

## INSPECTION REPORT

**CLINTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOL**

Merton, Okehampton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113452

Headteacher: The Reverend Mrs. Alison Turner

Reporting inspector: Jennie Willcock-Bates  
1967

Dates of inspection: 27 to 29 January 2003

Inspection number: 247377

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Merton Okehampton Devon
Postcode:	EX20 3EQ
Telephone number:	01805 603357
Fax number:	01805 603357
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Philip Collins
Date of previous inspection:	23 February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1967	Jennie Willcock-Bates	Registered inspector	English, Information and Communication, Technology, Geography, History, Areas of Learning for children in the Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9756	Kenneth Parsons	Lay inspector	Education Inclusion	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal achievements? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16227	Jim Phillips	Team inspector	Mathematics, Science, Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Physical education. Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd.  
Lydney Office  
The Croft  
Brierley Way  
Oldcroft  
Lydney  
Gloucestershire  
GL15 4NE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a small Church of England school with 86 pupils between 4 and 11 years old. It is situated in the village of Merton in Devon to the north of Okehampton, serving four parishes, including many farms. Several pupils are transported to school. Most parents have to travel to neighbouring towns to work now that the farming industry is in decline. While the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is about average, the area suffers from rural deprivation. The foot and mouth epidemic in 2001 had a significant impact on the financial stability of the area. Four year olds enter the school twice each year and join pupils in Year 1 in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Their attainment on entry varies each year and is currently below average. A few pupils have above average attainment and are already writing their names and reading simple words. All pupils are from white British background and speak English as their mother tongue. Thirty-four per cent of pupils need support for special educational needs, which is above average. A significant proportion of these are working at levels that are well below average. Pupils are taught in classes with two or three other year groups because the school is small. The school recently received an Eco Award for its environmental work.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is improving. It has several strengths but there are also shortcomings. Standards in English and mathematics are below average because of a significant proportion of low attaining pupils in each year. As a result successful teaching achievement is good. The school provides satisfactory support for pupils with special educational needs but there is a lack of specialist support for long-term very low attainment. This is unsatisfactory and suppresses pupils' achievement by the time they are in Year 6. The leadership and management of the new headteacher are very good. She has created a strong team that has a determination to improve the school and raise standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good and work is planned to help them learn effectively.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and with the governors and staff have inspired a strong determination to raise standards and improve the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good because they are managed very well and excellent relationships inspire confidence, and a pride in the school and its eco-environment.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good and the school provides very successful opportunities to help pupils become responsible.
- The school provides very good activities for pupils outside lessons using the local and wider community very effectively and making successful links with neighbouring schools.
- Parents' views of the school are excellent and the school has established a very good partnership with them.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, particularly writing, and mathematics remain below average by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology remain below average by the end of Year 6.
- The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory because pupils do not always get the specialist support they need.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Improvement is satisfactory but has been slow since the previous inspection in 1998 because the school has faced significant challenges, which have compromised the pace of change. A period of instability

and changes of teacher, including the headteacher, because of recruitment problems, meant that new teaching programmes were not implemented effectively. A new headteacher and teachers have been appointed and a new teaching team established. Improvement has become more rapid. Standards in English and mathematics remain below average. Programmes of work have been introduced to raise standards. Standards and achievement in science, history and physical education have improved and they remain average in all other subjects. Satisfactory improvement has been made in all the key issues, but further work is required on pupils' recording skills in science and assessment.

## 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	E*	D	E	E
Mathematics	E*	C	E*	E*
Science	E	D	E*	E*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of the national tests in 2002 for pupils in Year 2 were in the lowest five per cent of all schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The teacher assessment in science was also below average. It was similar in Year 6. Results in English were well below the national average and the average of similar schools. In mathematics and science, results were low and also in the bottom five percent of schools nationally. The small numbers taking the tests mean that analysis of the results and comparisons with other schools are unreliable. However, results are rising but slower than results in other schools. Frequent changes of teacher throughout the school compromised standards. Nearly half of the pupils in the year group had special educational needs that affected their results. Absence from school in 2001 because of the Foot and Mouth epidemic compromised improvement. The school did not meet its challenging targets, but the targets did not reflect an accurate picture of pupils' attainment. Targets have been adjusted and remain appropriately challenging but more realistic. After a difficult period, the school is now back on track to meet its targets in 2003.

Attainment on entry to the Reception Year is below average but there are wide variations. A few children's attainment is above average, while others are at a lower level. The children achieve well and by the end of the year they will exceed the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. They will reach the goals in all other areas of learning but not all the aspects of communication, language and literacy. Work throughout the school shows significant improvement in the last year. Standards of work seen in English, mathematics and science are broadly average at the end of Year 2, although handwriting and spelling are weak in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is good and pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 are benefiting from new programmes of work and improved teaching. However, standards in Year 6 remain below average in English and mathematics, because of the pupils' low attainment. Pupils are learning at a good rate. Standards and achievement in science are satisfactory. Differences between test results and the work seen are related to good teaching and support in lessons and work planned to help pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, standards in history and physical education are above average and achievement is good. Achievement in art and design, design and technology and geography is satisfactory. Pupils are achieving well in information and communication technology but the limitations of the resources inhibit standards in Year 6. Achievement in music is satisfactory at the end of Year 2 but it was not possible to judge standards at the end of Year 6.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: pupils are polite and courteous and there is no evidence of oppressive behaviour or bullying.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: pupils enjoy working and playing together. Relationships are excellent and pupils respond well to their responsibilities.
Attendance	Very good: unauthorised absence is rare. Authorised absence is below average.

Pupils work and play happily together. They show respect for each other and for the values and beliefs of others. The School Council is impressively organised by pupils with the help of a teacher.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall and pupils learn effectively. Teaching was satisfactory or better in almost all lessons and good or better in eight out of ten; in four out of ten it was very good. Teaching is satisfactory in the reception and Year 1 class, good in the Year 2 and 3 class and very good in the Years 4 to 6 class. Teaching is very good in English, history and music, good in mathematics, science and design and technology. Literacy and numeracy skills are effectively taught, although pupils do not regularly practise the sounds of letter to help their reading in Year 1. Pupils apply their basic skills to most other subjects. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching English and mathematics and this helps pupils to work hard. Teaching is at least satisfactory in geography, art and design and information and communication technology, and very good in physical education.

Teaching meets the needs of most pupils well, whatever their attainment, special educational needs, social background or gender. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which helps them to produce innovative activities to broaden out the pupils' skills knowledge and understanding. Very good use of questioning helps the pupils think and to ask and answer questions to help teachers to understand what they have learned. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent, and inspire trust that helps the pupils to have confidence to learn new things. Teachers manage pupils very well and this helps them to work hard. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Teaching was not effective when activities lacked structure in some of the learning in Reception and Year 1. Learning support assistants are very effective.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: the curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and has a strong emphasis on teaching English, mathematics and science.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory: work is planned effectively to meet the pupils' needs in school, but there is not enough external support for pupils with very low attainment.



Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good: the provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good and cultural development is good. Activities help pupils understand different cultures around the world. More could be done to help pupils experience the richness of cultural traditions in Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: teachers know the pupils well and monitor their development appropriately. Assessment is still being developed and is not yet consistent.

Limitations of resources mean that not all the aspects of information and communication technology are taught. The school does not use any testing to provide detailed information about pupils other than national tests. Child protection procedures are good and links with parents are very good.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good: the headteacher provides strong and positive leadership and manages the school very well. Teachers carry out their responsibilities well. They support the headteacher but she has too many subjects to manage.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: governors are effective and very supportive. They know the school well through focussed visits, reports and discussion with staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good: the headteacher and staff analyse results and pupils' work and the headteacher evaluates teaching and learning
The strategic use of resources	Good: the school is effective and efficient at using available resources, to improve pupils' achievement, and teaching and learning.

The school has an appropriate number of well-trained teaching and non-teaching staff. The accommodation is satisfactory although there are weaknesses because the hall has to be used as a teaching area. Resources are adequate but more are required to update information and communication technology. The school is continually seeking ways of promoting racial harmony and fully includes the different groups of pupils in all its work. The school is successfully seeking ways of getting best value out of resources.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents feel that their children like school, work hard and are making good progress.</li> <li>They think that the behaviour is good and that the school is helping their children become responsible and mature.</li> <li>Parents feel that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed.</li> <li>They feel that the school works closely with them and helps them with problems or concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small minority does not feel well informed about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>A small minority feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspectors support the positive views of the parents. Pupils enjoy their lessons and their behaviour is very good. Inspectors found that while the school provides appropriate information about pupils' achievement, reports could be improved. Inspectors found that the school provides a very broad range of

good quality activities outside lessons.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Overall, standards are below average at the end of Year 6 because of the pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. This is a similar judgement to that made by the previous inspection. The school has suffered from a series of serious setbacks since then that compromised standards and achievement. The school's performance in the national tests was poor, and results overall at the end of Year 6 were in the bottom five percent of all schools nationally. There are variations in results each year because of the different attainment of the pupils. The school has significant numbers of pupils with low attainment, and this affects results in small year groups. However, several other factors have inhibited school improvement and affected standards.
  - Several pupils had to be absent from school as a result of the Foot and Mouth epidemic. The disease started in this area, creating a period of significant instability and devastated many parents' livelihoods and financial security.
  - High numbers of pupils, particularly boys, have significant special educational needs in the Years 4 to 6 class which affected standards.
  - Staff changes, including the retirement of the headteacher led to recruitment problems. There were several changes of temporary teachers over the last three years, which disrupted the pupils' education.
  - Circumstances in the school slowed improvement and the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
  - An above average number of pupils have moved in and out of the school, particularly in Years 3 to 6, which means that they did not take their Year 2 tests in the school. Therefore, the judgements about achievement from Year 2 to 6 in tests are not accurate.
2. Last year a new headteacher was appointed and successful recruitment enabled a new teaching team to be established. The pupils' work in throughout the school and particularly in Years 3 to 6 shows significant improvement. The school is now back on track, and standards and achievements are rising. The new headteacher has focussed her efforts on improving planning and teaching in literacy and numeracy by supporting the successful implementation of the national strategies. Efforts to boost the confidence of boys and helping them to see the importance of learning are beginning to take effect. Over the last year achievement has improved, and effective systems are now in place to track pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. This helps the school to set appropriately challenging targets based on pupils' current performances in tests and assessments. The reasons for the significance difference in the standard of work seen and the test results is that these improvements did not have time to help pupils in the previous Year 6. In addition, pupils are well supported in lessons and work is targeted to help them learn and succeed. However, they still do not always have the confidence to apply what they have learned when they undertake independent work or tests.
3. Because the groups of pupils who enter school each year are small, attainment on entry varies, and is currently below average. The attainment of a few pupils is above average, and achievement is rapid. The attainment of others is below average, and they find it difficult to sit and listen. Teaching is satisfactory overall. There are

strengths in the way the children's language and mathematical understanding is developed, and how they are helped to be happy and confident in school. By the end of the Reception Year, children are achieving well and exceed the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are meeting the goals in their mathematical development, and their creative and physical development. Children will not meet all aspects of the goals for communication, language and literacy, related to the sounds of letters make and writing. There are times when their achievement slows because activities lack structure. Children are not always guided enough about what tasks they need to undertake and which they can choose for themselves.

