

## INSPECTION REPORT

### WYKE REGIS INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Weymouth

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113713

Headteacher: Mrs Margaret Davies

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Rowe  
1695

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 June 2003

Inspection number: 247395

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Shrubbery Lane Wyke Regis Weymouth Dorset
Postcode:	DT4 9LU
Telephone number:	01305 782470
Fax number:	01305 766721
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Doug Hollings
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Brian Rowe 1695	Registered inspector	Physical education History Geography	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (results and achievements) How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Jenny Mynett 9334	Lay inspector	Inclusion	How high are standards? (attitudes, behaviour and personal development) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Lynne Thorogood 29988	Team inspector	English Music Foundation stage	
Mike Best 10413	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Vera Grigg 12331	Team inspector	Science Art Design and technology Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL53 7JX

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wyke Regis Infant School and Nursery is situated in the conurbation of Weymouth and Portland, in the county of Dorset. In the late 1990s there were changes to the catchment area following the withdrawal of the navy from Portland. The closure of the dockyard followed by the run down of the naval station caused a great deal of anxiety and upheaval in the area. For a while these changes adversely affected the socio-economic mix of the school. The sale of the navy's married quarters and new building projects including housing association accommodation have resulted in the current broad mix of socio-economic groups within the school. Pupils are aged 3 to 7 years, and come mostly from the local and surrounding area. There are 266 pupils on roll, in reception to Year 2. The 139 boys and 127 girls are grouped in nine classes. In addition, there is a nursery class with 80 children on roll, the majority of whom attend for three sessions each week. The school is larger than average. All the pupils are from a white UK heritage, and none speak English as an additional language. There are 30 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, two of whom have statements. These proportions are average. Fifty-four pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is close to the national average. Children enter school in the reception class with standards that are above average for the local authority and nationally. During the last few years, the school has been subject to severe staffing difficulties and this has impeded its development.

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

Wyke Regis Infant and Nursery is a good and improving school. It does well for its pupils so that, by the end of Year 2, they achieve standards that are above average compared to other infant schools. Effective teaching, very good planning and a positive environment support pupils' learning. Parents and pupils are very pleased with the support given and what the school and nursery offers them. The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher and deputy head, with the governors making a valuable contribution. It has successfully come through a period of difficult staffing issues, and is now in a position to make even further improvements. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Very purposeful leadership by the headteacher has resulted in good improvements to many important aspects of school development, such as raising the standards of pupils' work, the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum and long-term planning.
- Effective teaching ensures all pupils make good progress, are well cared for, establish positive relationships, behave well and have very good attitudes to their learning.
- The very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
- The high quality of provision in the nursery and reception years.
- Parents are made to feel very welcome in school; they offer good support and make an outstanding contribution to their children's learning.

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

- The use made of assessment information to ensure pupils are set work to reach their full potential.
- The overall provision for design and technology.
- Provision for supporting the most talented pupils.

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

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

The school was last inspected in January 1998. After that inspection, the school's development was severely disrupted through staffing issues and standards declined. However, during the last two years there has been rapid progress and the school has made a good improvement. The recommendations identified in the previous inspections have been successfully addressed. The school has also made improvements in many other important areas. These include raising academic standards in Years 1 and 2, strengthening leadership and management procedures, improving the quality of teaching and learning and providing greater curriculum opportunities for pupils. The school has also been successful in gaining an Achievement Award for raising pupils' attainment and the Investors in People standard.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools*	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
Reading	D	B	D	D	very high A*
Writing	E	C	C	D	well above average A
Mathematics	E	A	B	B	above average B
					average C
					below average D
					well below average E

\*For the purpose of this inspection, the 8% - 20% free school meal benchmark is used to provide comparative data.

Children enter the nursery at the age of three with standards that are close to expectations for their age in most areas of learning. They respond positively to the provision in the nursery and reception classes and make very good progress, particularly with their personal, social and emotional development. Because of this very good progress, many enter Year 1 with standards that are above average and almost all children are likely to exceed the level of attainment they need to meet the expectations of the early learning goals<sup>1</sup>. The results of the 2002 tests for pupils in Year 2 were below the national average in reading, broadly average in writing and above average in mathematics. In comparison with those in similar schools nationally<sup>2</sup>, the results were below average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In the teacher assessments for science, results were below the national average for all schools and for similar schools. The school's results in 2002 were similar to the previous year and a considerable improvement on 1999 and 2000 when they had dipped in comparison to results at the time of the previous inspection. From an analysis of pupils' work, inspectors have confidence that pupils are achieving well and the 2003 results will indicate a further improvement, bringing them above the national average in each of the subjects tested. There is no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills successfully in other subjects. Pupils are set clear, realistic and achievable targets in literacy and numeracy and this helps both the teachers and pupils to focus on the areas for individual improvement. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their learning because they are supported effectively by class teachers and other support staff. The school sets itself appropriate academic targets and is successful in meeting them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils enjoy school. Their attitudes both to school and learning are very good. Pupils are well motivated, they concentrate hard, and are keen to contribute in lessons and participate fully in their different tasks and activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around school is very good and has been well maintained since the last inspection. The school has a very orderly atmosphere.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They willingly undertake roles of responsibility around the school, acting as class monitors for various different tasks. Relationships are very good and staff work hard to promote tolerance and kindness and ensure pupils do not feel excluded or isolated.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory and has declined since the last inspection. This is in part due to illness, with outbreaks of stomach upsets and chicken pox, as well as the large number of parents taking their children on holiday in term time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<sup>1</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

