

INSPECTION REPORT

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL

Sidmouth

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113437

Headteacher: Mrs P Smethurst

Reporting inspector: Mr L Lewin
22330

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th May 2003

Inspection number: 247374

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	55 Woolbrook Road Sidmouth Devon
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Preb. D James
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology, music, special educational needs, equality of opportunity.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19639	Mrs G Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
31819	Mrs S Duggins	Team inspector	English, geography, history.	
24528	Mr G Muton	Team inspector	Mathematics, physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20752	Dr J Collings	Team Inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Nicholas Church of England VA Junior School is a large sized school situated in the town of Sidmouth. There are currently 302 pupils on roll aged between seven and eleven. They are taught in 10 year group classes, by 11 full-time teachers (including the headteacher) and one part time teacher. The number on roll has stayed much the same in recent years. The percentage of pupils who join or leave the school other than the usual times of admission or transfer is lower than that found in most schools nationally. Two thirds of the pupils come from private housing in the town area while one third are drawn from nearby local authority housing. The vast majority of pupils are of white UK heritage, with a very small number of pupils coming from other heritage backgrounds. There are no pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language. Nineteen percent of pupils have special educational needs and two per cent have statements of Special Educational Need. These figures are similar to the picture nationally and the needs of the pupils are wide ranging. At 10 per cent, the proportion of pupils eligible to receive free school meals is just below the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average. At the time of this inspection major building works are underway to replace classrooms and improve facilities at the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features. Very good leadership and management ensure that staff and governors work very effectively together. Overall, good teaching throughout the school helps pupils to achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science and art. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Very effective leadership and management ensure that the school maintains a good rate of improvement.
- Overall, good teaching results in pupils achieving well and attaining above average standards in English, mathematics, science and art by the time they leave the school.
- Very good provision enables pupils with special educational needs to make very good progress.
- The school cares very well for its pupils and, as a result, pupils form very good relationships with each other and staff and respond very well to opportunities for showing initiative and taking responsibility.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well provided for.
- Parents and the local community provide very good support.
- An excellent programme of extra-curricular activities is provided for all pupils.

What could be improved

The inspection team found no main areas where provision or standards are unsatisfactory. However, the school may, in particular, wish to consider including the following areas in its future action plans:

- Adopt a formalised system for action planning for all subjects to show how they will develop in the future.
- ¹Develop greater use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- ²Develop greater links between subjects within planning for lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in November 1997. At that time the school was asked to improve its provision for teaching higher attaining pupils, its lesson planning and, in particular, its provision for teaching science, information and communication technology (ICT) and music. These areas have been successfully addressed so that a full range of planning and resources are now in place to support teaching and learning. It was also recommended that the school should continue to press for improvements to be made to its accommodation. It is a credit to the hard work of the headteacher, staff, governors and parents that improvements in this area are now well underway with the current building work. Teaching overall, has improved since the last inspection, as have the school's results in the national tests. There is a very strong commitment in the school towards ensuring future improvement.

¹ Already identified by the school as an area to be included in the next school improvement plan.

² Already identified by the school as an area to be included in the next school improvement plan.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The school's national test results for 2002 are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science when compared to all schools nationally. When compared to schools with a ³similar intake of pupils, the results are above average in English and well above average in both mathematics and science. The trend of the school's results in recent years has been rising in line with the national trend. Inspection evidence confirms the school's results with most of the pupils currently in Year 6 working at above average levels in English, mathematics and science and this reflects a good rate of improvement in standards in these subjects since the last inspection in 1997. Pupils also exceed expectations in art and sing well in music lessons, assemblies and during choir practices. In all other areas of work, pupils reach the nationally expected levels by the time they leave the school. Pupils join the school at Year 3 with average attainment, and the standards they reach at Year 6 represent good overall achievement, especially in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and many reach average or close to average levels of attainment by the age of eleven. The school sets challenging targets for pupils' performance in the national tests and is successful in reaching these.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have a positive attitude towards school and their work in lessons. They respond well to staff and take an interest in all activities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved. They are generally polite and well mannered and show respect for adults and one another.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils form strong relationships with each other and with staff. They work together very well in lessons. Older pupils carry out responsibilities in a conscientious way and the ⁴ school council is a very effective organisation that makes a useful impact on the working of the school.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

³ Schools are categorised into different bands by the number of pupils eligible for free school meals.

⁴ A group of pupils who meet together under the guidance of their teachers to discuss areas where improvements can be made.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching and learning are good, although a very small number of lessons were observed where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. Staff know the pupils well and cater sensitively for their needs. Precise planning for lessons ensures that pupils work on tasks that both challenge and interest them. As a result, they concentrate fully, make their best efforts and progress well with their learning. In most lessons teachers show confident subject knowledge and give clear explanations so that pupils gain a full understanding. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are effectively taught and the quality of teaching in English and mathematics lessons is good and sometimes very good. Teachers are particularly careful to match work to the attainment levels of pupils in these lessons – through the system of setting – and all individuals and groups including pupils with special educational needs are suitably extended by the tasks provided. Science lessons are especially well prepared to provide pupils with interesting and stimulating work. In a very small number of lessons, a lack of confident subject knowledge and unclear organisation of tasks results in pupils not progressing as well as they should. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and provide very good support for pupils, especially those with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The quality and range of opportunities provided within the school curriculum are good. Strong emphasis has been given to English and mathematics whilst at the same time maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum. Good attention is paid by teachers to including personal, social and health education in the curriculum. The school provides an excellent range of extra curricular activities that are well attended by pupils. The contribution that the community makes to pupils' learning is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Very effective organisation of the curriculum for these pupils ensures that their progress is carefully tracked. Teachers and teaching assistants are very well briefed and precise targets are set to aid the progress of each individual concerned.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through careful organisation and planning the school ensures that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to deepen their awareness in these areas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The pastoral care of pupils is very good. The school has a full range of procedures in place to ensure pupils' safety and security. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective.

The school maintains strong links with the parents. They are kept well informed and involved in their children's work. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. In particular, the Parent Teacher Association and the St Nicholas Action for Premises fund raising organisation are providing enormous support to help the school move forward with its current new building work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership. She ensures that staff and work together as a highly effective team. She is very well supported by her senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are fully informed about and involved in all aspects of the school's management. They work closely with the headteacher and staff to help the school move forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher, staff and governors monitor all aspects of the school's performance carefully. Particularly effective systems are in place to monitor the curriculum and teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses all available funding and resources to maximum effect. The headteacher and governors adopt a very rigorous approach towards ensuring that the best value is gained from all expenditure.

The school has a good level of staffing and, in particular ensures that teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs. The accommodation is unsatisfactory – with some of the classrooms being too cramped and the school lacking a games field. However, these problems are soon to be resolved through the current building work. The school has an adequate level of resources to support teaching and learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents have a high regard for the school and in particular they feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Teachers do a good job and expect the children to work hard. • The school is well led and managed and staff are approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small minority do not feel that the school works closely with them. • A small minority do not feel that they are sufficiently well informed about how their children are getting on. • A small minority did not feel their children get the right amount of homework.

Thirty-seven per cent of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire and 14 attended a meeting with the registered inspector. The inspection team agree with the positive views expressed by parents but did not find evidence to support the concerns expressed by the small minority of parents in the table above. The inspection team feel that the school makes good efforts to work closely with parents, provides very good quality end of year reports and makes very good provision for homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. As can be seen from the table below, standards have improved since the last inspection. This is particularly the case with English, mathematics, science and art where eleven-year-olds were attaining average standards but now attain above average standards – this represents a good rate of improvement in these subjects. Also eleven year old pupils attained below average standards in music previously but now attain average standards with much of the singing seen being of a good standard. In all other subjects, standards have been maintained and pupils meet expectations by the time they are eleven.

		Attainment – Last Inspection	Attainment – This Inspection
Key Stage 2	English	Average	Above average
	Mathematics	Average	Above average
	Science	Average	Above average
	Art and design	Average	Above average
	DT	Average	Average
	Geography	Average	Average
	History	Average	Average
	ICT	Average	Average
	Music	Below average	Average
	PE	Average	Average

*DT – design and technology, ICT – information and communication technology, PE – physical education, RE – religious education.