4. While standards are generally average at the end of Year 2, and pupil achieve well, the school did not perform well in the national tests in 2002. Results were in the lowest five per cent of all schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The results of the teachers' assessment in science was also well below average. The girls performed better than boys in all subjects. However, with small numbers taking the test in Year 2, an analysis of results or comparisons with other schools is unhelpful because they do not paint a reliable picture of standards and achievement. Nearly half of the pupils needed help with their learning and this had an impact on the test results. The teachers' assessments matched the results accurately. School documentation shows good achievement.
5. Standards at the end of Year 6 remain stubbornly below average because, within this year group of nine, a large number of pupils, in particular boys, have significant special educational needs in English and mathematics. Standards in Year 5 are higher. They are at least average, and for a large group of pupils above average. The school did not perform well in the national tests for Year 6 in 2002, and results were well below average in English. Results in mathematics and science were low and in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally. The performance of boys and girls was similar. While results declined since 2001, some variations year-on year occur because of the different levels of pupils' attainment and the small year groups. However, there was a decline in standards in the two previous years. Consequently, results were not rising at the same rate as other schools. Nearly half of the year group had special educational needs and this affected their results.
6. The school's analysis of the test results reveals that several pupils did not have the confidence to attempt some of the questions in the mathematics paper or had misunderstood what they had to do. The target set by the school for 2002 was very challenging and was not met in English or mathematics. The local education authority recognised the need to revise the targets for 2003 because of the attainment of the pupils. These targets remain challenging but are more realistic. The data maintained by the school show that pupils have achieved well over the last year within in the Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 class. The main reasons for this are improved teaching and organisation of the pupils into smaller teaching groups enabling work to be targeted at the pupils' ages and levels of attainment.
7. As a result of the teachers' consistent and successful effort to improve teaching and learning in English, all groups of pupils' achievement is good. The basic skills of literacy are generally taught well. Skilful questioning promotes achievement in speaking and listening and standards are average at the end of Year 2. Good achievement in Years 3 to 6 means that the majority of pupils in Year 6 are speaking in Standard English and adapt their talk for different purposes. However, there are weaknesses in reading, pupils in Year 1 do not know the sounds letters

make and are not developing strategies to help them read quickly enough. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to link the sounds of letters to read unknown words or to check the words using the meaning of the sentence. Good teaching and regular practise of skills means that achievement is good from Year 3 to Year 6, although standards are uneven. By the end of Year 6, a group of boys are not interested in reading but the school is successfully boosting their confidence and attainment. Higher attaining pupils read very well and freely discuss authors and the characters in books. Achievement in writing is good. Standards are rising because of the very good teaching. Pupils use increasingly interesting language to explain their ideas. Spelling is generally accurate and improving because pupils practise regularly in Years 2 to 6. There are good examples where pupils' consolidate their writing skills in other subjects but more work needs to be done in science. However, handwriting is weak in Years 1 and 2 because too few pupils are joining letters and this hinders their progress. By the end of Year 6, pupils are developing a fluent, joined style.

8. Standards in mathematics are below average by the end of Year 6, but vary widely from above average to low. The low attainment of a significant number of pupils with special educational needs lowers standards overall. However, achievement is good because teaching is good. By the end of Year 2, standards are average and most pupils understand place value and can identify the highest and lowest value from a three-digit number. They recognise and use addition and subtraction to solve simple problems and are gaining confidence in using measures such as centimetres and grams and kilograms. By the end of Year 6, the gap between the low attaining and high attaining pupils widens. Achievement remains good, particularly for high attaining pupils who can undertake inverse operations, understand equivalent fractions and apply their knowledge effectively when solving number problems. Lower attaining pupils are less secure in their understanding of place value and correct notation, for example when adding centimetres to metres. They are well supported. Although they are slower at learning whether to use addition or multiplication to solve a problem, records show that their achievement is good and their self confidence in mathematics is increasing.
9. Standards in science are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement is satisfactory. However, there are wide variations in attainment. Pupils are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of science by the end of Year 6. This is the result of good teaching from a specialist teacher and pupils' achievement is good in the more practical aspects of the subject. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the effect of heating and cooling a range of materials and record their investigations in a range of ways. They are developing a good understanding of the need for a test to be fair. By the end of Year 6, pupils know how to calibrate spring balances, using string and elastic bands and understand the need for accurate measurement and can record and interpret their findings accurately. They know that liquids and solids can be separated by filtration and evaporation and know how to make a test fair, limiting the number of variables and re-testing to check their findings.
10. The school is currently developing information and communication technology. Standards are average in the aspects of the subject covered. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average and the new programmes of work are enabling pupils to become confident at organising text and changing the size and colour of fonts. The limitations of the current equipment and the fact that the new programmes of work have not yet completed a full cycle mean that standards at the end of Year 6 are below average overall. However, pupils' skills in word processing are good and they

use computers effectively to support their learning in several other subjects. They can download information from the Internet and import pictures into their topics about the Second World War and the Ancient Egyptians for example. They lack experience of framing questions when interrogating information, using sensors and data presentation using spreadsheets and line graphs. Their achievement in the full range of technology is inhibited by a lack of suitable resources, but appropriate plans are in place to update resources by the end of the current financial year.

11. Standards in history are above average at the end of Year 6 and average at the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve well and have a good understanding of the different periods in history. Very good teaching fires the pupils' interest, and by the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the impact different periods of history have on our society today. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about standards in physical education by the end of Year 6, although most pupils become competent swimmers and achieve good standards in a range of games and athletics. By the end of Year 2, standards in dance are above average and achievement is good. Very good teaching helps pupils make imaginative responses to music and evaluate each other's work sensibly, which leads to modification of the previous sequences. Standards and achievement are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in art and design, design and technology, and geography. Standards and achievement in music are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 but it is not possible to make a judgement about standards at the end of Year 6 because of the limitations of the timing of the inspection.
12. Standards are similar to those identified by the previous inspection, although achievement has improved overall. There is a decline in standards in English and mathematics but this situation is improving. Improvement is satisfactory overall but the weaknesses in handwriting and spelling remain in Years 1 and 2. Standards have improved in science. There appears to be a decline in standards in information and communication technology. This is because of the changing demands of the curriculum and the limitations of the computers and other technology.
13. The recent changes to staff in the school mean that systems for tracking achievement are new. The headteacher and teachers carefully analyse results of tests and assessments in relation to the levels the pupils' attain, and special educational needs. While the school is working hard to support the pupils' with special educational needs, external specialist support is required because of the high levels of need some pupils have. The results of both boys and girls are carefully tracked particularly where there are more boys than girls in the year groups. After boosting the boys' confidence and attainment, the school is now ensuring that the quieter girls are achieving as well as they should. Test papers are now examined but there is limited evidence of analysis of test papers and the use of the information from previous years to examine trends in what pupils are getting wrong. Information is used to set targets for individual pupils and these are discussed and agreed with parents. In addition, the information is used to put pupils into teaching groups that will enable work to be targeted at their needs and to agree to more intensive support to raise attainment. Local and national data are now being used effectively to track achievement and make realistic predictions about possible levels of attainment. This leads to appropriately challenging targets and the governors, teachers and learning support assistants have a good idea about what has to be done to raise standards. Significant improvements have been made in the past year. The school is now well placed to make further improvements.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good. They are significant strengths of the school. Some of the strengths identified by the previous inspection have been enhanced, which marks a good improvement. The pupils have very positive attitudes, and they are highly enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoy school. This starts in the reception class, where children are content to leave their parents at the start of the day, including those who had only been in the school a couple of weeks at the time of the inspection. Children in the Reception Year work and play happily and are confident talking in front of adults, because they are encouraged to talk about what they are doing. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are proud of their school and are very willing to talk about their experiences of school life. A large number of pupils take advantage of what the school offers, including the very good range of extra curricular activities. For example, twenty-four pupils were seen attending the after school Chess Club, a large number in a small school. Pupils are proud of their work. Those producing decorated tiles on a local theme were keen to show what they had achieved with the school's artist in residence. Pupils are confident in lessons and most contribute effectively to discussions or answer questions posed by the teacher. A few older boys do not show enthusiasm, and teachers have to work hard to motivate them to respond to challenges.
15. The behaviour of all groups of pupils is very good, and praised by parents, teachers and other adults who work with them. Pupils usually meet the school's high expectations, helping them to learn effectively. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour in classrooms or the playground. There have not been any pupil exclusions in the last year. Incidents of bullying or serious teasing are rare. Pupils are polite and courteous and understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Their very good behaviour is promoted in the respectful ways teachers treat the pupils. Pupils look after their environment well and there is no litter.
16. Relationships in the school are excellent and this inspires confidence, enabling pupils to develop well personally. The school operates a very caring family community, and this is reflected in these exemplary relationships which exist between all members of the community. Pupils enjoy working and playing together. They are confident to ask for support and guidance when they need it because teachers value the contributions they make. This has a positive effect on their attainment. When working in pairs or in groups, they co-operate well, respecting each other's point of view.
17. Pupils show respect for each other and for the values and beliefs of others including religious beliefs and practices. For example, they talked sensitively about Judaism and the problems refugees face in a strange country. They make sensitive responses when discussing differences of colour of skin or the different languages people speak. The pupils respond very well to the Christian ethos, which has a positive impact on their ability to reflect quietly in assembly and discuss the issues raised sensibly. Boys and girls work together happily. Pupils in different years know each other well and older pupils play with younger ones. During the lunchtimes, older pupils, nominated as play leaders, automatically help younger pupils organise their games. This creates a friendly atmosphere. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities given for them to take initiative and personal responsibility. For example, the way they organise the School Council is very impressive. This has a real impact on the way the school is run. Their care for the environment and understanding of how they save the world's natural resources has led to an 'Eco-Schools' Award'. Playground leaders showed considerable maturity. Older pupils

patiently help younger pupils read. They clear the dining hall sensibly and contribute effectively to the school's conservation efforts, which they do with considerable enthusiasm. In lessons, pupils carry out jobs willingly.

18. Attendance is currently well above the national average for a school of this type, although the figures for last year dipped badly because of problems caused locally by the foot and mouth crisis. Unauthorised absences are very few in number and pupils arrive at school punctually, subject only to delays to the school buses.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19. The quality of teaching is good overall, and pupils learn effectively. Teaching was satisfactory or better in almost all the lessons observed, good or better in eight out of ten and very good in four out of ten. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good in science and very good in Years 3 to 6. Teaching in the Years 4, 5 and 6 class is one of the school's strengths. Rapid improvements have been made in the last year and this is helping to raise standards and improve achievement.
20. Teaching is satisfactory in the Reception Year and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. There are strengths in the way the children's language and mathematical understanding are developed, and in the range of innovative activities planned to inspire children to talk and ask questions. Another strength is the way children are helped to settle into school, helping them to be confident to learn new things. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory and in numeracy it is good. However, there are too few regular opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills. There are times when imaginative role-play and other play activities lack structure, and achievement slows when activities are not sufficiently linked to the Steps to Learning for the Early Learning Goals for the end of the Reception Year.
21. Teaching is good in the Years 2 and 3 class and sometime very good. Teaching is particularly good in the Years 4, 5 and 6 class and the needs of the different ages and levels of attainment in the class are met very well by the teachers who share responsibility for their learning. As a result, the different groups of pupils achieve well as they move thorough the school and their skills, knowledge and understanding are systematically developed as they move from Year 3 to 6.
22. Teaching is very good in English and history and good in mathematics, science, design and technology and music. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are generally taught well, enabling most pupils to practise their reading, writing and number skills. In Year 1, however, such opportunities were not regular and pupils were not as confident at recognising the sounds of letters when reading and the shapes of letters when writing as they should be. Literacy and numeracy are developed well in other subjects. There are several examples of pupils' writing reports in history and geography and using number in science and design and technology, carefully measuring and calculating. More could be done to link the skills of report writing to their work in science. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching English and mathematics, capturing the pupils' interest, and helping them to work hard. Too few lessons were planned to take place in the two days of the inspection in some subjects. However, the work seen indicates that teaching is satisfactory in art and design, geography, information and communication technology and very good in physical education. The pupils benefit greatly from working with an artist in residence. The quality of the pottery they are making is very good and pupils are proud of their efforts.



