had been aimed at bringing together several strands of learning from other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy, ICT and art and design for cross-curricular learning. Whilst the stories were linked directly to literacy, the art-work was of a high standard, and pupils had not only written their stories but had illustrated them as well. A very impressive cover was made from fabric that had been printed with stamps and stencils designed and made by the pupils and developed through ICT.
- 115 A good display was seen in the youngest class (reception, Year 1 and Year 2) on a design and technology topic 'Eat more fruit and veg.' A good example was the designing and making of fruit kebabs and accompanying booklets made by the children. Further skills development in food technology was seen in the biscuits made by older pupils. These were appropriately evaluated according to chosen criteria. By the end of Year 6 pupils have sound designing skills. The slipper display demonstrates a good choice of materials which has been sewn together neatly with a new stitch invented by the pupils called the 'castle stitch'. However, there is an inconsistency in the quality of the design process and, where good examples of work were seen, there was invariably a better quality of teaching and learning leading to a better quality of finished product. The progression of skills in the designing and making process is at present limited as pupils move through the school due to a lack of identification of subject specific skills in planning. For example, the lack of consistency in developing experience, and confidence, in using a range of tools has a direct impact upon progress over time, especially in the development of independent skills to enable pupils to design and make their own products. Whilst ICT is used satisfactorily, more can be done in developing its use, especially with older pupils in developing design proposals.
- 116 The quality of teaching seen, including photographic evidence was satisfactory overall. The subject management by the acting headteacher is satisfactory overall and is overseen by the acting headteacher. Resources are satisfactory, but an audit of the tools is necessary to ensure enough equipment is available for all classes to use when needed, especially in construction projects.

GEOGRAPHY

- 117 Standards by the age of seven are above average and by the age of eleven are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. By the end of Year 2 pupils have good knowledge of their local environment and very effective links are made with local history. A very good display was enhanced with aerial photographs, old photographs, maps, street plans and a historical map of the village and locality from 1887. Pupils had undertaken a walk of the village, planned three surveys and had sent out questionnaires to local residents and parents to find out about how the village had changed over time, the use of the land and local occupations. This type of geographical inquiry brings learning alive. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of the importance of water. They have made zigzag books on what they had found out. Pupils' work had an historical context linked by

the research on the use of water from the Romans to the present time. In one lesson pupils were linking their studies of the needs of water in developing countries with an emphasis on Water Aid and how this has changed the lives, particularly of women, in Muslim countries. There are good opportunities for pupils to use world maps and gain understanding of climatic issues, such as why there is shortage of rainfall in some areas causing droughts, and comparing these countries with their own.

- 118 The quality of teaching is good in reception to Year 4 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give good explanations. They generally use ICT appropriately to support learning and pupils are interested in their work, have good attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons. A particularly good feature of teaching is the way teachers interweave skills of literacy, numeracy, history and ICT to develop pupils' understanding of land use and sustainable resources. Good opportunities for younger pupils to learn about different parts of the world and finding specific places on maps are seen in the topic 'Where in the world is Barnaby Bear?' Barnaby, a toy bear, travels around on holiday with teachers, parents and children and sends postcards to the school from around the world. Photographs also become a good resource when Barnaby returns and can be displayed for other children to see where he has been on his travels. Younger pupils have also been linking their studies in geography and science by looking at the working of the eye and the problems and concerns that people in the world, such as Africa, have in acquiring spectacles. The study was backed up with a very good display in the classroom, highlighting the work of the charity 'Vision Aid,' explaining how they send these spectacles to Africa to be distributed to people who cannot acquire their own. However, standards of presentation of recorded work in both key stages are untidy and are unsatisfactory overall.
- 119 The subject co-ordinator is fairly recent to the post and management is satisfactory. Currently there is an imbalance in the curriculum for the older pupils, where the coverage of the full range of programmes of study is too narrow to ensure consistency of progress over time. Resources sufficient, but the use of ICT, whilst satisfactory overall, could be developed further to challenge above average attaining pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as pupils learn about the importance of water in underdeveloped countries. There are procedures for recording pupils' attainment which staff have just implemented. These are satisfactory but, as yet, information gained is not used sufficiently rigorously to plan the next steps of learning.

HISTORY

- 120 No judgements can be made on standards by the end of Year 6 as insufficient evidence was available to make a secure judgement, and pupils interviewed could not reliably remember the work that they had previously covered.
- 121 By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils consider how we used to live by comparing and contrasting aspects of old and new things, such as washing machines, classrooms, holidays and how pupils dressed for school. They study famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and they are developing a sense of chronology on how people of the past have influenced our present lives and how different inventions and improvements have made differences to the way we live now. Pupils know about the Great Fire of London, how it started and spread and they know that hospitals in Florence Nightingale's times were different in relation to sanitation and cleanliness to those of today. They can identify toys of the past and are very pleased to be taught by their teachers and not those of a Victorian era.
- 122 Pupils with SEN make good gains in learning because they are effectively supported by the very caring support staff and every effort is made to include them in class work. However, pupils who are capable of higher attainment, whilst making satisfactory progress, are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their skills of research and independent learning. This is largely due to the fact that the library is under-resourced. Pupils are keen to talk about their work, have good attitudes to learning and clearly enjoy their work. They can identify the difference between a fact

and an opinion. Older pupils recall that Henry VIII had seven wives and many of them were executed because he wanted to have an heir to the throne.