2. On entry to school in Year 3, most pupils show average attainment. The fact that most of them reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science and art at the age of eleven represents good overall progress and achievement by the time they leave the school. Nineteen per cent of pupils in the school have special educational needs, but the number of these pupils in each year group varies, with, for example, one third of the pupils in Year 6 having special educational needs. The very good provision for these pupils through intensive support and carefully targeted work helps many of them to reach average or just below average levels by the time they leave the school.
3. Over recent years, the school's test results for pupils in Year 6 have improved in line with the national trend of improvement. The school now sustains good results each year when its results are compared both to other school's nationally and when compared to other ⁵similar schools. The school's national test results for 2002 are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science when compared to all schools nationally. When compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils, the results are above average in English and well above average in both mathematics and science. The test results are confirmed by the standards of work seen during this inspection.
4. At the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above average. They speak with confidence and clarity using a wide vocabulary to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Standards in reading are good. By the age of eleven most pupils show proficiency in discussing characters and plot; their prediction, inference and deduction skills show good progress through the school. Pupils' writing is above average at the age of eleven. Pupils plan imaginative stories well, with good emphasis on the beginning and the end. Pupils write well in a variety of different styles such as descriptive and instructional writing, poems and report writing and they use vocabulary well to enliven their work. Pupils use their writing skills effectively to support their work in other subjects such as science, history and geography. Pupils' spelling is generally very good. This reflects the appropriate emphasis the school

⁵ Schools are categorised into different bands by the number of pupils eligible for free school meals.

places on the importance of spelling. Handwriting throughout the school is well formed, easy to read enabling work to be neatly presented.

5. Most eleven year old pupils show above average skills in all areas of mathematics. They use written methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division accurately and confidently carry out calculations mentally. They recall multiplication and division facts quickly, and competently work with more difficult tasks including the use of negative numbers and the correct use of brackets in equations. They understand the decimal system and use this understanding to solve problems involving money and measure. Pupils are familiar with the language and properties of shape. They recognise symmetry, calculate area and perimeters, measure angles to the nearest degree and calculate the area of compound shapes. They understand data when presented in a variety of charts and graphs and have a good grasp of the concept of probability.
6. Eleven year olds work at above average levels in all areas of science. For example, they plot graphs of the change in temperature as a liquid cools and explain the advantages and disadvantages of 'series' and 'parallel' circuits. Given various mixtures of materials, they choose whether to use filtration, evaporation or other means to separate to them and understand that plants make their own food from carbon dioxide and water using sunlight. A strength of all pupils' work is the breadth of understanding of science investigation.
7. Pupils reach the expected levels in ICT by the time they are eleven years old. They show appropriate knowledge and skills for their ages and use of computers to enhance their work. There are good examples of computers being used in some subjects, but the school is aware of the need to expand the use of ICT in different subject areas.
8. In art, the above average level reached by the time pupils are eleven is reflected in Year 6 pupils' exploration of a range of techniques and styles to create good quality sketches and designs. They research projects well before starting their designs. Their work shows care and sensitivity with, for example, some of their paintings in the style of Turner and Lowry being of very high quality.
9. In design and technology (DT), geography, history, music and physical education (PE) pupils reach standards that match the national expectations at the age of eleven.
10. All groups of pupils in the school achieve well by the time they leave, with many of the pupils with special educational needs making very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school lays a good emphasis on ensuring that work is sufficiently challenging for all groups of pupils and that there is strong guidance and support to help pupils advance confidently. This applies equally for higher attaining pupils who often work at tasks specifically designed to extend their skills. The school also carefully analyses test results to detect any differences in the performance of boys and girls and has made efforts to ensure that, where possible, resources available to support learning are equally attractive to boys and girls. During this inspection no differences were noted between the performance of boys and girls.
11. The school has suitable systems for setting challenging targets for pupils' performances in the Key Stage 2 national tests and is successful in getting pupils to reach and occasionally exceed the targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Overall, pupils have a positive attitude to the school, and their behaviour is generally good. At the time of the last inspection their attitudes were also positive, and pupils continue to enjoy their lessons and listen carefully. Pupils behave well in the playground. Nearly all of them, respond well to the high expectations set for their behaviour by staff and the school's strong emphasis on this area ensures that pupils' positive attitudes are strengthened as they progress through the school. Pupils mostly concentrate well in lessons, listen to instructions

carefully and usually try to do their best. In a small number of cases where the teachers' management of the pupils is less effective or the aims of the work are not made clear to them, pupils struggle to maintain their concentration and application to the tasks provided. During the period of the inspection there was no evidence of any bullying, racism or sexism. This is because of high expectations and because pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for others and show them consideration; for example, by offering to play with those sitting on the 'Friendship Bench' at breaktimes. There has been one fixed term exclusion in the last year, which has been properly dealt with.

13. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their good levels of interest and enthusiasm that make a good contribution to helping them progress with their learning. For example, in a Year 5 session, pupils approached their artwork with enthusiasm because of the teacher's confidence, which was shared by the pupils.
14. Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils support each other very well when working together and this makes a positive contribution to each other's learning. For example, in Year 3 music lessons, pupils worked in groups composing rhythm patterns together. They listened carefully and patiently to each other and achieved well. Pupils also show good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others and are appreciative of each other's views during class discussions. The initiative and personal responsibility that pupils show for themselves and others is very good. This is particularly evident in the responsible way in which Year 6 pupils look after Year 3 pupils. The school council is also a very good example of pupils carrying out their responsibilities in a conscientious way. The meetings are run by the pupils and led by a mature and articulate chairman and officers alert to involving all members. The initiatives that they take are well thought through, and they are very effective in making things happen for the benefit of all pupils; for example, changes to the school uniform and the provision of games at breaktimes. They have very effective links with other bodies that can support their initiatives - like the governing body and the parent teacher association. This makes a very strong and impressive contribution to the pupils developing maturity and active awareness of citizenship.
15. Attendance is good because pupils want to be in school. This is reflected in the large proportion that choose to stay on after school to enjoy the clubs on offer. Attendance is above the national average, and unauthorised absence is minimal. Pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and for lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, as noted at the time of the last inspection, teaching is good. However, there is a significant improvement in the proportion of very good lessons noted this time. There is also a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and the school has put effective procedures in place and taken appropriate steps to support and improve this teaching in the future.
17. Teachers generally prepare and plan their lessons very carefully. They ensure that tasks match the attainment levels of the pupils and that the content of the work is both interesting and challenging. The system of organising pupils into classes by ability (setting) in English and mathematics is a particularly good means of ensuring work is set at appropriately challenging levels and, often within those class groups, the teachers further divide the pupils into groups of similar abilities. This enables an accurate approach with matching work and benefits all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson for the lower attaining set, pupils worked in three groups investigating methods of calculating area. The different difficulty level of the three groups and the arrangement to provide direct support from the teacher and two teaching assistants meant that all pupils progressed at a very good rate.
18. Teachers often make good use of resources for learning. For example, ICT resources are sometimes used to good effect, with the computer projector being well used in the ICT suite

to ensure that pupils gain a clear understanding of what they need to do. Also, very effective use of the interactive white board was made in an art lesson for Year 6. The teachers used this facility to show video clips, including video clips downloaded from the Internet, to help pupils gain an understanding about the designs for headdresses.

19. Teachers form very good relationships with pupils and ensure that individuals relate very well to one another. This is a particular strength of the way in which classes work across the school. It means that pupils are usually keen to work hard for their teachers and mostly concentrate well on tasks they are given. The strong relationships also mean that pupils feel encouraged to do their best and respond in a very positive way to instructions and directions given to them. Teachers make full use of the very good relationships that exist and, in a great number of the lessons seen, work was organised so that pupils could collaborate in pairs or groups. In all cases this provided a positive impetus for the activities. For example, in the ICT sessions observed for Year 3 and Year 5 classes, mixed ability pairing of pupils meant that lower attaining pupils were well supported and middle and higher attaining pupils were suitably extended through the help, advice and explanations that they sometimes needed to offer.
20. Teachers generally show good subject knowledge and run effective discussions with pupils, often using well-focused questions to encourage pupils to develop their ideas. A feature of some of the very good lessons seen was the skilful way in which teachers used very specific questions to ensure that all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs were fully involved at all times. Teachers also make good use of additional questions to make pupils think deeply about ideas. This was noted in particular in some science lessons. For example, in Year 3, the teacher's carefully posed questions encouraged in-depth discussion about the structure of plants and resulted in pupils coming up with a good range of their own ideas about factors that influence plant growth.
21. The teachers manage lessons well through clear instructions and explanations. This leads to a good purposeful working atmosphere in classrooms with little time wasted. Teachers also ensure that projects undertaken are as interesting as possible for the pupils and thereby engage their interest and enthusiasm. This was noted for example in art work in Year 6 – making headdresses for an 'International Festival' in school, in Year 3 with 'Map Detectives' work on the computers and in the many interesting science projects undertaken around the school. In an excellent Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher and teaching assistant made the task of writing formal letters of complaint very realistic by engaging pupils in role play activities – acting out the parts of a customer complaining to the manager of a company. The lower attaining pupils in this set responded very well and grew very confident in expressing themselves and using vocabulary well. This approach is indicative of the way in which teachers work hard to extend pupils of all attainment levels.
22. For pupils with special educational needs, the clarity of the targets within their individual education plans means that a precise focus is maintained on their progress at all times. All staff are fully aware of the targets set and the plans are well used and regularly reviewed. The teaching assistants, in particular play a central role in this area giving specifically designed tasks and guidance to individuals either in the classroom or in withdrawal sessions. The flexible way in which they work, adjusting the programme to the needs of the individual is the touchstone of success in the school's very good support provision for these pupils.
23. In a very small number of lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory the lack of subject knowledge led to unclear explanations and inappropriate work for the pupils. The lack of proper management of the pupils led to pupils spending too long 'off task' and not making sufficient progress with their learning.
24. As well as the strong support for the pupils with special educational needs, the school has clearly identified its gifted and talented pupils. Teachers are fully aware of these individuals and through careful planning, good questioning techniques in discussions and the provision of extension tasks, they ensure that these individuals work to their full potential. It is through this