<sup>2</sup> Schools with between 8 - 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good and a significant strength in the school. This has contributed significantly to the rising standards. In addition, the good teaching has a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. Examples of very good teaching were seen in each year group. Owing to a focus over the last two years to enhance the quality of teaching, there has been a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is most effective in English, mathematics, science and art. This reflects the priority the school has made over the last few years to develop these subjects. In design and technology, two successful lessons were observed, but there is insufficient evidence to accurately judge the quality of teaching. However, the absence of detailed planning and assessment records suggests that practice is inconsistent throughout the school and is identified by inspectors as a key issue for school development. In the other subjects teaching and learning are satisfactory, but there is less consistency of practice between classes in the same year group compared to English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception years is frequently very good and contributes to the very good start and progress made by children in these years. However, there is some inconsistency of quality between the three reception classes.

The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is good in each year group and many lessons are very good. Teachers have secure knowledge of the literacy and numeracy strategies. They plan thoroughly, identifying clearly how expectations for different abilities are to be covered. Teachers give clear explanations and set well-defined targets for the work to be done. Teachers recognise the importance of literacy and numeracy and create effective links to other subjects, such as science, history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught and supported by teaching assistants.

Teachers mark pupils' work and guide their future learning through constructive and helpful comments. However, the use made of marking and assessments to plan future lessons and track pupils' learning is inconsistent and needs further development. Homework is used well to support the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of literacy and numeracy.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities for its pupils. Statutory requirements are effectively met. A good range of extra-curricular opportunities is available for Year 2 pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and assistants support pupils effectively. Individual education plans are written in consultation with teachers and parents and contain useful targets for improvement.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. Spiritual development is satisfactory and cultural development is good. The emphasis on personal development has a direct and positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school continues to provide a very caring and supportive environment for pupils. Assessing pupils' work has improved considerably, but the use made of assessment is in need of further development.

The school's partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents have very positive views about the school and give it a great deal of support. They receive very good information about school life and are always made to feel very welcome. Parents appreciate the level of care provided for their children.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall good. The headteacher and deputy head manage the school very well, with the governors making a valuable contribution. The headteacher provides calm and purposeful leadership and is committed to raising standards and ensuring continual improvements to all aspects of school life. The role of many subject leaders is less well developed than those for literacy and numeracy.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are conscientious in their support of the school. They work hard to make sure that the school can function as effectively as possible, particularly with regard to financial management and improvement of the premises and environment.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are clear systems for monitoring pupils' performance, teaching and the curriculum that help to identify both its strengths and weaknesses and provide information about future developments.
The strategic use of resources	The school applies principles of best value well. It makes good use of a number of specific grants. Financial planning and control systems are good.

The school has sufficient appropriately qualified staff to teach the curriculum effectively, and to support the needs of pupils and nursery children. Overall, learning resources are satisfactory. There are sufficient computers to enhance learning, but technical problems have restricted their use. Although the accommodation is very spacious, it still has limitations as classrooms are spaced far apart and wheelchair access is inadequate.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school sent out 300 questionnaires of which 207 (69 per cent) were returned. Approximately 18 parents attended a meeting prior to the inspection to express their views about the school. Also, 30 parents wrote to the lead inspector with additional comments. The table below represents the views of a high proportion of the parents.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Children's behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of its pupils.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems.</li> <li>• The school is well managed and led.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduction in the amount of homework given to the younger pupils.</li> <li>• Providing more information about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school to provide a wider range of activities outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspectors fully endorse the positive views expressed by parents. They do not agree with the views concerning homework and the information provided about pupils' progress, although the quality of annual reports could be improved. For an infant school a wide range of activities outside lessons is provided.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

##### *Nursery and reception years (Foundation Stage)*

1. Children enter the nursery class at the age of three with standards that are close to the expectation for their age in most areas of learning. However, a small, but significant number have poorly developed language skills. They respond positively to the provision in the nursery and make very good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Children continue to make good progress in developing their skills in the reception classes. Because of this good progress, many enter Year 1 at the age of five with standards that are above average and almost all children are likely to exceed the level of attainment they need to meet the expectations of the early learning goals<sup>3</sup>. The exceptions are in children's personal, social and emotional development where their skills are very high and well above expectations and in physical development where they meet the expectations.

##### *Years 1 and 2*

2. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were below the national average in reading, broadly average in writing and above average in mathematics. In comparison with those in similar schools nationally<sup>4</sup>, the results were below average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In the teacher assessments for science, results were below the national average for all schools and for similar schools. The school's results in 2002 were similar to the previous year and a considerable improvement on 1999 and 2000 when they had dipped in comparison to results at the time of the previous inspection. The school has recently received an Achievement Award for its improved results. The inspectors have confidence that the 2003 results will indicate a further improvement and be above the national average in each of the subjects tested. There is no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
3. Inspection findings from pupils' work seen in lessons and recorded in their books show that standards are now above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards have risen as a result of the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, improvements in the quality of teaching and a focus on writing and using assessment information to set individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics. The school has been successful in raising the standards of the less able and the more able. The numbers of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 2) and the higher level (Level 3) have increased, but the very ablest pupils could achieve even higher standards
4. By the end of Year 2, standards in art and design, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education, match the expectations for pupils of this age. It is not possible to accurately judge standards in design and technology because of insufficient evidence. Standards in religious education at the end of Year 2 meet the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus.