23. Teaching meets the needs of most pupils well, whatever their attainment, special educational needs, social background or gender. This has a positive impact on learning and their interest in the work they undertake. Pupils with special educational needs are generally taught well. There are particular strengths in their support and teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan lessons well, with good consideration of the wide ranging needs of pupils identified in the Individual Education plans and the objectives set. Good use is made of structured reading and numeracy support in small groups of pupils and the learning support assistants provide sensitive help and teaching. They work closely with teachers and follow lessons effectively. Teachers work hard to provide challenge to keep gifted writers and mathematicians enthusiastic and motivated. Successful opportunities are provided for pupils of the same age and level of attainment to work together and this is very good use of teachers' expertise.
24. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach pupils of these age groups. This helps them to produce innovative activities to broaden out the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. A good example of this was in a history lesson in the Year 2 and 3 class, when the teacher helped the pupils think like archaeologists and dig for treasure in the sand. The pupils were captivated by the lesson that skilfully built upon their skills and knowledge. In another history lesson the teacher used drama as a tool for helping pupils understand the social structure of life in ancient Egypt. The pupils concentrated hard on what each other had to say and worked very hard throughout the lesson. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There have been considerable improvements to the teachers' knowledge in information and communication technology through recent training. This has developed their confidence in their own use of information and communication technology, for example, in downloading information from the Internet that they can use in lessons. They are committed to improving the provision and extending the use of information and communication technology to other subjects.
25. Lesson planning has improved throughout the school, but needs further work to use the specific steps to learning more in the Reception Year rather than the Early learning Goals. In the best lessons, teachers share the objectives with the pupils, helping them to have a clear understanding of what they are going to learn. Teachers use a broad range of very effective methods and interesting activities to keep pupils motivated and engaged in what they are doing. As a result, pupils work hard. A good example of this was in a literacy lesson in Year 1 where pupils were changing the words to familiar nursery rhymes. The pupils were excited by their use of language and the teacher provided a good model of writing for them. In a science lesson in Years 5 and 6 pupils were captivated by an investigation about friction. They measured, in Newtons, using their own spring balances that they had calibrated.
26. Teachers ask well-timed and probing questions, and intervene in pupils' learning just at the right time to help them correct misconceptions and extend their knowledge and understanding. This very good use of questioning helps the pupils think, and helps them to formulate their own questions as well as provide answers to help teachers to understand what they have learned. For example, in a personal and social education lesson the teacher used drama to help pupils think about respect for others. High level questioning challenged the pupils' preconceived ideas. The teacher very skilfully used pupils' ideas building activities on the comments they made following the imaginative role play they constructed.

27. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent and inspire trust that helps the pupils to have confidence to learn new things. Teachers manage pupils very well and this helps them produce a good amount of work at a good pace. They have high expectations of behaviour and learning and they expect to be listened to. Teachers and learning support assistants value the pupils' work and the contributions they make in discussion. Pupils are keen to have a go at challenging tasks. A good example of this was in a literacy lesson in Year 5 and 6, where higher attaining pupils were studying Rudyard Kipling's Poem 'If' as part of a study on different types of poetry. The teacher helped the pupils to be confident in their knowledge about poetry, and supported them very effectively and sensitively as they grappled with the meaning of this complex poem. They struggled hard and eventually with encouragement and praise, were able to write their own poems around the same theme. They were delighted with their success.
28. Learning support assistants are very effective in their support of teachers and pupils. They fulfil a range of functions and are well respected by the pupils who enjoy working with them. Excellent relationships between the learning support assistants and the children promote confidence in their learning. Communication between staff is very good and this helps their work to be consistently good. They use their specific skills to good effect in information and communication technology and art for example. They work well as a team with the teachers.
29. The few shortcomings in teaching are related to an unsystematic approach to the teaching and learning of strategies for reading and writing in Reception and Year 1. Too little time was spent on reinforcing the children's knowledge of letters. Sometimes activities for children in the reception year are not sufficiently structured and they are not guided enough about what tasks they need to undertake and what they can choose for themselves.
30. Teachers carefully assess pupils' learning and know what they need to learn next. There are examples of effective marking and in some books pupils comment on the marking noting how they will improve their work. Marking is more consistent, and has improved since the previous inspection. Homework is used effectively to support the pupils' learning in lessons. The school suffered from a period of instability when there were several changes of teacher, which compromised improvement. Currently, teaching is continually improving because teachers evaluate their strengths and weaknesses through the analysis of pupils work and discussion and targets set with the headteacher. The teaching team work effectively together maximising their wide ranging strengths and expertise to enable pupils to learn new things in imaginative ways.

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

31. The school provides a good range of curricular and other learning opportunities and prepares the pupils well for the next stages of learning. This is because an appropriate curriculum is in place that is suitably broad and balanced. The statutory curriculum is in place including provision for a daily act of worship. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. This is a similar judgement to the judgement made at the previous inspection. There are now appropriate policies and schemes for all subjects and for the Foundation Stage curriculum for the children in the Reception. All the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum are covered and the school is working towards the

Early Learning Goals. However, some of the planning for activities do not always relate closely enough to the smaller steps to learning.

32. Suitable time is allocated to each subject area in keeping with the school's particular focus on improving pupils' literacy skills, especially writing. Planning is good. The strong emphasis on English and mathematics is helping pupils' to learn. The current two- and four-year programmes of topics provide an appropriate focus for teaching subjects and successful links between subjects in Years 1 to 6. The cycle is at its end and the curriculum is due for review and updating at the end of the school year.
33. The curriculum is appropriately broad. Teachers work very well together as a team to ensure effective continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Improved planning enables pupils to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. More could be done to enable writing skills to be applied to work in science. Teachers share their expertise in subject areas, such as music and physical education and work very well as small teams, enhancing learning and the curriculum. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are generally good, although the approach to teaching pupils about letters for reading and writing in Year 1 is not always as systematic as it could be. The use of information and communication technology, to support learning, is developing well because of the teachers enhanced subject knowledge. They make a concerted effort to include information and communication technology in English and mathematics and pupils use the Internet to research information for history and geography. There are limitations to this due to the inadequacies of the computers and other technological resources, which will be rectified as part of the current school improvement plan.
34. Considering the size of the school, the curriculum is very well supported by extra curricular activities. Sporting activities are a particular strength and very good use is made of grant funding to promote inclusion for all in a wide range of sports. Parents undertake football training. The school choir and guitar club are well attended and potential musicians can also avail themselves of tuition from a local music specialist. A thriving chess club meets regularly and the covered play area is well used for playground chess and draughts games. All pupils choose a book each term from the visiting mobile library encouraging good cooperation between home and school, encouraging pupils to read. Residential visits with other schools enhance the pupils' personal development and confidence being away from home. A very good range of visits are undertaken both locally and further a-field to support the pupils' learning. Very good use is made of visitors from the local community who share their expertise and experiences with the pupils. For example, pupils have interviewed villagers about the War and children that were evacuated from Plymouth and London. The chair of governors has shared his unique knowledge about wood glass with pupils. The school is proud of its links with the Coldstream Guards and pupils thoroughly enjoy meeting new and old soldiers
35. The school's involvement with other local schools is good. Joint events and visits enable the pupils to work with others in neighbouring schools. Sporting events are well supported and regular events enhance the pupils' learning. Teachers from the schools work together in joint training events. Children from the village pre-school group visit the school to help them prepare for their entry to school. Very good links are maintained when they join their teacher and return back to the pre-school group to share their experiences. These visits help pupils be confident and settle very well to their new school.

36. The development and use of the school grounds plays a significant part in enhancing the curriculum and learning opportunities. Playgrounds are well marked for a range of play activities suited to the age and stage of the pupils. Much thought and development has been put into the environmental area, which contributes to the pupils' learning in science, art, design and technology and physical education experiences. It also provides a basis for surveys, investigations, the collection and use of data and a range of literacy work. This work was given a national award.
37. All teaching and non-teaching staff work hard to make sure that all boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum. As a result, the provision for all groups of pupils is good and they achieve well. Careful planning ensures that whatever the pupils' attainment they are fully involved in all activities. High attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Gifted mathematicians and pupils with significant skills in writing or music have opportunities to work with older pupils.
38. Overall, provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. A governors' working party is contributing to the development of this programme of work. Regular group work called 'circle time' provides good opportunities for responding to personal issues as they arise. Suitable provision is made within the programme for sex education in keeping with the requirements of the Diocese. Appropriate attention is given to issues of the misuse of drugs and personal safety. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities as the progress through the school. A 'Playground Leaders' scheme effectively encourages pupils to take responsibility for organising play and the very good equipment provided. They are well trained and very serious about their responsibilities. The 'Eco School Council' significantly promotes pupil involvement and responsibility and contributes much to their developing citizenship. They are conscious of conservation and have a good understanding of how they can protect their local environment and the world resources.
39. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall. Early identification, appropriate support from learning support assistants and setting initial individual education plans with suitable learning targets are clear strengths of the provision. Teachers plan lessons well with good consideration of pupils' individual needs through learning objectives that match pupils' targets. Good use is made of structured reading and numeracy support for small groups of pupils. There is good initial compliance to the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. Termly reviews are well maintained and parents fully informed. Pupils with continuing needs are appropriately referred to external agencies for further assessment, for example by an educational psychologist. However, in the main this does not lead to additional support being provided or to further investigation of their particular learning difficulties. As a consequence, some pupils with special educational needs have been receiving School Action for several years. Despite having significantly low levels of attainment, they do not receive any additional specialist support or sufficient investigation into their special needs or particular learning difficulties.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and a strong feature of school life. These judgements are the same as those made at the previous inspection. The provision for spiritual development is very good. The strong Christian ethos permeates the school. Relationships are very good and result in pupils developing self awareness and respect and understanding of the needs of others. This is evident in the way pupils support and help each other, work together and celebrate achievements, both at play and during lessons. The school's

environmental area is very well used and pupils have a sense of pride and ownership and value the opportunities to observe wildlife from the hide. They have very positive and caring attitudes to the environment, understand and respect living things, and have a keen interest in and appreciation of, the natural world. A sense of wonder is effectively nurtured through poetry. The poem 'The Highwayman' captured the imagination of pupils in Year 4, and inspired their use of language.

41. The school makes very good provision for moral development. Daily routines are well established, and the school operates in a calm, ordered environment with every child knowing what is expected of them. Pupils are successfully helped to know right from wrong, by the consistent way the very few rules are applied. Adults provide very good role-models in their relationships with pupils and each other. A strong sense of honesty and fair play is evident throughout the school. Good opportunities are taken to discuss issues of right and wrong, for example, during a study of life and times in ancient Egypt.
42. The provision for pupils' social development is also very good. It is enhanced by good involvement with pupils from other schools through the co-ordinated physical education programmes arranged as part of the Schools Sports Co-ordinator Scheme, which promotes inclusion and active playtimes. Very good links are in place to enable pupils to be confident at times of transition. The annual residential camp, provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their social circle. Many opportunities are planned for pupils to take responsibility, for example helping young children to read, helping at lunchtime and in the play ground. Collaboration between pupils in lessons across the range of subjects is effectively encouraged. This helps pupils to develop good skills in working together to solve problems or be part of a team.
43. The provision for cultural development is good. Good contributions to pupils' cultural development are evident in topics and in religious education when they learn about a range of religious festivals, foods and customs. For example, a topic on India involved clothes, food and customs and pupils learned dance routines to Indian music and performed to an audience of parents. The 'Artists in Residence' scheme enhances pupils' understanding and appreciation of art but there is insufficient attention to the work of famous artists. A wide range of music is used strategically to enable pupils to appreciate its different forms. The school works hard to broaden the pupils' experiences from this small rural area. Trips and visits to places of interest enhance their understanding of other places. In the Reception and Year 1 class pupils enjoyed finding out about India and the area where one child's father was working on an oil rig. The school has a clear policy to confront and combat racism, which promotes a respect for other cultures. However, more could be done to help pupils understanding about other cultures and traditions represented in other parts of Britain.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

44. The school cares well for its pupils and places particular emphasis on pupils' social and personal development. The good standards of care have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school forms a strong community, which does not just function through formal rules. Almost all parents state that their children are happy and enjoy school. They rightly believe that the school is effective in helping their children to become mature and responsible.

45. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can feel safe and valued. All staff make considerable efforts to look after the welfare of individual pupils when they need it; both parents and pupils appreciate this. Responsibility for child protection lies with the headteacher who ensures that local procedures are followed. Adults in the school are reminded of their responsibilities. There is good provision within the programme for personal and social education to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own safety. Support from the staff enables pupils to feel secure and valued and to concentrate on their learning, thus helping them to achieve well. The governors, headteacher and staff are active in ensuring that health and safety procedures are in place and followed. Assessments of risk are carried out. The school provides a safe environment.
46. All teachers are active in the pastoral care of their pupils. Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils well and successfully meet their individual needs. Children are introduced to the school very sensitively for the first time. They meet their teacher at home and in the pre-school group. Then they make weekly visits to the Reception and Year 1 class. This is very good and helps pupils be confident and secure. Teaching and non-teaching staff are effective in supporting pupils when they need it. The very good relationships mean that pupils have caring adults to whom they can turn if they are experiencing difficulties. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good, although because of the size of the school, it is largely informal.
47. The school has good procedures for monitoring attendance and they encourage pupils to come to school regularly. There are systems in place to identify problems with attendance as they emerge, although the strong support for the school from parents means that these are not often needed. There is very rarely a need to involve the Educational Welfare Officer in problem cases.
48. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils know what is expected of them and conform. This expectation and ethos is strong and is established right from the early years; it permeates the school. There are clear boundaries of what behaviour is acceptable, although unusually, there are no specific school rules. Rather, there are two key principles expressed in the Behaviour & Discipline Policy, that the school expects children to treat others as they would wish to be treated, and that no child should disrupt the academic or social life of others. Clearly this works well but should the school ever be faced with a major problem, then this vagueness could make it hard, for example, to exclude a pupil. All staff, including teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors, are constantly reinforcing the school's expectations. The standards of behaviour achieved owe much to the staff's relationships with pupils and their personal effectiveness. The policy against bullying is a rather vague. However, in practice the school's approach to eliminating oppressive behaviour is effective, based on establishing a climate for behaviour that emphasises positive relationships. Bullying is dealt with quickly and efficiently.
49. The school has satisfactory systems for assessing attainment and achievement. A common approach to assessment of progress is a current priority for development. Staff are reviewing pupils' work together and planning assessment opportunities in each subject through lesson plans. Good, clear learning objectives are set for pupils of different levels of attainment. Teachers have their own methods to enable them to assess pupils' attainment and progress. For example, some use ongoing assessment by annotating lesson plans, others use an ongoing record against a list

of learning targets with coded marking to show pupils' level or degree of achievement. Both methods are used effectively in planning subsequent lessons in response to learning outcomes but a common agreed process is to be developed to aid continuity from class to class.

50. On-going assessments are appropriately used to maintain each pupil's record of progress in the National Curriculum at the end of modules of work. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked with in numeracy and literacy. Recent use of a computerised system is enabling data to be used to compare the attainment and progress of boys and girls and pupils of different levels of attainment. This data also helps identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching as well as monitoring the progress of individual pupils and enabling appropriate support as required. The results of the national tests are carefully analysed and the information used to set targets for improvement. Information from assessment is used well to develop the curriculum. However, assessment information is not supported by the use of tests such as standardised reading tests to provide more detailed information that could be used to monitor progress more closely. As a consequence, the school does not have sufficient diagnostic information on the learning needs of lower attaining pupils to help them develop individual teaching programmes that will meet their needs more effectively. This has a negative impact on the standards they can attain.
51. A good development in supporting pupils' progress is the active involvement of the pupils in self-assessment. Pupils are 'tutored' to compare what they can do now with their previous personal and educational achievements and reset new targets for themselves. They receive good recognition and motivation through the use of 'Reach for the Stars' certificates (Sharing Targets And Raising Standards) resulting in effective target setting and good monitoring and evaluation of progress.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52. The school has established a very good partnership with parents and enjoys the respect of all groups within the community. This marks an improvement since the previous inspection. Almost all parents were very positive about all aspects of the school. Parents believe that their children like school, that the teaching is good and that their children work hard and make good progress. They endorse the standards of behaviour and think the school helps children to become mature and responsible. They think the school is well led and managed. Parents see themselves as part of the school community and they support it. Parents' views of the school are excellent and it clearly enjoys their confidence.
53. The overall quality of information for parents is very good. The school works hard to maintain contact with its parents, many of whom live a considerable distance in remote villages and farms. There is an excellent weekly newsletter, which provides information, news and comment to help bind the geographically spread parent community together. It provides the genuine flavour of the school. The prospectus and annual governors' report to parents both meet legal requirements, thus meeting a key issue raised at the time of the last inspection of the school.
54. The annual reports on progress for foundation stage children are good, with paragraphs on the six early learning goals that are personal to the child and which give parents a real picture of their child's progress. In Years 1 to 6, the reports to parents on their child's progress are satisfactory. Teachers' comments vary in quality. Information on specific subjects is often limited and occasionally unnecessarily confusing. Parents need a clear picture of how their children are performing and reports should be consistent in quality. However, the school

provides very good information in other ways. At the start of each term there is a meeting to brief parents on what will be taught, there are target-setting meetings, and there are two formal meetings a year when progress is discussed with parents. The school emphasises that teachers are available to talk to parents as any issues arise. Parents are regularly consulted before decisions are made, for example their views were being sought on the proposed extension of the school at the time of the inspection.

55. The contribution of parents to the school and their children's learning is good. Most support their children's homework. A number come into school to help in class. Others help in gardening working parties, for example. One parent has made a major contribution through the erection of a wonderful thatched shelter in the playground. Parents help on school trips, provide transport for sporting fixtures, and help supervise swimming sessions. The Friends of the Clinton School are active in organising social and fundraising events. Most parents have signed the Home School Agreement although because the relationship was so good already, its impact has been minimal. This strong relationship is encouraged right from the start, with the reception teacher carrying out home visits before children join the school so that she can meet them in their own environment. It continues into the reception class, where parents bringing their children to school in the morning are encouraged to remain for a few minutes to share a book with them.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

56. Overall leadership and management are good and have a positive impact on standards, the quality of teaching and school improvement. The good management identified by the previous inspection was compromised by the many challenges that the school faced related to changes of staff and temporary appointments, the impact of the Foot and Mouth epidemic, which caused significant distress in the community and the retirement of the headteacher. While policies were in place, systems were as well developed as they should have been and improvements to standards and teaching in Years 3 to 6 were compromised. Following the retirement of the headteacher and a successful period of acting headship, the new headteacher took over the substantive headship at the beginning of 2002. She quickly gained the confidence of the governors, parents, pupils, and the local authority. All teachers are new, with the exception of one full-time and one part-time teacher. The new teaching team is effective and the pace of change has become more rapid. The leadership now ensures a clear educational direction for school improvement and the problems of the past have been resolved. This is beginning to have an impact on pupils' attainment and achievement.
57. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. She provides clear and positive leadership. She is committed to raising standards and improving teaching and learning within a well-organised school. The strong emphasis on raising standards in English and mathematics has led to the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This is largely due to the support of the headteacher and the local education authority. In addition, the governors, headteacher and staff work effectively together for the good of the pupils. They know what has to be done to improve because the leadership inspires involvement and commitment and uses the skills and talents of all involved to the full. The governors and teachers are fully involved in decision making and evaluation.
58. There is a strong sense of teamwork. This small teaching team has a determined commitment to succeed and morale is high. This means that there is a strong and



positive ethos. The aims are strongly reflected in the life of the school. The contributions made by all groups of pupils whatever their gender, social background and level of attainment are valued and their achievements are celebrated. This has a significant impact on the very good standard of behaviour.

59. The governing body is effective and fulfils its responsibilities well. The chair is a regular and popular visitor to the school. The governors are very supportive and through a regular and more focussed pattern of visits, classroom observation and examination of pupils' work they gain insights into the organisation of the school. In addition, from discussion with subject co-ordinators, governors are beginning to know the challenges facing the school and its strengths and weaknesses well.
60. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory and ensures that pupils are well supported in lessons, on their own, and in withdrawal groups and that most of the requirements of the Code of Practice for special needs are met. There are several pupils being supported by the school that have wide-ranging and significant needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator carefully monitors the pupils' individual education plans with the headteacher, ensuring that work is appropriately matched to their individual needs. Pupils receive general and successful support which helps them achieve well. However, there are gaps in the diagnostic assessment procedures and the support the school obtains from outside agencies. No pupils are receiving school action plus support. This slows the achievement of a significant group of pupils in Years 4 to 6, who have very low attainment. The school does not receive additional specialist support to plan programmes of work that will enable these pupils to succeed. This is a weakness in the provision. The role of the special needs co-ordinator could be strengthened enabling her to seek guidance about diagnostic testing and assessment that could be used to make more specific judgements about the pupils' needs.
61. The small teaching team has a satisfactory range of responsibilities as they are settling into their new teaching roles. The headteacher is enabling teachers to use their specific strengths well. Each teacher has a new job description as a framework to their areas of responsibility. The development of several subjects is undertaken corporately, which is appropriate in a school of this size. Leadership and management are very good in English and mathematics, good in science, art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, music and physical education and satisfactory in geography. However, the headteacher has too many key responsibilities, in addition to her management role. While she is beginning to delegate responsibilities to others, more could be delegated to individual or pairs of teachers.
62. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is developing well and is building on the good practice identified by the previous inspection. Systems are now being rigorously used to analyse local and national data through joint evaluation of work in subjects from Reception to Year 6. The current priorities are, very appropriately, to raise standards in literacy, in particular writing, numeracy and information and communication technology. The information from the analysis of performance data is used to modify the curriculum and to set appropriately challenging targets for individual pupils, teachers and the school as a whole. A good example of this was the discovery of weak writing and the boys' lack of interest in reading. This has led to changes in the way writing is taught, a review of books and purchase of books specifically of interest to the boys. The whole staff group monitors planning and pupils' work. The headteacher monitors and evaluates teaching and learning through observation but this is at an early stage of development. Teachers do not have much time available to visit each other's classrooms. Information from evaluation successfully informs the well-constructed

school improvement plan. The current plan is an effective tool for development and change.

63. The school has an adequate number of well-trained teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The teachers' knowledge and understanding is used well and their individual skills and subject expertise enhance the pupils' achievement. The induction of teachers new to the school is good and they are well supported, enabling them to be effective right from the start. Good use of is made of relief teachers and a visiting specialist for art to provide and share additional subject specialism. Good arrangements are made for the continued professional development of teachers. Training is identified as part of performance management and by the priorities in the school improvement plan. It is undertaken within the school, and a group of local schools, covering a broad range of subjects. Support staff are well briefed by teachers and they work well in each class. Some are gaining significant expertise through effective training programmes, such as a Certificate of Higher Education, including special educational needs that enhance their skills.
64. Overall the accommodation is satisfactory but there are weaknesses. Classrooms are of suitable size and well-organized to create effective learning environments. However, the multi-purpose school hall is often used as an additional classroom to provide much needed space for teaching in Years 4 to 6. As a consequence, the school makes use of the adjacent village hall for indoor physical education sessions. This is a weakness. The staff room and office are small and cramped. There are no facilities for disabled people and limited access for wheelchair users. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken to investigate how the accommodation may be improved and extended. The library is small but well organised.
65. Resources for learning are adequate, and generally well managed and maintained. There is a suitable quantity and quality resources for most subject areas and resources for physical education, history, music and English are good. Resources for information and communication technology are satisfactory, and they are used appropriately for pupils to have access to a good range of computer software and the Internet. However, further investment is appropriately planned to update the provision, enabling the full range of elements to information and communication technology to be taught. The school grounds are excellent and have been developed very well. They provide a major resource that is being increasingly used to give pupils interesting and meaningful experiences in many curriculum areas.
66. The school is effective and efficient at using the budget to raise standards and enhance the learning of the pupils. Good use is made of strategic resources. Special grants are well used to boost achievement and improve the quality of education for the pupils. For example, special grants for enhancing the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are effectively used, and enable the pupils to practise and enhance their learning. The governors supplement the grant for special educational needs to provide additional learning support to meet children's identified needs. Funds to improve teachers' skills are well used. For example, the small grant for training teachers in the use of information and communication technology and updating their subject knowledge has enhanced teachers' confidence to provide teaching materials as well as the pupils' achievements. This places the school in a strong position for further improvement in this area. Educational priorities are effectively supported through efficient financial planning carefully linked to school improvement.