kind of approach that an above average number of eleven-year-olds attain the higher levels in English, mathematics and science national tests. The success in teaching English and mathematics is also due in part to the teachers' generally confident knowledge and application of the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy – so that basic skills in these subjects are well taught and clearly understood by the pupils. However, the good emphasis that teachers place upon developing pupils' speaking and listening is also an important feature that is accelerating pupils' progress.

25. The school has created good planning systems in all subjects to help teachers prepare their lessons. Teachers also plan and deliver personal, social and health education lessons well. Additionally, teachers plan good opportunities for raising pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. As a result of the well-organised approach to teaching in these areas, pupils' personal development is accelerated and individuals show a mature approach to learning and life in general by the time they are in Years 5 and 6. Teachers sometimes make good links in their planning so that subjects overlap and develop pupils' learning on several fronts at once. However, the school recognises that this is an area in need of greater development, for example with the need to extend the use of ICT and mathematics into other subjects to a greater extent.
26. Teachers make very good provision for homework in all year groups. The work usually follows on or extends what is practised in the classroom and is provided for pupils in a systematic way by teachers. Homework diaries are well maintained and help pupils to plan their week and this provides good training for older pupils for their transition to the secondary phase.

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

27. Improvements have been made to the curriculum since the last inspection and the quality and range of opportunities provided within the school curriculum are now good with some very good elements. Improvements to the planning and organisation of the curriculum have ensured that there is coverage of the programmes of study for all subjects. Strong emphasis has been given to English and mathematics whilst at the same time maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has put much thought into its implementation of the national strategies for numeracy and literacy. The use of these strategies is continually reviewed according to school priorities and teachers continue to make changes in the light of experience. There are detailed guidelines for all other subjects, except personal, social and health education (PSHE), which rely mainly upon nationally produced material. Some useful modifications have been made to make them more relevant to the pupils; in history, for example, the pupils study the Regency period to take advantage of local historical sources and architecture. The school is very keen to enrich the classroom experiences of pupils by taking them out of the school on visits and various study projects and by inviting artists, writers, musicians and theatre groups into the school.
28. There is very close monitoring of planning systems and a continuing process of lesson observations and sampling of pupils' work. All of the information gathered is well used to help staff refine and improve future planning of work.
29. There are some worthwhile links between subjects and there are a few examples such as pupils making graphs in their science work, mixing different ratios of paint in mathematics lessons and writing 'in role' in history lessons. There is also a whole school scheme for teaching mathematics through ICT. However, this enrichment of the curriculum by providing experiences that allow pupils to make connections between different areas of their learning is not fully developed and is something the school has chosen rightly to do in the next phase of its curriculum development.

30. There is a structured plan and policy for pupils' PSHE. The programme of work is basically a list of issues to be covered and relies heavily upon individual teachers planning the detail of this area of the curriculum. However, the commitment of teachers working as a team and the leadership of the headteacher results in good provision. Aspects of PSHE are taught through subjects; pupils learn about the importance of diet in science, for example, and about the effect of exercise on their bodies in both science and PE. There are also specific lessons every week that tackle issues such as personal responsibility. There is a well-developed drugs education programme that includes very effective input from the local police. The community nurse provides good support helping the school with the programme for sex education. There is no action plan for the PSHE element of the curriculum to ensure its continual improvement or to evaluate the effectiveness of what the school provides.
31. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent, and enriches pupils' wider learning experiences and cultural development extremely well. It does this through a very diverse programme from clog dancing and French to the school orchestra and art classes. It is a great strength of the school and deserves the high levels of attendance it attracts.
32. The contribution that the community makes to pupils' learning is very good. The school has been very successful in utilising local resources to enrich the opportunities for learning. This is particularly evident in its very successful fundraising to support the major new building project, with the St Nicholas' Action for Premises fund raising group raising nearly £85,000 in less than two years through events and the support of individuals and trusts within the local community. Other examples of the strong contribution from the community include: grandparents giving talks in history or supporting readers, parents supporting extra-curricular activities for example clog dancing and Italian and the school's close links with the local churches with local clergy visiting the school to talk with pupils in assembly on regular occasions. In addition, pupils' learning is very well enhanced by local artists visiting and the very good use made by the school of the local environment to support history and geography work. The school works closely with other schools in the area and the local association of the schools strengthens the links between them.
33. Special educational needs provision is very good. It is very well organised by the co-ordinator who has established effective systems to ensure that all staff are fully informed about and kept up-to-date about special educational needs matters. A thorough and consistent approach is adopted in all classrooms towards maintaining records and information in a class special educational needs file. Teachers and teaching assistants liaise closely to ensure that work is targeted precisely to match the needs of individuals and all pupils are carefully guided, monitored and supported. Individual education plans contain clear and well-focused targets for improvement that are reviewed on a regular basis.
34. All groups of pupils including pupils with special educational needs have full access to all areas of the curriculum. The school adopts a very inclusive approach with much effort made to ensure all pupils have a chance to take part in activities. For example, the school works hard to ensure that any pupils with particular social/behavioural difficulties take part in the annual residential trips.
35. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a strength of the school, as found in the last inspection, permeating all areas of work. The school has improved provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development by recognising and planning opportunities for reflection and wonder in all subjects.
36. Across the curriculum, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and those of others in a way that effectively develops their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. In Year 6, an impressive display illustrates pupils' thoughts, moments and memories of what spirituality means to them. Following pupils' introduction to the communion service, they wrote thoughtful and sensitive thoughts such as 'after the blessing a warmth surrounded my

entire body' and 'I had never felt like this before'. A Christian and spiritual ethos is strong and permeates through the school affecting pupils' sense of purpose and the degree of their self-esteem. Teachers listen to and value pupils' ideas; this is strongly reflected in the way that pupils receive and value each others ideas during paired, group and class activities. Discussions reinforce the importance of appreciation for each other's beliefs and values.

37. The provision for moral and social development is very good. All staff treat pupils with courtesy and sensitivity and pupils reciprocate this towards each other. Through the behaviour policy, all staff and pupils are aware of the code of discipline and it is consistently applied. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility and make decisions; for example, making their own class rules and working on or with the school council. Year 6 pupils successfully act as mentors to Year 3 pupils, ensuring they settle well and have a friend to turn to if the need arises. 'Listeners' from Year 6 are elected to support pupils during break-times by befriending individuals and discussing problems and guiding others to ensure all are happy and secure within the school environment. The school council made the decision to allow 'listeners' more than a week in office in order that they may be more readily identified and benefit from their role. Teaching assistants are deployed well at breaktimes to encourage positive behaviour through organising the 'Friendship Bench' and playing games with pupils.
38. The school provides many well-planned opportunities to develop pupils' social skills. In all levels of school life, pupils are given frequent opportunities to work together and participate as part of a group. Residential visits for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 provide very good opportunities to develop pupils' social skills. The use of artists and other professionals to work alongside teachers in the classroom and visits to the theatre and other places of interest, enhance the curriculum and provide opportunities for pupils' social development. This was evident during the police visit to promote drugs awareness to older pupils. Pupils were very polite and listened with interest to their visitors. A sense of fair play, sportsmanship, taking turns and abiding by the code of conduct is well promoted through lessons particularly PE.
39. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good, including very good provision for the development of pupils' understanding and appreciation of their own culture. Pupils are well supported to share their knowledge and experiences of other cultures in lessons such as geography and art. In an art lesson many Year 6 pupils were able to avidly discuss costumes of cultures such as Aztec, Mongolian, Caribbean and Japanese. Pupils whose origin is that other than English are well supported and respected. Pupils share delight and interest in studying other cultures, their values and beliefs. Planned opportunities successfully develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of different religions and respect for those with a personal faith and for those with none. A visit to places of worship such as a synagogue, Exeter Cathedral and Buckfast Abbey provides valuable experiences to support pupils' understanding. Pupils are encouraged to raise and ask questions in their studies of literature from other cultures. Through geography lessons the school successfully fosters pupils' interest and positive attitudes towards the developing countries. Knowledge and understanding of pupils' own rich heritage is very well promoted through literature, geography, history, art and music. The school uses all opportunities to involve pupils in local events and initiatives such as the Folk Festival and musical concerts for the community including for senior citizens.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good, and this has been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher is very conscientious and experienced in handling issues. Appropriate action is supported by good record keeping and guidance for staff. Other agencies are used well, with the school nurse on hand to support with counselling. Health and safety procedures are good and the school has taken all reasonable measures to ensure safety on site during the difficult period of rebuilding.