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<sup>3</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

<sup>4</sup> Schools with between -8 - 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress with the support of the teachers and the teaching assistants. One pupil progressed a full grade in English and mathematics in less than one year, to reach standards comparable with other pupils. Another pupil who had severe emotional problems now takes a full part in school activities. Sometimes small, but significant, steps are made, such as from meeting a target to write their name, to progressing to copying words accurately.
6. The school has demonstrated that it can meet its targets and this is reflected in the year-on-year improvements. Pupils achieve well and inspection findings confirm that the school has teaching and management systems in place that will allow it to meet its future targets.
7. Standards by the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science are sufficiently high. Progress since the last inspection has been good, particularly in raising standards in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2 and generally for the higher-attaining pupils throughout the school. This is a direct result of effectively implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, more rigorous monitoring systems, improved curriculum plans and setting targets for pupils to achieve.

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

8. Pupils' attitudes both to school and their learning are very good. The pupils enjoy school. They have very positive views about their school, which they were happy to share with the inspection team. They like the books and the *'lovely library'*; they enjoy lessons and think there are *'lots of interesting things to do in the school'*. They have *'good friends'* and find the staff *'helpful'*. They speak enthusiastically about *'the loads of friendly people'* and think *'the teachers are wonderful too'*. Pupils are well motivated, they concentrate hard, and are keen to contribute in lessons and participate fully in their different tasks and activities. The youngest children in the nursery and reception classes show a confident and mature approach both to work and within their relationships with each other. They listen attentively, concentrate well and are developing very good social skills as they engage in their lessons and games. The children work and play very well together, happily sharing their toys and resources. Parents are particularly pleased at the consistently high expectations of all members of staff, which **encourage** pupils to work hard, behave well and achieve their best. They feel this is helping their children to become mature and responsible.
9. The standards of behaviour in and around the school are very good and have been well maintained since the last inspection. The school has a very orderly atmosphere. Parents are very positive about this area. They comment on the high standards set and the way their children all know the Golden Rules and take them seriously. Pupils are very friendly, happy to talk about what they are doing and share their work with visitors. Pupils report that the school is a happy and secure place with little aggressive behaviour. They speak of the occasional *'mock fighting'* but feel this is not a serious issue unless somebody gets hurt. If they have a problem they know who to go to and are confident it would be dealt with properly. There are very few incidents of oppressive behaviour and a high degree of harmony exists between pupils. There have been no exclusions in the school in recent years.
10. Relationships in the school are very good, both between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves. The school works hard to promote tolerance and kindness and ensure pupils do not feel excluded. Social development is well promoted and pupils respond well. There are frequent chances for pupils to work co-operatively together and this promotes a good working environment making a positive impact on learning. Pupils were observed working particularly well together collecting and collating information relating to the traffic

surveys they were undertaking in a geography lesson. The school promotes a value and respect for each other, which is reinforced by the good role models of the staff.

11. Pupils' personal development is good. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and develop their initiative are particularly well developed in the nursery and reception classes where they have free choice activities. Pupils willingly undertake roles of responsibility around the school, with all acting as class monitors for various different tasks. Year 2 pupils have wider responsibilities such as taking messages, watering the plants and looking after the younger children. They understand, '*We have to act as good role models*'.
12. Attendance levels in the school are unsatisfactory and have declined since the last inspection. This is in part due to illness during the year with outbreaks of stomach upsets and chicken pox, as well as the large number of parents taking their children on holiday in term time. The school has also recorded an increased number of unauthorised absences over the past year because of the way it records pupils' lateness. Pupils are generally prompt into school in the morning, but a small number of parents bring their children to school late on a regular basis.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all school activities, and enjoy coming to school. This is shown by their obvious pleasure at being in school, and their regular attendance. There are a few pupils who occasionally do not readily follow instructions or who quickly lose concentration in lessons. It is usually these pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties as part of their special educational need. Overall, they work very well with others, and delight in being chosen to share their work and what they have learnt. This was seen when a pupil showed a hinge that she had made in a design and technology lesson to other pupils.

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

14. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in 7 per cent of lessons, very good in 31 per cent, good in 31 per cent, satisfactory in 28 per cent and unsatisfactory in only one lesson. This represents a good profile of teaching. The quality of teaching is a significant strength and has contributed well to the raising of standards in the school since the last inspection. In addition, the good teaching has a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. Examples of very good teaching were seen in each year group. The previous inspection report judged the quality of teaching to be good in the majority of lessons and occasionally very good. Owing to a focus over the last two years to improve the quality of teaching, there has been a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
15. Teaching is most effective in English, mathematics, science and art. This reflects the priority the school has made over the last few years to develop these subjects. In the case of art, there has been a tradition of good quality work for a number of years. In design and technology, two successful lessons were observed, but there was insufficient evidence to accurately judge the quality of teaching. However, the absence of detailed planning and assessment records suggests that practice is inconsistent throughout the school and the subject is identified by the inspectors as a key issue for school development. In the other subjects teaching and learning is satisfactory, but there is less consistency of practice between classes in the same year group as compared to practice in English, mathematics and science.
16. The quality of teaching for the children in the nursery and reception years<sup>5</sup> is frequently very good, though there is some inconsistency of quality between the reception classes.

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<sup>5</sup> The Foundation Stage

In the nursery class, teaching is consistently very good. This consistently high quality of teaching is the reason for the rapid progress in learning that children make in their early years at school. Teachers, members of the support staff and parent helpers work closely together to promote learning. They have a clear understanding of the needs of young children and realistically high expectations of achievement and behaviour. They give children challenging and interesting tasks to consolidate and develop their knowledge and understanding. All members of staff use language carefully to develop children's speaking skills. They encourage children to work independently and make choices. The quality of teaching for the younger children has improved since the previous inspection. It is now a significant strength of the school and contributes to the very good start and progress made by children in the Foundation Stage.