67. Financial planning and budgetary controls have improved and are satisfactory. The recent local authority audit was complimentary. Appropriate systems are in place to enable the governors' finance committee to be well informed about spending, enabling future planning to be efficient. The current above average surplus is due to an unexpected increase in the number of pupils on roll, additional funding for special projects and unexpected savings made on the staffing budget including the change of headship. It is appropriately used to maintain staffing and ensure that the headteacher does not have a class. It will be significantly reduced over the next two years. New technology is used well to manage the budget, communicate with neighbouring schools and the local authority, and research information that teachers use in lessons. Further plans are appropriately in place to use technology to monitor results and assessments.
68. Effective systems are in place to ensure that the governors appropriately apply principles of management to ensure that they get best value. The headteacher and staff analyse results and track individual pupils' achievements in comparison with previous performance. Comparisons with similar schools are complex because of the small numbers in each year group, but the school is making comparisons with schools locally and nationally. Groups of parents and individuals are consulted formally and informally about issues related to school improvement and development. A good example of this the recent consultation about the possible improvements to the building. Parents' views were sought at a presentation meeting and informally when they look at the plans in the school. Parents were consulted about homework and school uniform and the home and school agreement is in place. The school council contains representatives from each year group who meet regularly, with an agenda and who take their role as representatives for the pupils very seriously. The pupils are consulted formally through the school council and informally within their classes. They have had a major impact on the design of the play area and the 'Eco' environment around the school. The governors are careful to seek best value with major and minor building works and developments or the appointment of staff.
69. Administrative procedures are efficient and minimise bureaucracy. The school administrator supports the headteacher well. The school is well organised to enable the teachers to concentrate their efforts on the pupils, and the headteacher to manage her complex role as teacher and manager. Standards are improving, and the quality of education is good. Pupils' enjoy school and their behaviour is very good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

70. To improve the effectiveness of the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) Raise standards in English, particularly writing, and mathematics by:
- i) implementing the planned improvements;
  - ii) ensuring that pupils learn the sounds of letters regularly and systematically in the Reception and Year 1 class;
  - iii) ensuring that handwriting and presentation improve in Years 1 and 2 and that pupils learn to join letters as early as possible.
  - iv) getting specialist help for the very low attaining pupils in mathematics.

(Paragraphs: 1-8, 20, 22, 29, 33, 40, 77-78, 85-93, 97-100 and 107)

- (2) Raise standards in information and communication technology by:
- i) implementing the planned improvements;
  - ii) ensuring that information and communication technology forms part of planning to support all subjects including science and design and technology;
  - iii) ensuring that pupils have equipment and resources to cover the full range of the information and communication technology curriculum as well as word processing.

(Paragraphs: 10, 24, 33, 66, 80, 107-108 and 124-128)

- (3) Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs by
- i) introducing diagnostic tests in addition to other assessment procedures;
  - ii) ensuring that the school gets special advice and support for pupils with very low attainment who have been receiving school action for a long time;
  - iii) strengthening the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator.

(Paragraphs: 5, 7, 23, 39-40, 51, 60, 93 and 97)

The following minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan.

- Improve the structure of activities in the Reception Year (Paragraphs 71, 73 and 83-4);
- Extend assessment procedures to include diagnostic tests or assessments (Paragraphs 49-50 and 94 );
- Ensure consistency in reports to parents about pupils' progress (Paragraph 54 )

## **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

### ***Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection***

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection***

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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Number	0	9	9	3	1	0	0
Percentage	0	41	41	15	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 more than one five percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	84
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs list	0	25

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Sections have been left blank to protect the identity of the pupils because the numbers of boys and girls was below 10	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	6	3	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (45)	56 (45)	78 (64)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (45)	67 (55)	78 (64)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Sections have been left blank because the numbers of boys and girls was below 10	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	8	4	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (67)	33 (58)	67 (75)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (67)	75 (50)	92 (75)
	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	13	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	62	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

### **Financial information**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.25
Average class size	28.33

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Financial year	2002-2003
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	£
Total income	216473
Total expenditure	215240
Expenditure per pupil	2502
Balance brought forward from previous year	22652
Balance carried forward to next year	23879

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

#### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	84
Number of questionnaires returned	22

#### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	27	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	51	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	49	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	63	2	0	2
The teaching is good.	66	32	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	34	5	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	63	27	2	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	80	17	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	37	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	50	8	0	0



### **Other issues raised by parents**

The parents are very supportive of the new headteacher and the staff and feel that standards have improved in the last year. Their children are making good progress and lessons are more interesting.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

71. The provision for children in the Reception Year is satisfactory overall, and there are strengths in the way children are introduced into the class from the local playgroup. Children are admitted to school in September and January, and join a Reception and Year 1 class. Initially the children attend part-time until they are confident to start full time. All the pupils in the Reception Year were full time at the time of the inspection but a small group had only started full time a few days previously. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. The curriculum is now based on the areas for learning of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage and planning is satisfactory. Significant improvements have been made to the outside play area and the range of wheeled toys available to the pupils. However, imaginative role play and other play activities sometimes lack structure. Children's achievement slows when activities are not sufficiently linked to the objectives set by the teacher or the Steps to Learning for the Early Learning Goals.
72. Overall, the attainment on entry is below average but there are wide variations. One or two pupils find it hard to sit and listen, while others show great interest, are learning quickly and their achievement is rapid. Attainment varies significantly from year to year because of the small intake. By the end of the Reception Year most children are achieving well and will exceed the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Nearly all will meet the goals in their mathematical development, and their creative and physical development. Children will not reach all the aspects of the goals for language, literacy and communication related to the sounds of letters and writing.
73. While teaching is satisfactory overall, there are strengths in the way the children's language and mathematical understanding is developed and in the range of innovative activities successfully developed to inspire children to talk, question and seek solutions to problems. Improvement to teaching has been satisfactory since the previous inspection. The teacher has a good understanding of how to teach these young children, and to help them be confident and settle happily into school. The area of personal, social and emotional development is very well established and teaching is good. However, there are times when activities in other areas of learning do not have a structure. Children are not always guided enough about what tasks they need to undertake and which they can choose for themselves. Important learning opportunities are sometimes lost when children play in one area for too long, without the intervention of an adult or have no purpose or structure to their play.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

74. The children in the Reception Year are confident and happy in school because effective teaching means that the classroom rules and organisation are clearly established from the start. The youngest four year olds have settled into the routines of school very confidently, quickly learning what is expected of them. Children work and play enthusiastically with each other and the older children in Year 1. They are happy to demonstrate their achievements. For example, after they had recorded nursery rhymes, they were keen to stand in front of the class and talk about what they had been doing. The teacher and the classroom assistant are careful to encourage children to talk about what they are doing and what they are feeling. They are sensitive to the children's needs, helping them to listen and take turns.
75. Children are constantly encouraged to be confident and share their successes with the rest of the class. Relationships are very good and children respond well to the teacher and the classroom assistant, who value the contributions they make. For example, after the children had made cakes as part of their mathematics work on weighing, they enjoyed icing the cakes. One child new to the reception class confidently offered to try a sample of the chocolate buttons before they were stuck on the cakes. Children are proud of their achievements and are happy to talk to visitors in the school. They take turns and share equipment and have a strong sense of what is fair. Children are generally interested in what they are doing, although sometimes their concentration waivers when they work for too long on their own.
76. Personal and social development is well promoted in all areas of learning, and planning is satisfactory. The teacher and the classroom assistant provide very good role models for the children, always treating them with respect. This is a strong feature of the class and older children in Year 1 are careful to support and encourage younger members of the class. This leads to trusting relationships and helps children develop an awareness of others. However, areas such as the shop and the painting area are often untidy and the children do not always take care to handle equipment carefully or tidy up when they have finished. Children have ample opportunity to choose activities for themselves and take responsibility for registering themselves when they arrive in the morning. They are encouraged to initiate their own ideas through play, although there are not always enough challenging role play activities to make them think and plan. There is a satisfactory range of resources and a good range of artefacts from other cultures such as India for example.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

77. Children's achievement is satisfactory and their language and communication skills are developing well. Most talk freely about their experiences and the things that interest them. Teaching is satisfactory. Children enjoy listening to and using spoken language and are particularly enjoying the current work on nursery rhymes. They are keen to offer suggestions about the rhymes and most speak using phrases or sentences. For example, when one small group were playing with puppets one child said the nursery rhyme of 'Two Little Dickey Birds' but transposed the children's names instead of using Peter and Paul. Most children can recognise and write their names. At the end of the Reception Year the children know that print carries meaning and enjoy reading picture books in the morning. They are beginning to make recognisable letters and simple words. However, they do not have much recall of the sounds letters make and very little time was spent reinforcing their knowledge of letters during the inspection.

78. The teacher has appropriately adapted the National Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of the children but the sounds letters make are not as frequently reinforced through stories and rhymes as they could be. Children are provided with a good range of activities to develop their use of vocabulary but this does not always lead systematically to a language for reading or writing. Consequently, children will not meet all the aspects of the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception Year. The teacher knows the children well and planning is satisfactory but expectations of what children can achieve in reading and writing are sometimes not high enough.

### **Mathematical development**

79. The children know some mathematical language such as 'heavier than' and 'lighter than', and 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'. In one session estimating which was heavier, a large box or a small box, the children were enthralled by the fact that the smaller box was heaviest. They could feel the weights in their hands and put them in order of heaviest to lightest. The youngest four year olds thoroughly enjoyed making cakes and weighing flour, butter and eggs. However, their recall of the previous mathematical events diminished, when they measured out the water to make icing sugar and counted out chocolate buttons to match the cakes they had made. Children can count the numbers in the class and are beginning to write their numbers. They can count the containers of sand they use to fill up a truck. Tasks are practical and capture the children's imagination.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

80. The children enter the Reception Year with a good general knowledge, particularly those who have attended the local pre-school group. The teacher builds effectively on their knowledge, helping them to learn more about the world. Achievement is good and they are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. The children have been studying the forces of push and pull in science. They thoroughly enjoy the interesting activities provided for them such as blowing marbles across the table and making wheeled vehicles to push and pull. The children have been studying life in India and sometimes make reference to the chapattis and poppadoms that a visitor cooked for them. Photographic evidence shows great concentration when children are using the power of the wind or looking through a magnifying glass at the daffodils in the classroom. They have also examined children's clothes from the past to note differences in their own clothes. Good teaching capitalises on the expertise of parents and children were clearly fascinated by identifying countries on a map, including where the oil rig was situated on which one child's father is working. Children are encouraged to write their names on the computer. However, while the computer is available, it is not used regularly to support what children are learning.
81. Planning is satisfactory, and covers a wide range of tasks. Teaching is good and there are strengths in the skilful questioning that helps the children to understand what they have learned. Visitors and visits enhance the curriculum and enable children to learn about the skills, ways of life and beliefs of others. Children are currently studying toys as part of the 'moving along' topic. The toy shop provides an appropriate focus for imaginative play. However, the area is unstructured and does not provide sufficient opportunity for children to be involved in imaginative role-play about the areas about which they are learning.