41. The school cares for pupils very well. In particular staff are skilled with building pupils' confidence and self esteem. The school works hard to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are included in all school activities; for example, working with specialists to meet pupils' specific needs on residential activities. The Breakfast Club is a very good, well run provision for those pupils who enjoy coming to use this facility before school starts.
42. All teaching and support staff have a thorough knowledge of the pupils and provide effective and caring support for their personal development. This is well supported by good provision for personal, social and health education. The very good quality of care in the school raises achievement, as pupils are ready to learn because they feel secure.
43. The school has very good systems for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics and satisfactory systems for assessing progress in science and the foundation subjects. Pupils undertake English tasks for their 'progress book', which are marked and levelled against the National Curriculum performance descriptors. In mathematics, there is ongoing assessment with tasks formally set, marked and levelled. This 'levelling' is used to identify whether pupils are making at least the expected progress and is used to set challenging but realistic targets for pupils in English and mathematics. All of this activity in assessment constitutes good progress since the previous inspection when assessment was satisfactory. The school provides good, effective support and advice for its pupils, informed by the monitoring of their academic progress and personal development.
44. In addition to statutorily required testing, the school undertakes optional mid key stage tests at the end of each year and regular end of unit assessments in the remaining subjects throughout the year, with the teachers identifying pupils who did not achieve the unit objectives and those who exceed the objectives.
45. All other subjects follow the nationally recommended Qualifications and Curriculum Authority end of unit assessment format whereby pupils achieving above and below expectations are noted on the class sheet. Subject co-ordinators monitor samples of work each term, obtaining information about strengths and weaknesses. Good use of assessment has been made in science to identify the need for improvement in pupils' investigative skills. The current emphasis as a result of this assessment has significantly raised standards in science.
46. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good, because pupils want to be in school and value the awards for full attendance. Attendance is monitored carefully and absence is followed up appropriately. Exclusion is rare and the school works closely with parents to ensure that its impact is positive.
47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective because the school works hard to build the child's self esteem and reinforce the positive. An ethos of mutual respect and a strong social and moral code ensure that pupils want to behave well. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good because pupils are encouraged to value each other, and to provide friendship, particularly at play. Pupils know what to do if there is bullying and are confident that if an incident were to occur, they would be well supported by staff.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents consider this to be a good school. Just over a third of parents responded to the inspection survey and the responses were all very positive except about a sixth did not feel their child gets the right amount of homework. Nearly a quarter did not feel well informed

about how their child was getting on and did not feel the school works closely with them. The inspection does not find evidence to support these concerns.

49. The use of homework is very good, its provision is consistent and generally homework books are used well. The information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress is good. Annual reports are particularly good and give a clear picture of each pupil's progress and of the targets set to aid improvement. The reports are thoughtful and give a full picture of the pupil and include a space for parents' comments. There are formal meetings and good opportunities for informal contact with teachers. Newsletters are informative and regular and curricular evenings are helpful to parents. Information sheets are sent out to the parents for each class at the beginning of year to give them a view on the areas that will be taught and provide information about useful Internet websites the parents may wish to use to support their children's learning. The school makes all reasonable efforts to work closely with parents.
50. The school's links with parents have remained strong since the last inspection. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. This is particularly evident in the very good support from the parent teacher association and for the St. Nicholas Action for Premises fund raising group. The parent teacher association gives very good social and financial support but, in particular, it contributes unusually well to the school's own cultural ethos throughout the year with the events it holds. The summer fair is an example of this where each class puts on a stall. Parents have given very good support to the St Nicholas Action for Premises group and its fund raising activities, which will make a major contribution to the quality of learning in the next academic year when the new building is opened.
51. Parents make a good contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home. Some come into school and others support clubs. They support school trips and respond well to specific requests for help. Year 6 parents also help to escort the pupils to and from the field used for games. Pupils and their homework diaries confirm the good support that parents give at home for their child's learning. They are committed to the home/school agreement. The school has the confidence of all groups and is very well thought of in the community.
52. The school maintains good links with parents whose children have special educational needs and ensures that they are kept fully informed. Where necessary the school ensures that these parents are properly involved in reviews of individual education plans for the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides strong leadership and has a clear view of the educational direction for the school. She works energetically and with great determination to ensure that the school continually improves and seeks to help pupils reach their full potential. In particular, she has very successfully moved the initiative forward to build new accommodation for the school and has rallied a great deal of support for the school in this venture. However, and significantly, she has not allowed a preoccupation with this side of the school's improvement to sidetrack the staff from maintaining good standards and progress with other important initiatives in the school development plan. She keeps a very firm grasp on the development of the curriculum and assessment procedures and works closely with all members of staff to raise standards. The headteacher is strongly supported by, in particular, the acting deputy headteacher as well as all members of the senior management team. Together they give a good steer to the rest of the staff and provide an atmosphere in which staff work together as a committed and enthusiastic team. The co-ordinators mainly provide good leadership in the subjects/areas for which they are responsible. The exception to this is the area of personal, social and health education where leadership is weak. However, even in this case, the good team work of staff and guidance from the headteacher ensure that the work for this area is effectively managed in classes across the school.

54. The school has very clear aims and staff work hard to achieve these. The aims and the vision for future development are comprehensively stated within the school's improvement plan. All areas are fully costed and full details are provided about how actions will be carried out and by whom. A strong feature of the plan is that staff and governors are fully involved in formulating, monitoring and implementing the actions. Over recent years the plan has tended to focus upon developing further the core subjects of English, mathematics and science as well as moving forward with initiatives relating to the last inspection report. Understandably, and rightly, the development of the building work forms a strong focal point within the plan. However, although specific action planning by co-ordinators has made a strong contribution to the overall improvement plan, there is a lack of formalised action planning in history, design and technology and personal, social and health education. The headteacher maintains the momentum of these subjects to some extent through teachers' annual performance management review and target setting, but the school recognises the need to adopt a more formalised and consistent approach to action planning for all subjects.
55. The school has very good systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching and learning. The headteacher works with the subject co-ordinators to maintain a rolling programme of classroom observations and all of the information from these visits and from the monitoring of work and planning is used to help constantly refine and improve teaching practice across the school.
56. The school is fortunate in having a very effective group of governors who work energetically in support of the headteacher and staff. They keep themselves well informed through the regular and detailed headteacher's reports, briefings from subject co-ordinators and through their own visits to the school. In this way they have a clear view of the school's strengths and of the areas in need of development. The chair of governors in particular maintains close and supportive liaison with the headteacher.
57. There are a suitable number of teachers to match the demands of the curriculum. The curriculum provision is successfully enhanced by the strong input from peripatetic teachers for music. Effective use is made of senior and experienced staff to act appropriately as members of the senior management team. The last report indicated that classroom support assistants were barely sufficient in number although they made a significant contribution to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The school has been successful in recruiting an additional six classroom support assistants, bringing the number to eight, which is a significant improvement. Their deployment assures that pupils with special educational needs have very good support and guidance. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good and reflect both the needs of the school and personal needs of the staff. Opportunities allow sharing of skills, knowledge and understanding to improve teaching and learning. The school has very good procedures for the induction of newly qualified and newly appointed staff to the school with particular staff nominated to give help and guidance. A detailed programme that responds effectively to the needs and aspirations of newly qualified staff successfully supports and builds their confidence and self-esteem.
58. The existing accommodation is unsatisfactory with some of the classrooms being quite cramped and with a lack of a playing field. However, these problems will soon be resolved when the new building is completed in the near future. The issue of accommodation was raised in the last inspection and has been very successfully addressed because of the huge commitment by the headteacher, governing body and the wider school community.
59. Learning resources are at least adequate in all subject areas. Subject leaders have a responsibility to inform the senior management team of resource needs and available funds from the budget are allocated by taking into account subject needs and school priorities. There were serious deficiencies in computers and other equipment to teach information and communication technology at the time of the last inspection. The school now has an

adequate range of resources for this area including a fully equipped ICT suite as well as computers in the classrooms. There is a good range of books available for all abilities both within classrooms and in the school library where there is also a good stock of non-fiction including books about other cultures. Resources are also good for teaching mathematics, geography, physical education and art. The storage facilities for resources other than books are inadequate.