17. In literacy, the quality of teaching is good in each year group and many lessons are very good. Teachers have secure knowledge of the literacy strategy. They plan thoroughly, identifying clearly how expectations for different abilities are to be covered. Teachers give clear explanations and set precise targets for the work to be done. Teachers recognise the primary importance of literacy and create effective links between English and its application to other subjects, such as history and geography.
18. The quality of teaching in numeracy is good in most classes. This good teaching is linked to teachers' understanding of and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils and evaluate carefully to see what pupils have learnt. They and the teaching assistants give good support to individuals and groups of pupils. Links with other subjects are planned, but this aspect is not as strong as with literacy.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught and supported well by teaching assistants. Clear, precise explanations and carefully targeted questioning ensure that levels of understanding are high and potential learning difficulties are minimised. As well as good teaching of specific strategies to improve skills, emphasis is appropriately placed on increasing confidence and self-esteem. In many lessons, pupils with special educational needs are grouped together for work that matches their ability and receive additional help if needed. This is particularly so in English and mathematics. When they are withdrawn from lessons, for example, to work on letter sounds, it is only to another area in the classroom, where the surroundings are quiet and conducive to listening. The teaching assistants provide very effective help for these pupils in lessons when they deem it necessary, but encourage independence as they progress through the school. These pupils are given individual educational plans that have clear and attainable targets, such as to learn specific letter blends. Such targets are not set in tablets of stone, but are adjusted quickly when reached. Planning is very effective, due to the good liaison between the teachers, the teaching assistants and the special needs coordinator.
20. In the best lessons, teachers show good subject knowledge, which is passed on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. The purpose of the lesson is shared with pupils and contributes well to their understanding of their own learning. Planning is very good, matching the scheme of work and ability of the pupils. Teachers use demonstration and explanation skills well to put across key teaching points. Lesson introductions are challenging and require pupils to think and give answers to teachers' questions; for example, in numeracy, they are expected to explain how they find answers to mental arithmetic problems. Relationships are very good, with pupils being confident and secure with their teachers and support staff. In many subjects, teacher expectations are sufficiently high, but the most gifted and talented pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

21. Within this context of good teaching, there is still too much variation between classes. In a few subjects, such as information and communication technology and design and technology, the full extent of the curriculum is not adequately taught across the school.
22. Teachers use resources well to support pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are used effectively in lessons to support individuals or small groups of pupils. They work closely with class teachers and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Time is used well and there are only few occasions when pupils are not purposefully engaged in learning or worthwhile activities.
23. Teachers mark pupils' work and guide pupils in their future learning through constructive and helpful comments. However, the use made of marking and assessments to plan future lessons and track pupils' learning is inconsistent and needs further development. Homework is used well to support the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of literacy and numeracy.

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

24. The school provides a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities for its pupils. Statutory requirements are effectively met. A strength of the provision is the way in which parents are informed of what each class will be studying in all subjects throughout the year.
25. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage<sup>6</sup> is very good. The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes covers all the areas of learning for children at this age. It follows the recommended *Stepping Stones* and leads to the early learning goals<sup>7</sup>. It is rich and varied, successfully capturing and developing children's interests across a wide range of experiences. In particular, the provision made for children's personal, social and emotional development is first class; it is central to the good progress children make at the start of their school careers.
26. The school's curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. It includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education, which is based on the locally agreed syllabus. The provision made for pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex and drugs education, is suitable for their ages. The use of the local environment, especially in art and design, geography and information and communication technology, is good. The curriculum for information and communication technology and design and technology is not fully covered by all classes and is in need of further development.
27. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully reviewed and updated its curriculum policies and plans, drawing upon nationally available guidance. These provide a good framework for the planning of a series of lessons. The quality of teachers' planning in the Foundation Stage is excellent. The way in which it links children's learning to the *Stepping Stones* is exemplary. In Years 1 and 2, the adoption of an agreed planning format has substantially improved the quality of teachers' planning. The overall standard of planning is good; it is strongest in literacy and numeracy. In some subjects, teachers' identification

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<sup>6</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

<sup>7</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

of the purpose of their lesson is too geared to the activities that pupils will do rather than the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding. Planning for design and technology does not take sufficient account of the designing and evaluation elements of pupils' learning.

28. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and these have been instrumental in raising standards at the end of Year 2. The planning for both strategies has been refined since their introduction and now provides a good basis for learning. Good analysis of national test results in mathematics has, for example, enabled teachers to focus on areas of relative weakness. The quality of the school's curriculum statement, particularly the emphasis on the development of pupils' thinking, research and enquiry skills, is good. There are, however, some inconsistencies within and between year groups in the planning for such skills in lessons.
29. The school is making good progress towards its goal of making information and communication technology a regular feature of learning in every subject area. In the Foundation Stage, computers are well used on a daily basis in, for example, developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world, in their mathematical development and in their communication and language development. In Year 2, teachers are making good use of the interactive whiteboards, for example, in numeracy lessons. Pupils successfully use a simple word-processing program to draft their writing and make good use of the Internet to e-mail messages and information to their *e-friends* in another school. However, the wider use of information and communication technology is currently impeded by the unreliability of the school's system. This is due to be replaced for the start of the new school year. The school has responded promptly and efficiently to the shortcomings in its provision.
30. The amount of teaching time given to each subject is similar to that recommended for pupils of this age. Teachers alternate some subjects each half term so that teaching time can be used more effectively. This arrangement works well in art and design, history and geography. The length of lessons is suitable for most subjects, providing time for a whole class introduction, group work and a concluding plenary session. Just occasionally, there is not enough time at the end of lessons for teachers to tie together what has been learnt and flag up the next steps in learning.
31. The school works hard to enable pupils of all abilities to take part in all lessons. Teachers' planning to address basic skills, such as listening, reading and number, is strong, and is particularly suitable for less able pupils. Classroom activities are usually designed so that all pupils can take part, often with individual work for those with specific needs. Pupils are taught in class groups for most subjects, with a mixture of the full range of abilities. The school only rarely groups children by ability from a number of different classes to provide extension work or specific opportunities for learning. Teachers plan well for the less able and those of average ability but sometimes the most able pupils are given additional work rather than work that is matched to their ability from the outset. Consequently, the present provision for gifted and talented pupils is underdeveloped. The school has a register of identified pupils, but no one has a management brief for this aspect of the school's provision. Programmes for staff in-service training for teaching gifted and talented pupils have not yet taken place.
32. All pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum, and through carefully planned liaison with the local junior school, these pupils are ensured continuity of support and learning. For example, one pupil will make more visits than others to ensure that he will be confident in the new surroundings. The coordinator in the junior school also attends annual reviews of these pupils, which ensures that pupils and parents are comfortable when pupils change schools.

33. Personal, social and health education is to be found across the school's curriculum, and provision is satisfactory overall. Pupils also benefit from additional experiences from the Life Education Centre each year. Every class has at least one session of Circle Time<sup>8</sup> each week and teachers regularly remind pupils of the school's *Golden Rules* for behaviour in and out of the classroom. Health education, including drugs awareness and sex education, is included in the science curriculum and is well supported by the annual visit of the Life Education Centre together with the school nurse and community police officer. However, the school does not have a specific policy for this area of the curriculum or guidance for teachers that brings together the various elements of the school's work.
34. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. All Year 2 pupils, regardless of their level of ability and experience, have a chance to take part in after-school sporting activities, which are currently provided free of charge. Parents comment positively about the improvement they see in their children's sporting and personal development as a result of taking part in these popular clubs. There are two recorder groups and Year 2 pupils lead the school's Christmas Carol concert at the nearby parish church.
35. Throughout the school, pupils' classroom learning is strengthened by visits and visitors. The school makes good use of the community to enhance pupils' learning opportunities. Through discussion about local routes and landmarks in geography, pupils' awareness of their environment is increased. Parents, grandparents and former staff and pupils are invited in for special celebrations, such as the school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Recent visits to the nearby Sculpture Park are inspiring work in art and stimulating pupils to find out more information from the Internet.
36. The school has good relationships with other educational establishments. Students from local secondary schools and Weymouth College work in the Foundation Stage as part of their work experience programme. Teachers in training also gain experience at the school. There are good links with pre-school providers who provide important information about children about to enter the school. The headteacher is actively involved in the local headteachers' forum and maintains good links with the neighbouring junior and secondary schools. Transfer arrangements with the junior school are developing well, with teachers exchanging teaching plans as well as information about pupils' attainment and progress.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

37. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Since the last inspection, the provision for pupils' spiritual development has been maintained while that for their moral, social and cultural development has improved.
38. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. From when they start in the nursery, pupils are encouraged to respect and appreciate the views of others, successfully developing their social skills alongside those of speaking and listening. Through assemblies and Circle Time, staff successfully promote the importance of thinking of others. In lessons, there are regular opportunities to work together, share and take turns. Teachers encourage pupils to talk about and consider each other's different methods of working. Visits, extra-curricular activities and class assemblies help promote pupils' self-esteem. Fund raising for local and national charities helps to make pupils aware of others less fortunate than themselves.

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<sup>8</sup> During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

39. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school provides pupils with a very clear set of moral values through the school's *Golden Rules*. Prominently displayed in classrooms, these give clear and unambiguous guidance to pupils as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour both in the classroom and around the school. All staff are familiar with these *Golden Rules* and provide a consistent message to pupils about what is right and wrong. They effectively model the principles of fairness, respect for property and caring for others. A strength of the school's provision is that the *Golden Rules* are more often discussed as a celebration of good behaviour rather than in response to unacceptable actions. The timetabling of *Golden Time* at the end of each week provides a good goal for pupils to aspire to; they value the opportunity to choose an activity in these sessions. Staff ensure that those who lose some of their *Golden Time* understand the reasons for this, and how they can avoid such a loss in the future. There is a good moral dimension in religious education lessons where pupils learn about other faiths as well as Christianity. Staff effectively raise pupils' awareness of moral and environmental issues. For example, pupils in Year 1 demonstrate strong views about rubbish and recycling.
40. The provision for the cultural development of pupils is good. The school effectively provides pupils with insights into the beliefs and cultures of other people through the curriculum in literacy, geography, religious education, art and music. Visits to places of worship are linked to religious education. Where it is impractical to make such visits, teachers make good use of videos and other materials within school. During this school year, pupils have celebrated *Eid* and the *Chinese New Year* as well as traditional British festivals. A forthcoming school focus is native Australian customs and culture. The school participates in non-competitive music festivals with other schools.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements. Whole school themes for these daily events are well suited to pupils' ages. Although pupils are attentive and recorded music is suitably used to create the right atmosphere, opportunities for pupils to reflect and think about what they see and hear lack focus and are too brief. In the nursery, children's spiritual development is very well provided for through stories, drama and listening to music such as excerpts from *Swan Lake*. In other classes, spiritual development is incidental rather than planned. Pupils in a Year 1 class particularly enjoyed listening to Benjamin Britten's *Pizzicato Polka* and used their imaginations well to suggest a sequence of body movements to 'tell' the story the music suggested to them.