### **Physical development**

82. Children's achievement is generally satisfactory and they are on course to meet the goals by the end of the year. They participate fully in physical education with years 1, 2 and 3. In one lesson observed the children's physical development was good. The task was challenging and the high expectations of the teachers sharing the lesson helped the children work very and imaginatively. They could run, jump and make jerky movements like toys. The children worked well with a partner. They movements to the music were rhythmic and expressive. Children can move wheeled toys around the new play area with reasonable control and enjoy the challenging toys available. The children's learning in this valuable space and the use of good quality equipment is sometimes reduced because it is not a planned aspect of the provision. Children handle scissors and paint brushes carefully. They can carefully use their fingers to hunt for treasure in the sand. Photographic evidence shows pupils using tools and constructing models, but during the inspection there was not enough opportunity for the children to construct models using small and large construction equipment even though it is available. The new play area is very popular and provides challenging opportunities for children to climb and balance and walk through netting. They were very disappointed that bitterly cold wind and ice meant that the equipment was not safe to use.

### **Creative development**

83. The children enjoy their creative activities, and achievement is satisfactory. For example, the children enjoyed a music lesson where they were learning about rhythm in nursery rhymes. They enjoyed learning how to use the percussion instruments and clapping rhythms with the pupils from Year 1. They enjoyed listening to music from 'Coppelia' and skilful teaching helped them to imagine the doll dancing. The children thoroughly enjoy creating castles and shapes in the wet sand and rose to the challenge of creating 'Humpty-Dumpty' using modelling material. Too often however, the children's play was unstructured and they either moved quickly from activity to activity or played in the popular sand for a very long time. The imaginative play in the toy shop was enjoyable but became very robust as children bounced in and out of boxes leaving the toy shop very untidy. However, the structure to the play with puppets really challenged the children and resulted in clearly organised roles and imaginative language.
84. Examples of children's work showed that children can draw and paint using pencil and a good range of colours. The hand paintings undertaken as part of their study of India were shown off with pride. Children replicated the patterns on the shapes of their hands, carefully sticking sequins and jewels in lively imaginative patterns. They drew teddies of different sizes as part of a study on 'bigger and smaller than'. Sometimes drawings and paintings are rushed and untidy. Paint is thin and does not provide the right medium for exploration of colour. A lack of structure and direction from an adult does not enable children to explore different media imaginatively.

### **ENGLISH**

85. Overall standards of attainment in English are below average. Standards are uneven in each year group because of the small numbers of pupils involved and because of a large group of pupils who have significant special needs related to low attainment, particularly in Year 4 and 6. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory in the issue related to the teaching of English in other subjects. However, the school has faced many challenges in a short time, which

compromised improvements in English and the impact of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

86. There were too few pupils in Year 2 to make a reliable analysis of national test results or comparisons with similar schools. Results in the Year 2 were in the lowest five per cent of the country and in Year 6 tests results were well below the national average and the average of similar schools. There are several reasons for the low results, which include wide variations in the levels of attainment of individual pupils and also a decline in standards in the two previous years. Teaching programmes had not been well implemented because of the numbers of changes of teacher in the Year 4, 5 and 6 class. In addition, several pupils had been absent from school at a critical time because of the restrictions of the Foot and Mouth epidemic. Girls performed significantly better than boys in the Year 2 tests in reading and writing and the gap narrowed and results of boys and girls were similar in the tests for Year 6. These results indicate poor achievement from Year 2 to Year 6. However, several pupils joined the school in Years 5 and 6 so this analysis is unreliable. Because of the very small numbers in the majority of year groups variations in attainment between years do not paint a reliable picture about current standards in the school.
87. One of the main reasons for the differences between the results and the work is that in the last year rapid improvements have been made to teaching and learning in English with the introduction of new programmes of work. In addition, a new teaching team, that includes the new headteacher, is beginning to have a significant impact on standards in reading and writing. Work is targeted at specific aspects of English, such as improving levels of writing following systematic assessment and analysis of the test results. Additional literacy support has been provided, and work is now successfully planned to raise levels of attainment, particularly for the boys. Consequently, pupils are very well supported in lessons and this helps some of the low attaining pupils reach average standards. The achievement of pupils of all levels of attainment is good because teaching is very good particularly in Years 2 to 6. High attaining pupils are appropriately challenged, enabling them to read and write skilfully. However, while the school supports pupils with special educational needs well, some of the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have significant difficulties with English and need additional specialist support.
88. Standards in speaking and listening are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are encouraged to engage in discussions about their work. Achievement is satisfactory. Skilful questioning from teachers encourages pupils to explain their ideas using a good range of vocabulary. They listen well to the each other and the adults who work with them. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are developing increasing skill in discussion. Drama is used very effectively as a tool for learning across the curriculum and this enables pupils to practise their developing spoken language. By Year 6, the majority are speaking in Standard English. They talk and listen confidently in a broad range of contexts. They adapt their talk to the purpose; for example when discussing their work, answering questions or presenting the strengths of the environmental area to visitors and relaxed conversation at lunchtimes.
89. Achievement in reading is satisfactory. Pupils attain average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Basic skills are taught appropriately in Year 1, but pupils' achievement is slow and standards are not high enough. The teaching of the sounds of letters is not systematic. Pupils could recall the initial sounds of the letter at the beginning of their names but were not as confident as they should be at

recognising the sounds at the beginning and ends of words. Although pupils enjoy books regularly, several felt that they could not read. Too many were not confident at tackling words or making up the story from pictures. In Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the sounds letters make individually and when they are joined together. They are proud of their reading skills and confident when reading out loud. This helps their spelling and writing across the curriculum. In Year 3, reading has improved significantly since the pupils took the test in Year 2. Good teaching and the regular practise of skills helps them read with expression and correct the mistakes they make quickly without losing the flow of the story. In Year 5, high attaining pupils enjoy complex books such as 'Lord of the Rings' by Tolkein and the 'Harry Potter' series by JK Rowling, even if they struggle for some time. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good knowledge of authors and can discuss the relevance of different characters to the plots. They are developing preferences of genre and can explain why a particular author such as Jacqueline Wilson, for example, captures their imagination. Low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are still not confident in a range of strategies to help their reading. Some of the boys are beginning to see failure and the school is working very hard to promote an interest in books and reading. Pupils have opportunities to practise their reading, and while their attainment is sometimes well below average their achievement is good. New programmes of teaching are beginning to have an impact on standards reading, particularly in Year 5

90. Standards in writing are average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. This is because of the different levels of attainment of the small year groups. The school has focussed successfully on raising levels of attainment in writing but the new programmes of work have not yet had time to boost the attainment of the low attaining pupils in Year 6. However, this marks an improvement since the previous inspection. In Year 2, pupils are beginning to use interesting vocabulary in their poetry. A good example of this was in a lesson studying the rhythm and structure of an African Poem 'You'. There were many examples of effective use of language and the pupils had great fun playing with words. One child wrote, 'You, your ears are like fumbly drums'. One child's poem, 'In my Pocket', showed high levels of imagination with, 'In July I dug deep and found the SUMMER HOLIDAYS!' Pupils are beginning to spell simple words correctly and use dictionaries appropriately.
91. While standards are below average overall by the end of Year 6 because of the wide range of ability in the year group, standards in Year 5 are average. High attaining pupils in Year 6 are beginning to use language very well, tackling complex poetry such as 'IF' by Rudyard Kipling. They demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the style and structure of different poetry because teaching is very good and challenges and motivates their thinking. Low attaining pupils and those with significant special educational needs still need support and cannot always apply their writing skills successfully. However, the achievement of all groups of pupils, including high and low attaining pupils and boys and girls is good. The work seen and the school's careful records of pupils' achievements show the clear gains they are making in their learning.
92. Achievement in handwriting and presentation is too slow in Years 1 and 2. Handwriting is weak and hinders pupils' progress. Too few pupils are joining letters, although the work from Year 2 shows a rapid improvement since the beginning of the school year. By the end of Year 6 standards in handwriting and presentation are average. Pupils are beginning to develop a fluent, joined style of handwriting and work carefully and neatly. Spelling is generally accurate and pupils use dictionaries

and charts of words to spell correctly. Standards have improved in Year 6 since the previous inspection but are similar in Year 2.

93. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils' work over the last year shows that it is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Consequently, standards are slowly improving. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 2 to 6, and helps pupils to learn new things as well as consolidate what they have already learned by applying their skills in other subjects. For example, pupils accurately label their models in design and technology, record events and other findings in history and they are beginning to record their findings from investigations in science, although more work needs to be done in science to consolidate pupils' writing. There are particular strengths in the way that teachers question pupils to motivate them, and maintain their interest, as well as elicit what they have learned. A good example of this was in a lesson based on the poem 'The Highwayman', where pupils, even eventually the less imaginative group of boys, fell under the spell of the teachers' language and presentation of the poem. Teachers make sure that at the beginning of lessons pupils are clear about what they are going to learn. Work is skilfully planned to enable pupils of all the wide ranging ability levels to learn and succeed. The National Literacy Strategy is successfully implemented and most lessons contain a good balance of the teaching of basic skills of spelling and reading and grammatical structure and investigation of text to enable pupils to complete challenging activities and poems. Planning is sound in Year 1 and good in Years 2 to 6. At times, lessons in Year 1 lack structure and pupils are not challenged enough to improve their reading and writing skills at an appropriate rate.
94. English is very well led by the headteacher who provides a very good role model for other teachers. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning in English. Pupils are confident in word processing their writing using different size and style of font. They thoroughly enjoy learning their spellings using the spelling program and are eager to beat the computer. The school is benefiting from very effective support from the local authority. Assessment is thorough, although should be more rigorous for pupils with special educational needs to alert teachers to the specific problems these pupils have in English. Teachers track pupils' achievement very carefully analysing what aspects of tests they get wrong. Writing has appropriately become a key priority for improvement. The current programme in Year 3 to 6 is already having an impact on the standard of pupils' writing. However, while assessment is good overall, the school does not use any tests for reading or spelling to help them be alert to the needs of pupils' whose achievement causes concern. Teaching is monitored effectively and feedback is provided to help teachers improve.
95. The setting arrangements in the shared Years 3 to 6 class are successful and mean that high and low attaining pupils are very well catered for within smaller teaching groups. However, there are not enough classrooms and the hall is used as a teaching area, limiting its use for a considerable amount of the day. This is a weakness in the accommodation and pupils have to walk to the village hall on the same site for physical education. The small library area is well resourced and pupils understand the number system for retrieving books. Very successful leadership promotes a shared capacity to succeed and this is reflected in the performance of the pupils. The school has a good capacity for further improvements.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96. Standards vary considerably across the school from above to significantly below average. Standards are closer to average in Year 5 than in Year 6. Because of the low attainment of a significant number of pupils who are identified as needing individual support in their learning, overall standards are below average by the end of Year 6. Overall achievement is good, however, and pupils' work shows that all groups of pupils are making steady gains in their learning because of good teaching and improved and highly focussed programmes of work related to the National Numeracy Strategy. School records show that achievement has been rapid over the last year since the new teaching team has been in place. This marks a good improvement since the previous inspection.
97. The school's performance in the national tests for mathematics in 2002 was low and the results of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 were in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally. Teachers' assessments matched the test results and the school did not meet its very challenging target. Girls performed better than boys in the Year 2 tests but the gap narrowed and by Year 6 results were similar. There were too few pupils in Year 2 to make analysis of results reliable but the drop from previous years is related to the significant differences in the levels of attainment of pupils in the year group. The wide variations of results each year is also related to the attainment of each small year group and the proportion of pupils with low attainment and special educational needs. One pupil's results can amount to a significant percentage of the results. However, there was a decline in standards over the two previous years because of several changes of temporary teacher in Years 4, 5 and 6. Teaching programmes were not effectively implemented. In addition, the absence of pupils from school and the stress of the Foot and Mouth epidemic compromised standards and pupils' confidence. This led to gaps in pupils' learning and new programmes of work had not had time to have an impact on the mathematics in Year 6. The school's analysis of tests reveals that pupils struggled to apply what they had learned to the test questions. They lacked confidence to answer questions and several pupils did not attempt some aspects of the test.
98. The significant differences between the test results and current work in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is because the good teaching throughout the school is having a significant impact on pupils' achievement. In lessons, pupils are well supported and given extra tuition in mathematics to consolidate what they have learned. Pupils' confidence is growing but standards remain stubbornly below average because low attaining pupils still find difficulty in applying what they have learned when they are working on their own. High attaining pupils respond very well to challenging work and this accelerates their achievement.
99. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because teaching is good. For example, some are still working at coin recognition and understanding the value of coins, while others are confident with addition and subtraction of £ and p. By the end of Year 2, lower attaining pupils have a sound basic knowledge of numbers to 100 including even and odd numbers and number bonds to 10. They know the days of the week and use key vocabulary such as 'heavier or lighter' correctly. Most pupils understand place value and can identify the highest and lowest value made from three digits. They recognise and use addition and subtraction in simple numerical problems, multiply and divide by 2 and 10 and are learning multiplication tables. They are gaining confidence in using measures such as metres and centimetres, kilograms and grams, and tell the time to half and quarter hours. Higher attaining pupils are confident with numbers, set out their work correctly and record using the