60. Working closely with the headteacher, governors oversee the school finances very efficiently. Maximum use is made of all funds and resources available and governors consider carefully all spending decisions. For example great care was taken in selecting the architect for the current building work. In addition, the headteacher, staff and governors carefully monitor the school's performance in the annual national tests and take the necessary steps to improve future performance. The school also regularly canvasses and considers the parents' views on areas of its work. All of these checks on the school's performance are carefully tied to the way in which governors allocate the budget.
61. Considering that the expenditure per pupil is in line with that of most other schools nationally, that the very good leadership and management enable the school to move forward at a good pace and result in good teaching and good standards in English, mathematics, science and art – overall, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The inspection team found no main areas where provision or standards were unsatisfactory. Effective measures are already in place to support and improve the very small number of occasions where teaching is unsatisfactory. Although no major areas for development are identified, in order to maintain the school's good rate of improvement, the headteacher, staff and governors may wish to consider including the following areas in their future action plans:
- Adopt a formalised system for action planning for **all** subjects to show how they will develop in the future. (*Paragraphs 45, 54*)
 - ⁶Develop greater use of ICT across the curriculum. (*Paragraphs 7, 25, 29, 83, 90, 97, 104 and 110*)
 - ⁷Develop greater links between subjects within planning for lessons. (*Paragraphs 25, 29, 83 and 90*)

⁶ Already identified by the school as an area to be included in the next school improvement plan.

⁷ Already identified by the school as an area to be included in the next school improvement plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	29	19	3	0	0
Percentage	2	21	44	29	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	302
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	57

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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.5	School data	0.1
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	44	38	82

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	38	42	44
	Girls	29	23	36
	Total	67	65	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (82)	79 (74)	98 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	37	42	41
	Girls	26	23	29
	Total	63	65	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (83)	79 (78)	85 (96)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	277	1	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	10	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	30.2

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	127

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	-
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	-
Total number of education support staff	-
Total aggregate hours worked per week	-
Number of pupils per FTE adult	-

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.4

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	573281
Total expenditure	579248
Expenditure per pupil	2040
Balance brought forward from previous year	35784
Balance carried forward to next year	29817

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	302
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	38	1	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	61	1	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	56	15	2	4
The teaching is good.	50	46	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	44	21	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	46	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	47	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	27	48	22	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	48	44	2	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	56	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	46	9	3	2

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

ENGLISH

63. Standards of work are good with most pupils reaching above average levels in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the age of eleven. Boys and girls achieve similar standards. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in raising standards through good teaching that is firmly based in the National Literacy Strategy. The majority of pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. Progress is very good for those with special educational needs with many of them successful in reaching the required standard. Test results for eleven-year-olds have been above the national average for the past four years.
64. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above average. Pupils benefit from well-planned opportunities provided in most lessons for offering opinions or explanations. They speak with confidence and clarity and use a wide vocabulary to express their thoughts and feelings. For example, Year 6 pupils share a range of examples illustrating how language is used in a persuasive way and Year 5 pupils make good progress in presenting explanations with clarity and suitable detail. Most pupils listen with concentration to other pupils and to their teachers and wait their turn to contribute in discussions. On the very small number of occasions listening is not as good as it should be because pupils are not sufficiently motivated and are unclear about the purpose of the lesson.
65. Standards in reading are good. By Year 6, higher attaining and most average attaining pupils show proficiency in discussing characterisation and plot. Pupils show good prediction, inference and deduction skills. These skills are developed well by teachers' good quality questioning and strong encouragement for pupils to make extended answers. Appropriate measures are taken to identify pupils with reading difficulties and to provide them with extra help and support. This is very successful in raising pupils' standards. Although some lower attaining pupils read hesitantly, their use of expression is developing well and they talk confidently about their reading books. Library skills are well developed. From Year 3, pupils explain the purposes of glossaries, contents pages and indexes and choose books from a library. Some use is made of the Internet to find information relevant to their lessons. Library resources are sufficiently varied with appropriate resources available to support pupils' cultural development. Each class has its own library with a suitable range of reading and non-fiction books. A good range of books is available in classes to support topics being studied.
66. Pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities for writing for different purposes and their response to these is good overall. In the scrutiny of work during the inspection there was a wide range of writing of a good standard. For example, descriptive and instructional writing, poems and report writing all demonstrated a good use of vocabulary. Pupils plan imaginative stories well with good emphasis on the beginning and the end. Pupils use their writing skills effectively to support their work in other subjects such as science, history and geography. For example, Year 6 pupils write letters from an evacuee of World War II with empathy and understanding. Their grammatical knowledge and understanding shows good progress and pupils write expressively. The majority of pupils of all abilities make good progress in their writing due to the quality teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well by classroom assistants.
67. Pupils' spelling is generally very good. They make good progress from Year 3 where the higher attaining and average attaining pupils spell most common words correctly. The lower attainers have confidence to attempt words using sounds. By Year 6 the higher attaining pupils have exceptionally good spelling with the average and below average pupils achieving very well. This reflects the appropriate emphasis the school places on the importance of

spelling. Regular spelling tests on word patterns and root words effectively build pupils' knowledge and understanding as well as their confidence. Handwriting throughout the school is well formed and easy to read enabling work to be neatly presented. Regular, short and quick handwriting sessions successfully encourage correct formation of letters. Teachers have high expectations on the presentation of work that places a positive foundation for pupils and encourages them to develop a pride in their work.

68. Overall, pupils respond well in English lessons. The vast majority of pupils are prepared to concentrate and persevere to overcome difficulties, especially when work is well matched to their attainment levels, is challenging and has clear learning objectives. Relationships between teachers and pupils are, in the main, positive and mutually respectful. Pupils collaborate well and work productively and amicably.
69. Teaching in English is good overall. In half of the lessons seen teaching was good or better and included one excellent lesson. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Teachers across the school have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing and almost all are very confident and competent in delivering the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers make good use of questions to develop understanding and extend learning and they pay good attention to subject specific vocabulary. Year 6 pupils, when analysing leaflets, compare the passive and active voice' and identify 'persuasive' language accurately. The majority of teachers show enthusiasm for the subject, which has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and interest. Other characteristics of the good teaching are well-planned lessons and good management of pupils and support staff. Teachers use praise well to reward pupils' efforts, raise self-esteem and encourage pupils to achieve as well as they are able. Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils and successfully guide them to reach their full potential. There is good use of assessment to set pupils into classes of suitable ability within their year group. This has a positive effect upon learning and progress. Assessment information is generally used well to help teachers plan lessons. However, in an unsatisfactory lesson, the average to lower attaining pupils were not effectively challenged. Work set was below the majority of pupils' capabilities and the pace was slow. As a result, they were unmotivated and became disruptive and no progress was evident in their learning. In the best lessons, with older pupils, the last part of the lesson is used very well to challenge pupils, to analyse their own learning and to highlight the purpose of the lessons. Pupils' assessment of their own work is well established. They are fully aware of the targets they are expected to achieve. This is not always the case and, in some lessons in Years 3 and 4, the pupils were not clear about what they were supposed to learn and this slowed the pace of working. Marking throughout the school is good, with examples of helpful marking, particularly for pupils in Years 5 and 6. It is regular and has a very positive impact upon progress.
70. There is strong leadership from the co-ordinator for English, who has very good knowledge and experience. Lesson observations and detailed feedback of analysis to staff have had a positive impact upon the quality of teaching in most of the classes. The co-ordinator has been central in the development of the policy document and the implementation of the national guidance. The school makes detailed analysis of all test results and uses this information to inform planning for future lessons. The information is also put to effective use in helping set individual and group targets for improvement.
71. Resources for English are good overall and used well within classrooms. The major genres of written English are appropriately represented. Information and communication technology resources are at present underused to develop pupils' information seeking, word processing, drafting and presentation skills. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because programmes of work are carefully targeted to their needs and they are given very good support by their teachers and the teaching assistants.