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

42. The school continues to provide a very caring and supportive environment for pupils. Its provision for pupils' health, welfare and guidance is good, and makes a significant contribution to their personal and academic development. Parents feel that teachers are helpful and provide a listening ear when the children, or they, have problems or concerns. The school has an appropriate focus on ensuring all pupils are fully involved in school life and have equal opportunities to succeed. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Teachers and their support staff know their pupils very well. They effectively monitor pupils' personal development and will act quickly when they see a need.
43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very effective. There is a clear system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils are aware of the *Golden Rules* and how they should behave, and this is reflected in their good behaviour and the orderly atmosphere in the school. The weekly celebration assemblies recognise pupils' successes and achievements. Pupils respond enthusiastically to mentions in the 'Golden Book' and talk excitedly about the activities they have negotiated for '*Golden Time*' on a

Friday. Information regarding the school's behaviour policy is circulated in the prospectus and included in the home/school agreement. It clearly highlights the school's expectations and identifies the responsibilities of staff, parents and pupils. Procedures to monitor and eliminate oppressive behaviour or bullying are very good, with the school operating the 'No Blame Approach'. Pupils know what to do and feel confident in going to any member of staff if they have concerns.

44. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good despite the fact that attendance is too low. The school keeps parents informed about their responsibilities for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and promptly, but is currently not offering incentives to promote better attendance. Attendance figures are closely monitored and evaluated to ascertain the reasons for absences and to enable the school to address areas of concern. There are good links with the educational welfare officer, who attends the school regularly and follows up issues where necessary.
45. The school has good systems and guidelines in place for child protection and ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. The headteacher has designated responsibility for child protection. Although she has not undertaken recent training due to lack of appropriate courses, she and other members of staff are aware of the necessary regulations and requirements relating to child protection issues. Sufficient numbers of staff are qualified to provide first aid treatment. Well-established systems are in place to take care of pupils who have minor accidents or fall ill during the day, and there are effective procedures to meet the medical needs of pupils. The school has appropriate links with the external agencies such as the school nurse, speech therapist and educational psychologist.
46. There is an appropriate health and safety policy and procedures in place to address the issues of safety and security of pupils in and around the school and when out on visits. The headteacher, site manager and the health and safety governor undertake regular health and safety checks and risk assessments, reporting back to the governing body. The governors take their responsibilities for health and safety seriously. A thorough analysis of incidents and minor accidents helps inform the school of any areas of concern and these are quickly addressed. A recent study revealed that there are no major hazards, and that falls and bumps are most frequently caused by pupil exuberance and running around in the playground.

## Assessment

47. The school has developed good procedures for monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils from the time that they enter the school. In the nursery, adults make detailed and thorough assessments as children take part in activities. Good systems for tracking pupil progress in English, mathematics and science through Years 1 and 2 have recently been put in place, and are used in all classes. The assessment co-ordinator has run several workshops and in-service training sessions with staff to ensure that they match pupils' work accurately to National Curriculum levels, and firm plans are in place to continue this. In English, writing progress books provide evidence of achievement, and teachers regularly assess pupils' progress and provide targets for future development for pupils to work towards. This has had a positive impact on standards of attainment in writing. Teachers need further experience of making judgements on pupils' work across all subjects by examining work from a range of pupils across the school. This will improve the accuracy and consistency of teacher assessments in all aspects of each subject.
48. The good procedures are not having sufficient impact upon standards at the end of Year 2 because the use of the assessment information is under-developed. Assessments are made, but with the exception of writing, they are not used to set targets for groups or individuals so that they know what they have to do to improve further. In some lessons,

assessments are not used to plan activities with a high enough level of challenge to make sure the most able pupils reach their potential. In some classes, the skills of teaching assistants are not fully used to gather and record information about pupils' work, for instance by making notes about mathematical processes pupils use to work out calculations, or the spelling strategies used when working in groups.

49. There is some inconsistency in the ways in which assessments are carried out within classes and across subjects. Subject leaders do not monitor assessment sufficiently rigorously to ensure that all pupils' achievements are recorded and that teachers are using the results of assessment to help them plan for future learning.
50. The school has very effective procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils, in order to identify those with special educational needs. The excellent monitoring, and the very close communication between all staff, both in the nursery and in the main school, means that the needs of any child or pupil about whom there are concerns are quickly identified, and appropriate action taken. Those pupils who have statements of special educational needs receive very good support as detailed in their statements.