- 123 No teaching of history was seen during the week of inspection, but pupils' written work shows that national guidelines are followed appropriately. The use of ICT is satisfactory. The school's fully inclusive philosophy ensures all pupils, including those with SEN, receive an effective historical education. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory overall. Resources are satisfactory and are appropriately used to support learning, but there is a shortage of books in the library and this prevents pupils from developing their skills of research and independent learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 124 Standards are in line with those expected of pupils by the age of seven and eleven. This is an improvement on the last inspection for the junior pupils who were attaining below average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and those of all other capabilities make satisfactory progress. ICT provision is hampered by limited resources but the school does the very best that it can and the building of a 'classroom of the future' will help raise standards as more ICT resources will be made available. Only three schools in Devon have been chosen to have such a class, a computer suite with an interactive whiteboard and opportunities for video conferencing with other schools. Importantly the classroom will create links with the local community who will be able to use the facilities in the evenings.
- 125 By the end of Year 2 the pupils had been working on data handling and had been learning about the different ways of presenting information, including bar graphs, line graphs, pictograms and pie charts. They have been using the program 'Colour Magic' to study artists' work. Pupils in the same class created a page combining graphics and text. Other work undertaken from Year 1 to Year 4 included, for example, an adventure game compact disc, word processing, instruction for programming the movements of a floor turtle, using microphones to record and manipulate a tape recorder and a branching line database. Pupils can load a program, use a mouse confidently to control tasks, edit using copy, cut and paste, save and print. However, progress appears to level out when pupils reach the top class in the school, although several examples of sound use of ICT were seen in Year 5 and Year 6. Pupils know how to use a spreadsheet to cost a camping trip and use the Internet to access information about religious studies, famous literary figures and information on musical instruments. In a good lesson seen in Year 3 and Year 4 the teacher gave good explanations based upon pupils' prior learning, highlighting the work pupils had done using the 'Colour Magic' and 'Talking First Word' programs, and pupils felt confident in learning as they consolidated and extended skills previously learnt. Year 2 pupils were able to talk about developing images using repeating patterns and combining text and graphics. Pupils' portfolios showed that, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils had studied a range of visual images that included, symmetrical, repeating patterns where pupils selected areas, copied and re-sized them, learning to alter the size of the brush tool and examples of combined graphics and text. It was clear that pupils had successfully learned all the skills.
- 126 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but teaching in the upper juniors is not systematic enough to move pupils on in their learning at a fast pace. More rigour needs to be placed on ensuring that opportunities are clearly defined in medium term planning to move pupils on in their learning. Generally teachers have secure subject knowledge, offer appropriate explanation and show pupils what to do. Sound assessment procedures are in place and are just starting to be used. The subject co-ordinator is the acting headteacher and the subject is managed at a satisfactory level. All teachers have been involved in national ICT training and will move on to the next stage when the new classroom has been completed. There is an up to date policy and the scheme of work is based on national guidance. Assessment is undertaken at the end of each unit and is satisfactory overall. The use of ICT is satisfactory overall in most subjects but control technology could be developed further, and further opportunities for ICT across the curriculum should be identified in planning. Pupils have good attitudes to ICT and confidently use listening centres, printers, a digital camera, and computer applications appropriately in both the infants and

the juniors. The school has computers in each classroom, two programmable 'Roamers' and a Data Harvest control program for control technology.

MUSIC

- 127 Standards are in line with those expected of pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Further evidence about standards was available from displays around the school, listening to the pupils singing in assembly and talking to teachers and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and overall all groups of pupils make sound gains in learning.
- 128 Pupils' attitudes to music are good and this was clearly seen by the quality of singing in assembly, which was joyful with clear diction, where all the words could be clearly heard. By the end of Year 2 satisfactory progress has been made in developing pupils' listening skills and experimenting with sound and pupils can use tuned and untuned percussion to add sound effects to the story of 'Peace at Last'. They can keep a steady beat and sing clearly. They pronounce their words appropriately and understand when they need to sing loudly and softly. Pupils get excited when they hear themselves playing on a recording made during the lesson. Teaching is generally satisfactory with good features. Teachers are gaining confidence due to the purchase of a new music scheme. By the end of Year 6, pupils have sound skills of composition. They sing in tune and understand the meaning of timbre and texture. The whole school took part in a school production of Cinderella where their musical skills showed a sound level of performance. Pupils in Year 6 were observed extending their composition and performing skills by experimenting with writing lyrics to a melody. This was in response to the challenge: 'To write a song for a class song contest.' Good use is made of a commercial scheme of work and pupils sing along to a compact disc that gives them good starting points to practising the rhythm to words and then improvising a melody over the top. All lessons are planned in line with national guidance. The use of this scheme has helped develop teachers' subject knowledge and teachers are now more confident in teaching music. They use appropriate musical terminology correctly and offer good opportunities for group work, helping to develop pupils' social skills. Musical events within the local community include, performing at St John's fair and the infants taking part in a music festival with other schools. There is a guitar club, taken by a visiting teacher and pupils give concerts to family and friends regularly. Pupils like music, have good attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons. They listen to a range of composers and are familiar with music from different cultures such as India and Japan.
- 129 The management of music by the acting headteacher is satisfactory overall. Currently the use of ICT is undeveloped in music. Since the recent introduction of the commercial music scheme standards in music have begun to improve, as the scheme offers support and advice to teachers and has a range of resources, such as compact discs to support learning. Resources are good, especially in the area of tuned percussion, but more instruments reflecting the multicultural nature of our society need to be purchased.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 130 By the age of seven and eleven standards are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Pupils with SEN make good progress over time.
- 131 The overall curriculum is satisfactory and includes gymnastics, indoor and outdoor athletics, net and wall games, orienteering, dance and swimming. Sadly the school swimming pool is now out of action and unable to be used in the foreseeable future. Pupils learn bat and ball skills, starting in the infants, and gradually develop by putting these skills into action as they get older in a variety of team games. For example, in the week of the inspection the school was preparing for a netball match with another school. However, although the school has close links with the village football and cricket club no clubs have yet been started in the school. The school is heavily involved in the national initiative to improve physical activity and a number of sporting events has been arranged which has raised the profile of physical activity in the local schools. By the end of

Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are well co-ordinated; they have sound ball skills, understand the need for team games, and can sequence several actions together, showing fluidity in movement. Photographic evidence shows that pupils cover the full range of the physical education programmes of study but, in inclement weather, the hall is too small for the oldest pupils to undertake gymnastics. The majority of pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6.

- 132 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan effectively, in line with national guidance and ensure that pupils understand the importance of exercise and safety in all activities. The attitude and behaviour of the pupils to their lessons was very good and they thoroughly enjoyed taking part and interacting with their peers in the activities. The younger pupils were observed successfully throwing and catching balls, both under-arm and over-arm and, in a good link with mathematics, were counting just how many times they could throw and catch the ball. Older pupils were engaged in an activity that has progressed over a number of weeks in practising the skills for playing a racquet game. All pupils had learned a series of warm-up activities, with air-flow balls and racquets moving towards using shuttlecocks with the aim of playing badminton competitively.
- 133 The subject co-ordinator has undertaken the responsibility since September 2002, and has identified that physical education across the school is an area of development. Management is satisfactory; however, some difficulties are linked to the space in the hall, especially for the older pupils in gymnastics. Resources are sufficient, and assessment and its use are satisfactory overall. Some equipment is in need of replacement, notably mats.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 134 By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for their age and all groups of pupils make sound gains in learning. The previous HMI report did not focus on pupils' attainment in religious education, therefore comparisons are not made within this report.
- 135 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have a secure understanding of Christianity and its impact on people's lives. Their understanding is strongly reflected in the charitable and caring attitudes which pupils show to each other. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of other world faiths and they know that most major religions have many things in common, such as a holy book, places of worship, rituals for births, weddings and deaths; older pupils can describe effectively the traditions of Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Pupils have good knowledge of the stories Jesus told and they are capable of reflecting, empathising, reasoning and synthesising information. By the end of Years 2 and 6, they understand the concept of betrayal and when learning about the religious meanings of Easter, they sympathise with Jesus in relation to not being able to rely upon his best friends for support. Pupils in all year groups know about religious signs and symbols and the importance of having rules within a society, this enables them to have good awareness of the Ten Commandments and the importance of them in our daily lives. Pupils in both the infants and the juniors know that there are symbols in all religions and that the symbol of the cross in Christianity reminds us of Jesus' crucifixion. By the end of Year 6, pupils can identify Bible passages that speak of the creation of the world, the coming of the Messiah and the various stories that Jesus told.
- 136 Teaching was only observed in the infants, where it was satisfactory overall. Teachers give clear explanations, use plenty of opportunities for drama to encourage pupils to enact stories, such as that of the events leading up to the Last Supper, and test pupils' understanding by asking questions of the sequence of events that led up to Jesus' death on the cross. Good use is made of resources, which are generally well prepared. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 had the opportunity to wave palms that the class teacher had prepared in advance. This really got the pupils into the spirit of Easter and enabled them to enter into the public joy of Jesus arriving in Jerusalem on a donkey. Teachers use time and support staff effectively and lessons move on at a brisk pace. This ensures that pupils learn quickly and effectively, support staff are used well to

support those pupils who experience difficulty but higher attaining pupils, whilst making satisfactory progress overall, could be challenged further to produce more extensive work and undertake independent research.

- 137 Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that written presentation is untidy and that, too often, pupils repeat incorrect spellings that have been previously pointed out as not being phonetically justifiable by the class teacher. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and use time and support staff effectively, this has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils with SEN make good gains in learning because staff ensure that targets on their individual education plans are catered for in lessons. Staff ensure that both pupils' skills of literacy and ICT are developed through this subject, and pupils are given good opportunities to write their own prayers. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall and teachers' assessments of their pupils' learning are sound.