MATHEMATICS

72. Levels of attainment for eleven year olds are above national expectations. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when attainment was found to be average. The evidence from lesson observations and an analysis of pupils' work shows that the majority are working confidently at expected levels and well over a third are tackling more difficult work.
73. The school has worked hard to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. There is a continuing cycle of review which helps the school improve the quality of the curriculum and teaching in this subject. Teachers plan and provide a range of work to cover all parts of the mathematics curriculum including number, data handling, shape, space and measures.
74. The school has maintained the good quality of teaching reported at the time of the last inspection. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed and in the majority of lessons the quality of teaching was good; in some lessons it was very good. A consistent strength in mathematics lessons is the management of pupils and the very good relationships that teachers have with their pupils so that all pupils feel encouraged and confident in their learning. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and they use this to stimulate pupils into thinking a little deeper about number and other aspects of mathematics. The pace of lessons is good, with very little time wasted. There are occasions, however, when the balance is too skewed towards teacher led discussions instead of allowing pupils more time for practical or independent work. Some teachers maintain the challenge for pupils of all abilities in the 'mental/oral' sessions and keep everyone 'on their toes' by skilful, targeted questioning. However, this is not evident in all lessons and remains a point for development within the school.
75. A consistent strength of the teaching is the accurate use of mathematical vocabulary by teachers and the encouragement they give to pupils to use this vocabulary. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work and this is also a consistently strong feature in the subject. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' problem solving skills and considerable progress has been made towards this. Teachers often present number calculations in the form of 'real-life problems' and ask their pupils to do the same. There are many examples of teachers planning and teaching problem solving skills and, whilst the school had made considerable progress in this area since the last inspection, there remains scope for further development of this important aspect of teaching. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were observed tackling a very good mathematics project that involved them in planning and budgeting the redecoration and furnishing of a room. This project successfully promoted a whole range of number and measuring skills including the use of spreadsheets on computers. The school is usefully developing a good progression of learning in this area so that pupils progress from simple one-stage problem solving to more difficult problems and investigations. There were also many good examples of teachers encouraging pupils to explain their methods for calculating in their 'heads'. The teacher would discuss these with the class and write out the method on the board. These teaching approaches have helped to improve pupils' skills and represent an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
76. As a result of the good quality of teaching pupils make good progress. The commitment and high expectations of teachers and support staff means that many pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress. By the time they are eleven, pupils use written methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and do many calculations mentally. They know how to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 and 100 and recall multiplication and division facts. Pupils understand the decimal system and use this understanding to solve problems involving money and measure. They are familiar with the language and properties of shape. Pupils recognise symmetry and calculate area and perimeters. They can understand data when presented in a variety of charts and graphs.

Many pupils are capable of doing more difficult work including for example the use of negative numbers, the correct use of brackets in equations and the reduction of fractions to their simplest form. They measure angles to the nearest degree, calculate the area of compound shapes and understand the probability scale from 0 - 1. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately extended by the work provided. For example, during the inspection, the higher attaining Year 6 pupils were revising the skill of multiplying numbers with two decimal places. These pupils are confident when tackling problems and willing to discuss and try out a number of different strategies.

77. Throughout the school, pupils remain well focused during lessons and work hard. They are especially good at working together collaboratively in pairs and teachers often put boys and girls together to do this. Pupils generally behave well and change from one task to another without fuss. In a very small number of lessons, there are exceptions to this when teachers have to employ a number of different strategies to contain the potentially disruptive behaviour of a few individuals.
78. Teachers assess pupils' work and often modify their planning to take account of the progress made. They use half-termly assessments of units of work as well as their ongoing assessment through marking to record pupils' attainment. Information from end of year tests are used well to add to the picture of each pupil's progress and attainment. The information is also used to group the pupils in each year for mathematics. Teachers recognise that there is still a range of ability within each 'set' and provide extra support and challenge as required.
79. A good system is established so that agreed amounts of time are dedicated to the teaching of mathematics through ICT in the computer suite and this enhances pupils learning through giving them extra practice to sharpen their number skills and work with data handling and problem solving. The subject is well managed. The subject co-ordinator monitors the subject through a number of means including the observation of lessons, the sampling of pupils' work, the analysis of teachers planning and pupils' test papers. As a result, the school priorities are decided and an action plan produced to ensure continued good development.

SCIENCE

80. In the 2002 national tests pupils were well above average. The current Year 6 pupils entered the school broadly average and have made good progress and are now above average. The difference between the standards in 2002 and now, can be attributed to cohort differences. Improvement since the last inspection is good with standards improving from satisfactory to at least good.
81. By Year 6, pupils plot graphs of the change in temperature as a liquid cools, explain floating in terms of the balance between the force of gravity pulling down and the 'upthrust' of water pushing up, and explain the advantages and disadvantages of 'series' and 'parallel' circuits. Given various mixtures of materials they choose whether to use filtration, evaporation or other means to separate them and understand that plants make their own food from carbon dioxide and water using sunlight. Higher attaining pupils use technical vocabulary accurately, for example, xylem and photosynthesis. A strength of all pupils work is the breadth of understanding of science investigation.
82. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and particularly enjoy the large amount of practical work done. This ensures all pupils have full access to the science curriculum as it provides pupils with the opportunity to succeed through a range of teaching and learning styles. As a consequence, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, are fully included in lessons and are supported appropriately. This commitment to a significant involvement in practical work also enables higher attaining pupils to be extended through more demanding investigative skills.

83. Science supports the development of pupils' writing skills well. For example, Year 5 pupils accurately describe the reasons for night and day. The pupils go on to successfully present their findings using a computer programme. The development of technical vocabulary also supports literacy. This is done impressively through the imaginative use of ICT to, not only label the parts of a flower using graphics and text, but also to create hyperlinks on the labels to more detailed explanations. Some science work supports numeracy; for example, graphing the force needed to move an object across different surfaces in Year 6. However, generally, insufficient links are made between science and mathematics. There are some good examples of the use of ICT, but overall insufficient use is made of word processing and spreadsheets to record and report investigations. However, it is part of the school improvement plan to identify and exploit the links between different subjects including those between science and mathematics.
84. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A good example of 'awe and wonder' was seen when Year 5 and 6 pupils used microscopes to look at decaying food and different powders respectively. Pupils were fully engaged, enthusiastic and very keen to share their learning with others. Science also contributes well to social and moral provision. In all the lessons seen, pupils not only enjoyed the practical work but also worked very responsibly in groups and behaved well, so ensuring all were able to participate and contribute.
85. Overall teaching is good. All lessons seen in Years 5 and 6 were of good quality. A particularly good feature across all lessons was the emphasis on practical work, which helped pupils develop a broad understanding of the concepts taught. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is generally good and this enables them to plan well and ensure the lesson supports the required learning and challenge pupils' thinking. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 lessons where pupils were revising materials. Pupils were given the opportunity to test materials for their crystal structure, solubility etc. and then on returning from break found there had been a 'break in' with tell-tail foot prints left across the classroom. Their task then was to test the material to identify the possible identity of the culprit. This approach not only captured the pupils' imaginations, but also effectively engaged them in reviewing the knowledge, understanding and skills required. Another consistently good feature of teaching is the good use of science vocabulary; for example, in a Year 3 lesson when discussing 'fair testing' and the effect of different conditions on plant growth, not only the parts of a plant were emphasised but also their function. Teaching is less successful when introductions are too long, insufficient opportunities are allowed for pupils to learn from their mistakes and there is a lack of clarity in investigations as to what variable has been changed and what was the effect. There are also a few instances where what pupils should know, understand and do by the end of a lesson are not sufficiently clear; for example, in a lesson for lower junior pupils, the lack of the clarity in the lesson objectives meant pupils were unclear of expectations when they were given opportunities to discuss the effect of different growing conditions on plants.
86. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school is committed to learning science through practical work and investigation. This is having a direct effect on standards by giving pupils opportunities to learn through a range of learning styles and to apply and consolidate their learning.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is broadly in line with expectations and they make good progress to be above expectations by the end of Year 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards were satisfactory.
88. Standards are good across the key stage and good progress is made as pupils move through the school. In Years 3 and 4, pupils create pictures stimulated by artists such as Dali and

emulate his work by creating a range of ideas such rabbits with a brick texture or a fluffy crab flying in the sky. In Year 4, pupils effectively manipulate photographs of themselves in the style of David Hockney. Year 6 pupils learn a range of techniques and styles from the work of a very good range of artists. For example, pupils creating a series of simple forms to 'create' movement, using ovals to draw simple body proportions and the use of construction lines to ensure the features of the face are correctly proportioned. Pupils respond well to the range of stimuli teachers provide, for example, they enjoy researching examples of carnival headdresses before designing and creating their own. The quality of work is good and shows care and sensitivity. For example, some of the examples of painting in the style of Turner and Lowry are of very high quality. Pupils also create good quality designs to depict 'God's love for His World' when inspired by the work of a visiting artist.

89. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in art lessons. For example, pupils with difficulty manipulating paint brushes have been given specific help in developing their motor skills. The good knowledge and understanding of the staff ensures all pupils are given a wide range of experiences and encouraged to experiment with a wide range of media and techniques to enable them to succeed.
90. Art contributes to literacy through the comments in pupils' good quality sketch books, which are used very constructively to record the experimentation and exploration of ideas and materials. A particularly strong feature of this is pupils' self-assessment of their work where they comment on their own strengths and areas for improvement. Explicit links to numeracy are limited. However, pupils work with a range of shapes, work in three dimensions and the need to measure and scale some of their ideas supports the 'shape and space' aspect of mathematics. Use of ICT is satisfactory, for example, using it to research the work of various artists. However, few opportunities are made to enable pupils to use computers to experiment and explore the effects of pattern, colour and texture.
91. Pupils are very aware through their art lessons of the diversity of culture in Britain today; for example, the range of costumes displayed at the Notting Hill carnival in a Year 6 lesson. They also explore their own culture through willow sculptures stimulated by a local artist who created the sculptures at the front of the school. The quality of much of the pupils work shows sensitivity and respect for others, for example, through their exploration of African art. Art lessons involve pupils in working together, sharing their views and sometimes making presentations. These opportunities make a good contribution to the social provision in the school. Much of the pupils' work shows sensitivity, thought and reflection; for example, the use of colour in their landscape paintings, and in their observational drawings to depict 'a sense of place'.
92. Teaching is good overall. Of the nine lessons seen three were satisfactory, four good and two very good. The strong features of teaching are the good knowledge and understanding of teachers to teach the skills required to enable pupils to express their ideas in a range of ways. This is supported by the use of examples from a range of artists to enable pupils to develop an understanding of the various ways artists express mood, feelings and ideas; for example, the comparison of Dali's 'Persistence of Memory' with the illustrator Anthony Brown's version. Teachers inspire pupils to work hard and concentrate through good pace, high expectations and the challenging of ideas. Where teaching is less effective the slower pace of some lessons means some pupils lose concentration. In some lessons the objectives are not always sufficiently clear as to what the pupils should know, understand and do by the end of the lesson.
93. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator and this is a significant factor in the good standards achieved. The strength of the subject is the systematic development of skills, the exploration ideas through a wide-ranging curriculum, and the enthusiasm of the teachers for the subject; these ensure pupils are given stimulating and challenging work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

94. Standards meet expectations and progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and improvement is satisfactory.
95. By Year 6, pupils design shelters to a sound standard. They design with a clear purpose, list materials and sizes, list additional materials not planned for, and evaluate their work systematically. They also design slippers effectively with some pupils sufficiently enthusiastic to attend a 'slipper club' after school to fully complete them. Year 6 pupils also create electrically driven vehicles to their own design. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they consistently review what they have done and identify ways to improve their work.
96. All groups of pupils are well supported and make good progress including those with special educational needs. Pupils are assessed at the end of each unit of work and pupils who did not achieve well are identified and their needs addressed. However, assessment does not sufficiently identify whether pupils are making the expected progress year on year, which limits teachers' ability to target an improvement in standards in the subject.
97. DT makes a sound contribution to literacy through pupils not only listing materials and creating designs but also through evaluation of their own work. Numeracy is also supported through the need to create scale drawings, measurement of materials and planning effective sequencing of the work done. The use of ICT in design and technology is more limited. ICT is not used sufficiently to record the planning and evaluation of work or to challenge higher attaining pupils to, for example, control the vehicles they make. DT also supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences. It is clear from the work reviewed, that pupils take a care and pride in their work and take part in a significant amount of practical work that needs co-operation and collaboration to share materials and equipment.
98. DT was not scheduled during the inspection so no lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. However, from the quality of work seen and interviews with teachers and pupils teaching is at least satisfactory.
99. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and the scheme of work follows national recommendations.

GEOGRAPHY

100. As at the time of the last inspection pupils attain levels that match the national expectations by the time they are eleven. Insufficient consideration has been given to addressing the previous weakness of 'written objectives' in the planning for lessons, which are currently not precise enough to meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils'. Lesson objectives remain too broad so that pupils of all abilities are not sufficiently clear on what they should learn by the end of the lessons.
101. Pupils make sound progress through a two year rolling programme of work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 cover the same curriculum, as do Years 5 and 6. In the lower school, pupils competently consider their own locality. They draw clear maps of their journey to school using their own symbols. Visits into the locality give pupils the opportunity to consider the environmental profile and make building assessments of features known to them such as the church hall. This successfully leads them into comparisons between how the world affects us and how we affect the world. Pupils demonstrate sound understanding of environmental issues. This was seen in their work on St Lucia – where pupils learned about areas of the world that need more development to help the people who live there. The geography programme makes good use of comparisons to make geography more meaningful for pupils.

For example pupils compare and contrast a school day in St Lucia with that of their own in Sidmouth.

102. Year 5 and 6 pupils have sound knowledge of the main continents and oceans of the world. They study maps at different scales and demonstrate good knowledge of ordnance survey symbols; locating key features such as mountain ranges, major cities and rivers. Pupils are familiar with calculating distances, reading census data and know about different currencies of the European Union. Pupils have opportunities to voice their own opinions on issues arising from their studies. Suitable question and answer sessions and use of visual clues demonstrates that Year 6 pupils have satisfactory knowledge of the Kenyan economy. Through open discussion pupils show consideration of how tourism can have a detrimental and positive effect on peoples' culture.
103. Pupils make sound progress, overall, especially in their ability to interpret geographical information. However, not enough opportunities are given for pupils to use their literacy skills effectively to support their learning. The pupils work mainly with interest and enthusiasm. Teaching is overall sound. One lesson in Year 6 was very good with pupils being well motivated by a dramatisation of an argument between a Kenyan and that of a tourist, (the class teacher and support assistant) highlighting the effect of tourism on the natural environment and developing pupils' appreciation and understanding of other cultures. This was a firm basis on which pupils could develop their roles for and against the building of a hotel. Working in pairs good use was made of the tape recorder to record interviews in order to help pupils understand issues from both sides of the argument.
104. The subject is managed appropriately by the co-ordinator who works in close liaison with other teachers. She retains a clear overview of the subject through supporting the teaching programme for different classes. Sufficient resources and the use of field trips effectively enhance the curriculum. All pupils benefit from the good use of resources and are efficient in searching for information, although the use of ICT for this purpose is under-developed.

HISTORY

105. Standards are in line with national expectations. This reflects a similar position on attainment to that at the time of the last inspection. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of people and events in the past, and of change over time.
106. Pupils build their chronological understanding, and their knowledge of features characteristic of periods and societies studied. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of Britain and the wider world in Tudor times. Pupils develop their ability to suggest reasons for, and the results of, events and situations studied. This was evident in Year 6 where pupils are studying the cause and effect of World War II. There are activities when historical enquiry is promoted well, such as Year 5 pupils using historical information in the form of pictures and what they already know to make sensible deductions about Aztec culture. Through good teaching, Year 6 pupils successfully investigate the purpose of written documents. A good link with their literacy studies of formal and informal writing effectively supports them in their work. Good use of quality resources successfully stimulates pupils' interest in events of World War II and how they affected the lives of the people. Pupils demonstrate sound factual knowledge of the war years and genuine empathy for those involved particularly the evacuees who had to leave their parents. Good progress is made in pupils understanding that aspects of the past have been represented in different ways.
107. The teaching was good overall. Teachers demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the periods and motivated their pupils well through good presentations and use of resources. Throughout the school pupils have a suitable range of experiences for gathering information, although the use of ICT is under-developed. Throughout the school insufficient use is made of pupils skills in literacy to support their work in history, although extended writing was evident in Year 6, where the pupils used vivid descriptions to relate a mix of emotions, and diary extracts of an evacuee are written in the first person.