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

51. The school's partnership with parents is outstanding. The quality of information provided for parents is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Parents feel they are getting '*lots of information*' and find '*the school open and the staff accessible*'. Good induction information is provided for parents of children in the nursery. Information regarding the school and its activities is detailed on the web site and in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. Regular contact with parents is maintained through termly news-sheets and updating letters informing them of forthcoming activities or events. The reading folders provide excellent day-to-day contact between home and school. Curriculum information, including details of projects and topics to be covered, is shared with parents at the beginning of the year and on notice boards outside classrooms.
52. Parents have very positive views about links with the school. They are made to feel welcome, and particularly value the invitation into classrooms to share books and activities with their children at the start of the day. They feel comfortable in approaching the school with any issues. They appreciate the open door policy and the fact that the school encourages suggestions and takes any concerns they have seriously, handling them sensitively. They feel that the teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. The parents' questionnaires identified a few concerns. Twenty-two per cent of parents who responded made comments about the amount of homework provided, although they did acknowledge during the parents meeting that there was no pressure on pupils to complete the work. The inspection team considers that the homework set is generally appropriate and effective. Forty per cent of parents expressed concerns relating to the range of activities offered after school. This may relate to the fact that these activities are only available to Year 2 pupils. Twenty per cent of parents did not feel that they were kept fully informed about the progress their children were making. The school has very good procedures for reporting to parents, but these are not consistently applied by all staff.
53. Parents have frequent opportunities to speak with staff, to ask questions or discuss any concerns they may have through 'drop-in' sessions, a 'meet the teacher' session at the start of the year and the termly consultation evenings. These are always well attended. The reporting focus is through personal contact, with the annual reports to parents providing an overview at the end of the year. The quality of reports varies, with the best examples clearly detailing each pupil's progress and attainment, and identifying targets for improvement. However, some parents felt the use of 'jargon' made them inaccessible so

they could not clearly identify what the child knows, understands and can do. Parents are regularly consulted about different issues such as the setting up of an after school club. The teachers' medium and long-term plans are posted on classroom notice boards to keep parents apprised of what is happening in the classroom.

54. The outstanding contribution of parents to their children's education is having a very positive impact on pupils' progress and learning. The school warmly encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning by helping out in the school. A very large number of adults help out on a regular basis by listening to reading, working with literacy and numeracy groups, helping in the library or providing assistance on school trips. Parents regularly share books with their children both at school and at home, and this is contributing to the good standards of reading. A reception classroom was buzzing one morning with about 20 parents focused 'one on one' or with small groups playing games or undertaking a number of work-related activities, whilst others were off in the library helping to select new books for reading. This is a weekly event that draws tremendous support and interest from parents. School events such as class assemblies, special services, curriculum evenings and plays are always well attended. The involvement of parents through the parent, teacher and friends association also makes a valuable contribution to the school. This is very effectively run by a committed group of parents, who successfully organise a number of fund-raising and social events each year. The events are well attended and generate substantial additional funds for the school. These have helped purchase computers, interactive whiteboards, a digital camera and other items identified each year on teachers' 'wish lists'. Parents are currently fund raising to purchase large outdoor play equipment for the school playground. Additionally, a number of parents undertake maintenance tasks around the school, such as painting play huts or helping to develop the environmental areas. This provides valuable extra support for the school.
55. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in the support that their children receive. All attend the annual reviews, and contribute to the agreed targets. There is excellent informal communication between the coordinator and parents, who know that they can raise any concern, and action will be taken.

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

56. The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher and deputy head manage the school very well, with the governors making a valuable contribution. After the last inspection, in 1998, the school's development was severely disrupted by staffing difficulties and the standards of pupils' work declined. However, during the last two years there has been rapid progress and the school has made a good improvement. It has successfully come through the period of difficult staffing issues, and is now in a position to make even further improvements. The headteacher provides calm and purposeful leadership and is committed to raising standards and ensuring continual improvements to all aspects of school life. She has high expectations and a clear vision of the educational direction for the school. This has been very well communicated to all involved with the school and is shared by the staff and governors. There is a strong sense of teamwork, commitment and shared purpose to the school's work. As a result, the school provides a supportive and effective learning environment appropriate to the needs of all its pupils.
57. The headteacher receives good support from the deputy head, other senior teachers, an able team of staff and the governing body. A regular pattern of meetings has been established which involves key personnel in various capacities. Through these meetings, the headteacher and governors are kept well aware of issues impacting on the effective functioning of the school in all its aspects. The subject leaders for literacy and numeracy have been very effective and supported all staff to raise standards. The school has rightly

focused on raising the standards of reading, writing and mathematics in particular. Owing to this focus on literacy and numeracy, the other subjects have had less emphasis and the role of the subject leaders for these subjects is not as strongly developed or as effective.