range of basic mathematical symbols correctly. They understand and use correct notation for money and measures, know the basic geometric shapes and tell the time accurately.

100. Pupils continue to achieve well, but by the end of Year 6, there is a very wide range of attainment. Very good attention is given to pupils' understanding of mathematical language. They confidently use mathematical terms such as 'factors, multiples, square roots, prime number, digits' correctly when describing a number. Several pupils with special educational needs need significant support to understand simple numerical problems, fractions, and estimation. Others can apply factors and multiples when calculating mentally. Despite every effort made by the school, their achievement slows because they are often insecure in their understanding of place value and correct notation, such as being unsure when adding centimetres to metres, and lack confidence in deciding the correct operation to use such as whether to add or multiply when solving a problem. Higher attaining able pupils have a clear grasp of long multiplication, inverse operations, equivalent fractions, use of brackets, coordinates and symmetry and negative numbers. They are taught very well and their achievement is good. For example, they confidently apply their knowledge and understanding effectively to solving problems involving more than one operation and make realistic estimates.
101. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Lessons are well planned and good use is made of resources. For example, in Year 1, good use is made of previous learning as pupils are introduced to size and weight with good development of key vocabulary such as 'heavy' or 'light' or 'balance'. Higher attaining pupils were inspired to use 'heavier and lighter' to describe their comparisons. Effective mental maths sessions, conducted at a brisk pace, developed pupils' knowledge and recall of number bonds between 10 and 100. A good range of learning objectives are set to match the wider range of pupils' mathematics skills and good use is made of well targeted questions to involve all pupils. Very good class management and lesson preparation leads to work being set at a suitably challenging level for each pupil so that best use is made of previous learning. Appropriate extension work is set for most-able pupils. For example, for lower attaining pupils in Year 3, opportunities to work with real coins to recognise, count and add money up to 20p enabled them to make steady progress, others were challenged to solve money problems by choosing and using addition or subtraction with coins available for checking, and higher attaining pupils were working to solve problems involving addition and subtraction of £ and p. Teachers use evaluation sessions at the end of lessons effectively to clarify pupils' understanding of what they had learned.
102. Mathematics is very well led and managed and pupils' work throughout the school shows rapid improvement over the year. Overall provision is good and most pupils are achieving well. The slow achievement of pupils with significant special educational needs is because the school needs specialist help with their needs. Since the last inspection, good attention has been given to staff development in the teaching of numeracy and to the development of the use of assessment, including pupils' self assessment, to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs. Effective opportunities are planned for pupils to practise their numeracy in other subjects such as science and design and technology, where pupils calculate and measure with confidence. Good use is made of information and communication technology for pupils to practice their mathematics skills and to monitor their progress. The school is now well placed to further improve standards in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

103. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6, although there are considerable variations according to pupils' wide-ranging needs. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. This is a similar judgement to the previous inspection. However, it does not reflect the teachers' assessment for pupils in Year 2 and the test results in Year 6. The results of the teachers' assessment in Year 2 were well below the national average and the average of similar schools. Results in Year 6 were in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally and did not reflect the teacher's assessment of the year group. The variations in results from year to year is related to the proportion of pupils with low attainment and special educational needs who need support recording in writing and the small size of each year group. The school's analysis of results shows that pupils had problems understanding the questions and explaining their answers in writing. Girls performed better than boys and this reflects the number of boys who had special educational needs. The reasons for the low results include disruptions to the pupils' learning because of absence from school, a significant proportion of pupils who needed support with their learning.
104. Pupils reach higher levels in their current work than in the tests because all pupils, including low attaining pupils achieve well in practical tasks and they are well supported by good teaching and carefully planned tasks. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of facts and skills in all elements of science. This is the result of consistently good teaching in each year group, and a suitable emphasis on providing good practical experiences through investigations and experiments.
105. By the end of Year 2, standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. During a well-planned and prepared lesson in Year 1, pupils discovered the effects of push and pull forces. They found that they could change the shape of play-dough, move toys and equipment such as wheeled vehicles, playground swings and roundabout. A good introduction to the lesson helped pupils recall what they had learned before. An effective question and answer session at the end of the lesson helped the pupils to use the words 'push' and 'pull' correctly to describe the force used, enabling the teacher to assess what pupils' had learned. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the affects of heating and cooling on a range of everyday materials. They know that force is needed to speed up or slow down a moving object and describe pushing, pulling, twisting, squashing and pinching forces appropriately. They record their investigations using drawings, prepared charts and writing short statements. They have a growing appreciation of the need for 'fair tests'.
106. Achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards are average and pupils are keenly interested in science. Pupils work thoughtfully and carefully to carry out their investigation and know the importance of careful and accurate measurement and recording of data. They can calibrate effective spring-balances with string and elastic bands and demonstrate a secure knowledge of fair testing. In one lesson, they carefully measured and recorded the number of Newtons required to move their object along different surfaces. They understand that they need to repeat their tests using different ways to reduce friction. Pupils work well together in groups, choosing conditions, agreeing tasks and discussing outcomes. They understand the need for accurate measurement, use a range of measuring instruments and record and interpret findings effectively. They know the properties of solids, liquids and gasses, that heat can move by conduction and that different materials make good conductors or insulators. They know that substances can

sometimes be separated by filtration or evaporation and about solutions and suspensions. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the human body, the main organs and systems and the basics for good health, about gravity, the earth, moon and sun and the reasons for day and night, and the changing seasons.

107. Teaching is consistently good and based on effective specialist subject knowledge. This helps pupils to use scientific language to describe their work, as in the Year 5 and 6 lesson on the effects of friction on different surfaces. Activities are well planned and organised and of good quality to extend the pupils' learning. This motivates pupils to work hard and concentrate on what their investigations are revealing. Skilful use of challenging questions and discussion of findings enables the pupils to understand the scientific approach and how to analyse and interpret their findings. Pupils are managed very well and they handle materials and equipment carefully. Pupils are encouraged to record their science work in a variety of ways, including the use of charts and graphs. There are good links to pupils' work in mathematics. However, in Years 3 to 6, insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' skills in writing to record their work and explain their findings and conclusions logically. Little use is made of information and communication technology in science, other than the use of computers for some graphical representations of data from investigations.
108. Science is well led and managed. The effects of teaching on pupils' work are carefully monitored. Since the last inspection satisfactory progress has been made in the provision for science. A broad and effective science curriculum is in place and a good practical approach enables pupils to make good progress in understanding scientific investigation. More use needs to be made of information and communication technology to extend pupils' experience and pupils' skills in the written recording of their work needs to be further developed.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

109. It was only possible to observe a specialist artist in residence teaching in art with a small group of pupils during the short time of the inspection. However, from samples of pupils' work on display, school documentation and discussion with pupils, the provision for art is satisfactory overall. Standards are average throughout the school and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This indicates that the high standards identified by the previous inspection have not been maintained. The art curriculum is compromised by the necessary emphasis on improving English and mathematics. Because art and design tends to form part of topics and themes the progressive development of skills is not clearly evident in the pupils' work. Pupils benefit from the specialist expertise of visiting artists, such as the willow weaver and the current artist's work with ceramics. In these sessions standards are good and the quality of the pupils' final products is high, showing care and imagination.
110. By the end of Year 2, standards are average overall and achievement is satisfactory. However, good standards are attained in observational drawing and collage using natural materials such as shells. In Year 1, standards are average in drawing and printing but a limited range of medium used is evident. Their skills with paint are not well developed. Standards are average overall by the end of Year 6, Pupils use of watercolours and their work demonstrates a sound understanding of the media and effective use to represent flowers. In Years 4 to 6, skills in use of paint are developed well and there are examples of successful tie-dye using fabric. Pupils use artefacts and match materials confidently. For example, in one well-planned and prepared lesson linked to their history topic, pupils in Years 4 and 5

designed and made stencils and used them effectively to create a repeating pattern. They created effective 'Egyptian' plaques decorated with a border by experimenting with colour and pattern as they made and used a printing stencil.

111. All pupils are well motivated and excited as they work with a visiting artist. These very good subject skills and knowledge are used effectively to enable pupils to develop good skills in the use of clay to produce commemorative tiles. Very good development of vocabulary linked to science enables pupils to discuss 'reversible and irreversible processes' in fixing and glazing their tiles. Pupils develop good modelling and impression techniques as they create a range of textured effects. The pupils work indicates that teaching is satisfactory. A lack of staff expertise in art is suitably supplemented by strategic use of 'specialist' supply teachers and local artists as part of the 'Artist in Residence' scheme. Through these experiences, staff are improving their skills in art and successfully broadening pupils' work in a wider range of art activity. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Sketch books are not yet established and the use of information and communication technology is satisfactory but at an early stage of supporting art and design.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112. Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and achievement is good overall. The work seen shows that pupils achieve well in designing and making artefacts, using a good range of materials and processes. Pupils in Year 1 gain experience in constructing models such as houses and vehicles from the use of a range of construction kits and materials. They successfully investigate how mechanical toys work and move. Work is well linked with science investigations on forces. They gain good practical skills as they design and make Christmas cards and learn to use utensils when making cakes and choosing items such as coloured chocolate buttons to decorate them. By the end of Year 2, after researching Hebrew clothing and colours, pupils were able to design and create square printing blocks to a given specification using a variety of materials. They used these effectively to print a patchwork pattern on cloth to make 'Joseph's Technicolor Dream Coat.'
113. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good and pupils are developing a good range of skills for measuring, marking-out, and using saws, glue-gun, craft knives and sandpaper confidently to make and strengthen their 'cube' structures. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good grasp of the design and make processes through a well planned sequence of activity from investigating the workings of commercial toys, choosing from a wide range of materials, including junk items, and solving mechanical problems.
114. Good teaching is evident through the well-established good rapport with pupils who respond very well to the challenge to design and make moving vehicles or toys involving the use of cams and battery power. Lessons are well planned and prepared and very good attention is paid to safety when using tools and equipment such as saws and sawing boards, craft knives and the glue-gun. Very good use is made of the school environment to provide pupils with many opportunities to develop good skills in using a wide variety of tools. Pupils are proud of their contributions in developing the school garden and grounds as being Eco-friendly. They research ideas and benefit from involvement in construction and maintenance of the raised gardens, the recycling of degradable materials in the compost bins, the 'puddling' of clay for making a pond, the weaving of willow for animal sculptures and tunnel to the observation hide. They learn about rural crafts such as thatching

through working with a skilled local specialist to make the playground shelters. Through these valued activities pupils achieve good practical skills and knowledge.