108. History is well led and managed and the co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject. A suitable collection of work indicates the standard expected in each year. Teachers have the opportunity to arrive at a common understanding of what to expect and how to assess standards. Overall, assessment is not sufficiently developed to effectively inform teaching and learning by identifying individual pupils' progress in historical skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils' self-assessment of achievement and effort is used well in one Year 6 and this is good practice that helps individuals set targets to improve their work in the future.
109. Resources are adequate. There are a variety of reference books accessible in classrooms and pupils can examine artefacts and other source materials. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich curriculum provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

110. As noted at the time of the last inspection, by the age of eleven, pupils attain the nationally expected level. However, the overall provision for this area has improved markedly with much better computer resources and a carefully organised curriculum. The school responded energetically to the points for development raised in the last inspection report and there is now a much greater degree of staff confidence in teaching this subject than was previously the case. Whilst there have been significant improvements in successfully using ICT to support work in some other subjects, the school recognises rightly the need to make much more widespread use of ICT across the curriculum.
111. Year 3 pupils know how to use simple simulation programs to assist in finding things out. A good choice of software by the teacher in the lessons seen for this age group meant that they developed their geographical and mathematical skills in following clues to solve problems. Clear instructions from the teacher while demonstrating the use of the program via the computer projector helped pupils to progress at a good pace. In Year 4, pupils learn how to sharpen their adding and subtracting skills using computers and how to use computers to send Email. However both lessons seen for this age group were unsatisfactory. This was because, in one case the teacher lacked confident subject knowledge and did not explain the tasks clearly enough and, in the other lesson, because the teacher did not manage to focus the pupils' attention sufficiently on the work being carried out. As a result, in both lessons insufficient learning took place. Year 5 pupils gain a solid grasp of the principles of making and using branching databases. In the lessons seen, the Year 5 teachers provided good clear demonstrations using the projector, so that pupils accessed the tasks quickly and efficiently. In constructing and interrogating the databases, pupils could clearly see the importance of framing questions properly. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils showed confident ability to use spreadsheets to help them with a mathematical task. They made good use of the automatic 'addition of numbers in a column function' to help solve the problem to make a financial balance sheet that came to a specific given total. This was a very good use of ICT by the teacher to support learning in mathematics. Year 6 pupils are familiar with using hyperlinks and know how to use PowerPoint to make a series of slides about a particular project such as a study of the planets. They know how to sequence instructions to control a sequence of events such as changing traffic lights. They use the Internet to help them research and are familiar with Emailing techniques. As can be seen from these examples, teachers are beginning to make good use of computers to develop pupils' learning. A particularly good example of this was seen in a science lesson where the teacher used an interactive whiteboard to show pupils images on a microscope – this accelerated pupils' progress in understanding the structure of the materials being investigated.
112. In most of the sessions seen, pupils enjoyed using the computers and worked enthusiastically on the tasks provided. The technique of partnering pupils in mixed abilities is a successful strategy that helps to ensure the full involvement of all individuals, with lower attaining pupils well supported by average and higher attaining pupils. The collaboration in

these sessions was particularly good and clearly helped build good social interaction and personal development.

113. Overall, in most of the lessons seen teaching was good, although as noted above, two lessons were unsatisfactory. In the good lessons, teachers showed confident subject knowledge, gave clear explanations and chose ICT activities that interested the pupils and helped them to progress at a good rate.
114. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject area very effectively and works well with the newly qualified teacher who is currently shadowing the post to gain experience. Together, they have established an excellent computer based ICT curriculum map that forms the basis of a very useful tool to help staff through the embedded hyperlinks that help teachers link to examples of the work highlighted on the map. The co-ordinator liaises closely with all staff and provides them with strong support. The school has clear planning systems that effectively support teachers. Additionally, there is a detailed policy and a comprehensive Internet safety policy. These provide staff with clear guidance on the school's approach to using the facilities. The weekly computer club is a useful opportunity to help pupils further their learning, and the opportunities for pupils to use a digital camera in the photography club is another good method of advancing pupils' skills.
115. The school now has an adequate range of computer equipment and a well maintained computer suite. However, the projector in the computer suite is sited on a table that tends to block the view to the projection screen so that teachers often have difficulty positioning the pupils to view the screen easily. Also there is a lack of proper ventilation in the room so that it quickly become oppressive and stuffy during lessons. The installation of an interactive whiteboard in one of the Year 6 classrooms is a very successful strategy. The whiteboard is very well used to enhance presentations and accelerate pupils' skills knowledge and understanding.

MUSIC

116. By the age of eleven, pupils attain standards in music that match the national expectations. However pupils sing well and many of those receiving music tuition at school perform at a good level. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when music was judged to be below average overall. The improvement is largely due to the co-ordinator who has worked very effectively to provide clear guidelines to support teachers lesson planning and who provides clear leadership through his own good teaching and enthusiastic approach.
117. Year 3 pupils learn to clap out rhythm patterns and how to keep a regular pulse beat going. Most of the pupils keep reasonable time and they follow the clear lead given to them by their teachers during demonstrations. They also acquire a basic knowledge of how the different rhythms that they clap are represented through musical notation, but this part of their learning is limited as the teachers falter slightly in their subject knowledge and confidence in this area. Good teaching in Year 5 helps pupils gain a good understanding of the musical concepts of 'unison', 'parts', 'harmony', 'chord' and 'dischord'. Most pupils competently learn to sing a round and the teacher uses instrumentalists well to accompany/lead the singing. This approach helps a significant minority of pupils who experience difficulty holding the tune. Year 6 pupils in particular but also most other pupils in the school show good singing skills during assemblies, hymn practice and choir practice. Due to the careful way in which the melodies are taught to them, they sing expressively with clear diction and very tunefully. Older pupils playing the cornet, saxophone, clarinets, flute, recorders and glockenspiels showed good performance skills while rehearsing in the after school orchestra club –carefully following the musical score provided. In sessions observed with the peripatetic music teacher keyboard players and guitarists clearly benefited from the instruction they received and worked enthusiastically. The good work done in these sessions is very usefully carried forward, with these musicians working well in the school orchestra and making significant input during class lessons.

118. In all of the music sessions observed, pupils enjoyed participating and most tried hard with the music they were asked to perform. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good overall because of the strong input of the music co-ordinator. The non-specialist class teachers clearly find teaching music quite challenging but succeed through carefully preparing and organising the sessions they teach. The school has a satisfactory range of resources for teaching music although some of the percussion equipment is reaching the 'end of its days'.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

119. It was not possible to observe the oldest pupils in the school performing in all aspects of PE but inspection evidence indicates that by the time they are eleven pupils attain standards in PE that are in line with national expectations in gymnastics, dance, games, swimming and outdoor activities and close to national expectations in athletics. To produce these standards is a considerable achievement for the school in view of the inadequate facilities it has for outdoor PE lessons. The school does not have its own playing field and the largest hard play surface has a considerable slope. A small level area of hard play surface normally used for football, netball and other games is currently occupied by temporary buildings.
120. Eight lessons were observed during the inspection and the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall with a few good and very good lessons seen. There are a number of teachers who have qualifications or a special interest in PE. The co-ordinator for the subject is very keen and energetic and puts great effort into raising enthusiasm and interest in the subject including the use of specialist coaches from outside the school and providing a good range of teaching resources for the teachers. All of this contributes to the quality of teaching being satisfactory overall and to all pupils including those with special educational needs making at least satisfactory progress. The co-ordinator is also working with support staff to motivate pupils into trying more interesting physical activities during playtimes.
121. In all lessons teachers make sure that pupils warm up before the main activity and, in most lessons, the pupils are reminded about the reasons for doing this. A great emphasis is put upon sportsmanship and working collaboratively in lessons and as a result pupils display positive attitudes. Teachers usually maintain a good balance between the time allowed for explanation and time for activity. There are exceptions to this and ensuring that this becomes a consistent feature of all lessons is a development point for the school. In the stronger lessons, the teachers circulate amongst the pupils encouraging them to improve their skills and making sure everyone is trying hard.
122. Throughout their time in school, pupils practice a range of games skills including tennis, football, netball, rugby and cricket. Coaches from local clubs give an added boost to the teaching. There is also a range of after school 'clubs' and inter-school competitions. During the inspection Year 5 were observed practising tennis skills and they demonstrated expected levels of control. Year 6 is currently using a nearby field on alternate weeks to have an extended lesson practising a range of games skills. During the spring term the subject co-ordinator spent a whole day monitoring and recording every class doing dance activities. Her reports and school assessment records indicate that levels of attainment in this element of the subject are meeting national expectations with some pupils exceeding these levels.
123. Year 6 pupils are performing to expected levels in gymnastics. During the inspection they were observed working out and practising sequences of movements. They have a good PE vocabulary and, when asked, they explain which key aspects they are concentrating upon such as balance, height or mirroring. They are quiet and productive and work collaboratively in boy/girl pairs. The Harry Potter music provided by the class teachers heightened the interest and excitement in lessons in which the pupils were already applying physical and creative effort. The pupils demonstrated their work to others and made positive comments about their classmates' performance using appropriate PE vocabulary.

124. The programme of work includes all aspects of PE including swimming and adventurous activities such as orienteering. All year groups benefit from a visiting adventure challenge group who provide physical problem-solving challenges. Year 6 take part in a residential trip which gives further opportunity for outdoor activities.
125. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has put in place a basic assessment system. Teachers are not yet using this consistently to plan extra challenges for the higher attainers or to modify the tasks set for the less confident or less skilled pupils. When the current building programme is completed two extra areas of the school grounds will be available for teaching PE – placing the school in a strong position to develop the subject further.