115. Design and technology is well led and managed and good use is made of the co-ordinator's specialist skills. Good progress has been made in developing the provision. Since the previous inspection, a suitable curriculum plan provides for a broad, balanced and progressive experience. However, there is a lack of resources for, and pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills in, food technology, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. No lessons in geography were planned to take place during the inspection because the current focus of the curriculum is history. However from looking at pupils' work in books and on display and talking to them about what they know and understand standards remain average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Progress since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Teaching is at least satisfactory and all aspects of the geography curriculum are taught.
117. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and by the end of Year 2 pupils can draw simple maps of the school and the village. They can note features of the village and compare it with one in a different location by the sea in Devon. They enjoyed their study of India and can describe the way of life of children in an Indian village. The teacher in Year 2 has successfully linked a geographical study of Egypt as part of the history topic on Ancient Egypt. The pupils know that the river Nile provides fertile areas on the edge of the desert.
118. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including high and low attaining pupils, is satisfactory across Year 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of their local area and are able to make comparisons with the county city of Exeter. On a recent visit to the city, pupils felt it was busy and they understood the importance of the river Exe to the life of the city. They have a good understanding of why village and towns are built in specific places and that nomadic people in Africa need to move their families and animals about for food. They have a strong commitment to their school as an 'Eco' school. They are sorting rubbish for re-cycling and using the very well organised grounds to preserve wild life such as birds and insects. They have grown organic vegetables using compost and their own fertiliser from recycling their apple cores and other remains of fruit for the wormery. As children of farming backgrounds they have a good knowledge of how the land changes. They have a good understanding of how people can damage and improve the environment.
119. The geography curriculum is broad and has a positive impact on the pupils' social and cultural development. The policy and schemes of work are in need of review and form part of the current improvement plan. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and, although new to the school, has laid appropriate plans to enhance the provision. Good use of visits and visitors enhance the curriculum and extend the pupils' learning and understanding of the wider world in Devon and further a field. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory and pupils word process some of their work and search the Internet for information about the topics they are studying. The use of E-mail to communicate with different groups of people across the world is under-developed.

## **HISTORY**

120. Standards are average at the end of Year 2, and often above average at the end of Year 6 because of very good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Only two lessons were observed in the short time available. From a broad range of pupils' work and talking to them about what they know and understand, achievement is good and there is a clear enthusiasm for learning in history. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.
121. By the end of Year 2, the pupils are developing a good understanding of the past. Their motivation is fired by the current topic on Ancient Egypt. This means that they learn quickly and have already gained significant knowledge about life in Ancient times and differences with the lives of the people of Egypt today. Pupils know that archaeologists study the past and were fascinated when they could play the role of archaeologists and began to dig out pictures and artefacts from the sand. In this lesson, teaching was very good because it was very well organised to enable the pupils practise historical skills of careful observation, interpretation of what they found, historical enquiry and careful recording. There was a buzz in the room as they recognised some of the artefacts. The teacher skilfully maintained their interests and concentration for a long time. Their enthusiasm was infectious when the teacher unwrapped some real Egyptian relics and they handled them with great care.
122. Although no teaching was planned to take place in Year 6, the pupils' achievement is good because lessons carefully build upon each other. The quality of teaching observed was very good and challenged the pupils' historical thinking. The work seen on the Second World War showed that pupils made successful links between the lives of local people today and evacuees from London and Plymouth. Pupils are beginning to start to organise their work and to see that events can be interpreted in different ways. In the lesson for pupils in Year 4, their study through drama of the structure of society in Egyptian times challenged their ideas about the lives of the different characters they had studied. The task was innovative and the teacher very skilfully planned the work to enable all groups of pupils to be fully involved in the study.
123. The subject is well managed and work is effectively evaluated. There is a clear and appropriate plan for improvement that will take place when the current curriculum plan is reviewed. Information and communication technology is used effectively for research and pupils know how to investigate using the CD Rom and the Internet. The good range and quality of resources is complemented by the local authority loan service. Visits to local historical sites and the shared expertise of visitors enhance the history curriculum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

124. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. This is because the new curriculum plan has not yet completed a full cycle, and the pupils in Year 6 have not had time to learn the new broader range of skills required by the revised National Curriculum. In addition, the computer systems have had to be replaced because they were unreliable. This has happened recently and consequently pupils have only just begun to have access to CD ROMs and reliable links to the internet. Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school and good in the areas of word processing. Information and communication technology is used increasingly to support the pupils' learning in other subjects. No direct teaching was

observed during the short period of the inspection and judgements are made from examination of groups of pupils working on computers, talking to them about their knowledge and understanding and analysing samples of current and past work.

125. The pupils' continue to be confident using computers. By the end of Year 2, pupils can organise information and record and share their ideas. Pupils are confident changing the size and colour of fonts when writing their name and they are able to use an art program to explore colour and shape. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills in word processing are good. They insert lively text in a range of colours from Power Point into their writing and import pictures from the Internet and a CD Rom. Computers are used very well to support pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. They understand how computers help us in everyday life. The children from farming families share their expertise about how computers can be used to keep and update records and help to increase crop and milk yields. The pupils' work hard at learning their spellings and beating the computer. They can add to, amend, and combine text and picture. However, pupils lack experience of framing questions when interrogating information, using sensors and data presentation using spreadsheets and line graphs. They have used the Internet to find out information about World War 2 and the Ancient Egyptians. Evidence of the use of e-mail is very limited. Pupils are currently not yet communicating electronically with other schools or educational institutions. However, there are plans to create links with the local group of schools in the area.
126. Teaching is at least satisfactory and teachers are working hard to improve their own skills. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support English, mathematics, history and geography. For example, the pupils collect and interrogate data in Years 5 and 6 in mathematics and produce graphs to show their findings. However, there is very little evidence that computers are used to support learning in science, physical education and design and technology.
127. Information and communication technology is the school's current focus for training and development. Sensibly the teachers are re-establishing the curriculum in stages that match their growing competence. All the teachers have had training and are now beginning to be confident using computers as an aid to teaching. Progress since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Changes to the demands of the subject and the need for further resources were delayed because of the changes to the teaching staff. This slowed progress. However, the school is now on track. A new information and communication technology work station situated in the hall provides a helpful area for groups of pupils to be taught and to practise their skills. The governors are investing appropriately in up grading computers and extending the provision to include laptops for the pupils, sensors, and a screen that works with the computer.
128. The subject is well managed by the headteacher. The school is working hard to raise the pupils' levels of competence and achievement. Progress is carefully monitored. Additional support from an experienced learning support assistant is used successfully to develop specific skills. The curriculum is broad and balanced but as yet, limited because of the range of resources. The use of the hall as a work station has limitations and there is very little space in the school for such a resource. The plan for improving the provision and raising standards is appropriate. The school is well placed for further improvements.

## **MUSIC**

129. From the limited evidence available, standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils develop good skills in listening and performing both vocally and in using tuned and un-tuned instruments and have a good repertoire of songs. Their skills in composition are less well developed. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching overall. However, the very few lessons observed and pupils' achievement indicate that teaching and learning are good.
130. By the end of Year 2, good strategies are used to motivate and interest younger pupils in music. For example, four hand puppets are thoughtfully named and used to provide a range of name rhythms for pupils to follow or make sounds for them to locate. Pupils quickly clap in time to name rhythms using one to four syllable patterns. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of percussion instruments and pupils explain that the sound of a chime can be stopped by the touch of a finger. Their listening and control skills are developed well through challenging group work as groups combine different rhythm patterns. They become increasingly competent in maintaining simple rhythms and respond well to start and stop signals as they take turns at being the 'conductor'. They are introduced to a good range of music and are increasingly able to explain their feelings and mood when listening. For example, when pupils were listening to the 'Mazurka' from Coppelia with closed eyes, they began to smile and move as they imagined the toys dancing.
131. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about standards in music in Year 6 but younger pupils in Years 3 to 5 were effectively involved in appraising the compositions of older pupils. They made appreciative comments on the way the older pupils had used their own symbols to chart their group's playing of their chosen instruments as they had attempted to capture a mood such as 'joy' or 'hope'. Through very good, challenging teaching, the pupils quickly grasped the basic principles of composing. Their use of non-standard notation was very well taught and the pupils responded with very good concentration, imagination and effort as they discussed and recorded their compositions. Pupils listen critically to music and make thoughtful comments on the images they create such as 'horses galloping' or 'strong winds'. They suggest that the 'beat' and the 'instruments' would be the first things the composer would have established when creating the music.
132. Pupils acquire a good repertoire of songs and many gain good skills through their involvement in the school choir. They enjoy listening to a suitable range of recorded music which is a regular feature of school and class assemblies. Most able pupils are enabled to become competent at playing instruments by receiving weekly tuition from a visiting specialist tutor. The school enables a talented flutist to have extra tuition and achieve well.
133. Music has not been a feature for school development in the recent past but some good aspects have been maintained since the previous despite the several changes of staff. Subject leadership is satisfactory. It is not possible to make a judgement about the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. In the present situation the school is well placed to address the shortfall in composing as well as further develop overall provision.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

134. Good progress has been made in provision for pupils' physical education since the last inspection. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6



across the range of activities required. Teaching in the one lesson observed was very good and the records of pupils' achievements in swimming and sporting events indicate that teaching is good.

135. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 achieve well in dance activities as a result of very good teaching. They move imaginatively in response to suggested actions such as being a 'weight lifter' by strong slow movements or moving like a jack-in-a-box by bouncing, springing or leaping. They interpret music imaginatively and confidently demonstrate to others their ideas of how they can move like a steam-train. They learn quickly by observing and copying the moves of others and through group activities where they share their ideas and combine their movements into a routine. Lessons are well structured and conducted at a lively pace. Teachers' have very good class management and organization and pupils respond quickly to instructions and commands and with good concentration and effort to achieve the challenges set for them. They enjoy the increasing level of physical activity through stretching and moving warm-up routines and pay good attention to the focus on the different parts of the body. Teachers build effectively on pupils' experience of previous lessons and the good assessments made are used well to extend the performances of individuals. Music is well chosen to challenge pupils to develop and extend their movements in keeping with mood and pace. Very good strategies are used to develop pupils' observation and evaluation of each other's movements and for them to work collaboratively to devise and agree group movement routines to express their ideas such as a train gathering speed and slowing to a stop.
136. Although no teaching was observed in Years 4 to 6, pupils' notable success in sporting activities indicate that standards are above average. A well-planned programme of activities throughout the school year ensures a well-balanced and broad curriculum for physical education, including gymnastics, games, athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities. Most pupils become competent swimmers at twenty-five metres by the end of Year 6, and achieve good standards in a range of games and athletic activities. Pupils benefit significantly from the regular and well-organised extra-curricular sports opportunities available through the involvement of parents, which are trained, and very good liaison with staff from the other schools in the local 'cluster' group. The sporting festivals and competitions that complete the blocks of activity generate a lot of enthusiasm and challenge for the pupils.
137. Physical education is well led and the co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Pupils' achievements are effectively assessed and monitored. The school playgrounds are well marked out for play according to the age of the pupils and there is a very well equipped adventure playground. Additionally, older pupils are trained as 'Playground Leaders' and take responsibility for supervising the allocation of games equipment that has been provided for use at break-times. Together these facilities and their strategic use make a good contribution to pupils' overall good standards in physical education.