58. There are clear systems for monitoring teaching and the curriculum that are undertaken by relevant post holders and senior staff. Subsequently, the headteacher and deputy have had a significant role in monitoring the performance of teachers and the standards achieved by the pupils. Procedures for monitoring are well developed and structured. They involve agreeing the aspects of work to be monitored, and include formal feedback with the recording of outcomes. The school uses the strengths and expertise of senior staff to best advantage. However, some senior staff have too much responsibility. As delegation encourages the development of good management experience for individual staff, some of the responsibilities held by the senior staff should now be allocated to others.
59. The school has responded positively to national initiatives. A curriculum review was undertaken, and policies and schemes of work have been revised. Subject leaders for literacy and numeracy have specific time allowed for regular monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching and learning. School performance data has been analysed and the results drawn together to provide considerable information. Good use of the information is made to inform target-setting procedures and tracking the performance of various cohorts or individual pupils. The school has used the analysis to focus on improving lesson planning and raising pupils' attainment. Although subject leaders in other subjects also monitor through a review of teachers' plans and a scrutiny of pupils' work, this process is less rigorous than for literacy and numeracy.
60. The school has a very good development plan that clearly identifies relevant priorities. The plan is created by an effective process of audit and consultation, which results in an action plan for each area of focus. Targets are established and progress towards completing them is monitored by the headteacher and governors. Budget proposals and staff development initiatives are closely linked to the school development plan. Monitoring for the impact of expenditure on standards is managed effectively. Each subject has an action plan devised by the subject leader. Some are good, but the school is aware that others lack the detail to ensure consistency between classes and improvement across the school.
61. Governors are conscientious in their support of the school. They work hard to make sure that the school can function as effectively as possible, particularly with regard to financial management and improvement of the premises and environment. The chair of governors meets regularly with the headteacher and together they share a vision for the school that is firmly based on high expectations of pupil performance. The governing body is properly constituted, and roles and responsibilities are clear. Meetings, which are properly managed and minuted, are held regularly. A variety of sub-committees oversee different aspects of the school's work. The governing body is kept informed of developments through regular reporting arrangements. Individual governors undertake responsibility for specific aspects of the school's work. Some visit the school regularly and provide reports for the governing body, based on their valuable first-hand observation of the school.
62. Governors have a good understanding of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, governors' ability to present a robust challenge is well developed, for example with regard to holding the school to account for the setting of realistic standards. In addition to information and insight from sub-committees and individuals, the governing body is kept well informed by reports from the headteacher. As a result, governors can contribute to the making of school policy. The school development plan is a joint endeavour that is agreed following governor scrutiny of the school's draft proposals.

63. Financial planning and budget controls are good. The most recent local authority audit judged the financial management to be good, with only a few recommendations to be resolved. School decisions are supported through careful financial management, with budgets delegated to subject leaders in accordance with agreed priorities. The bursar creates a budget profile, which is submitted for scrutiny before being approved by the governing body. The financial sub-committee monitors the budget on a regular basis with very good support from the headteacher and bursar. Procedures for the management of the budget and other funds are effective and secure. An efficient system ensures that the procurement of goods or services is properly completed and recorded. Best value is sought by a careful scrutiny of suppliers and a tendering process where appropriate. Non-public funds are managed with the same rigour as official funds, and maintained and audited regularly in line with the official requirements. The high degree of effectiveness of the administration arrangements releases the headteacher and others to focus attention on the educational priorities for the school. The school ensures that all specific grants, such as those for pupils with special educational needs, are used appropriately to support the intended provision. The funds are related directly to improving pupils' learning.
64. The friendly and helpful office staff manage the arrangements for the daily administration and organisation of the school smoothly and efficiently. Good use of technology supports the school arrangements and ensures that accurate information and sound budget advice are easily available. All administrative and site staff complete their tasks competently and take a pride over their involvement with the school.
65. The leadership and management of special educational needs are excellent. The coordinator has a clear vision of its future development, highlighted in a detailed action plan. She has created a high performing team of teaching assistants who are very experienced and have a shared commitment to meeting the needs of pupils. There is excellent communication between all staff concerned, which results in immediate action being taken when necessary. All staff receive relevant training, which enables them to keep up-to-date with new developments in education, and with the specific needs of pupils. The governor for special educational needs is very well qualified and her weekly visits to school keep her fully informed about any developments. She ensures that other governors are kept fully informed of this aspect of school provision.

#### *Staffing, accommodation and resources*

66. There is now a good match of teachers and teaching assistants to meet the needs of pupils in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) and in Years 1 and 2. This has improved since the time of the last inspection. After the last inspection there was a period of considerable change amongst teachers, several of whom were seconded to other schools, but the school now has a stable staffing profile. There was considerable disruption to school development caused by the staff changes and the standards of pupils' work declined to well below the national average.
67. The introduction of performance management and appraisal has been very well managed, and has resulted in the 'Investors in People Award', being granted to the school on its first application. Evaluations of courses and staff training are acted upon, which has resulted in improved induction courses for new staff. All staff are appraised, including the midday assistants, which has contributed positively to their effectiveness. All classes have a teaching assistant, who works effectively with the class teacher.
68. Overall, the accommodation is very good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. However, the classrooms are spaced well apart and this restricts teachers from easily sharing their good practice and ideas. The design of the building creates high

energy and maintenance costs. Each class has a separate area for class teaching, and an excellent large enclosed space, which is used for painting or large construction work. The library is inviting, with comfortable chairs, tables and chairs, and space for pupils to browse. The hall is sufficiently large to accommodate the whole school, but for a while has had a leaking roof.

69. As the school is entered, the wealth of displays of pupils' work, and exciting art work in particular, livens up the wide, spacious corridors. The outside accommodation is delightful, with a paved area outside each classroom with picnic benches and a hut. There are also wide grassed areas, where pupils can run and play. The school has a large garden area that has a space for each class to grow plants, a butterfly garden, an area for digging, and a 'wildlife area'. The latter is a considerable asset to enhance the school curriculum. All pupils have planted bulbs, and this gives them pride in their surroundings and an interest in growing things.
70. The accommodation for the area of special educational needs is very good. The coordinator has a separate office, which is quiet and therefore invaluable for testing pupils and for the necessary personal communication. However, the school does not have a toilet for the disabled, although one is planned. Access for those who use wheelchairs is possible from the exterior of the building.
71. Resources are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum, and they are particularly good in mathematics, music and information and communication technology. However, the range of books in the library is in need of some development, especially non-fiction materials. Resources for pupils who have special educational needs are sufficient to meet their specific needs.

#### *Value for money*

72. Taking into account:
- the progress made by pupils and the above average standards achieved;
  - the improvements, including teaching, since the previous inspection;
  - the very good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils; and
  - the very good leadership and management by senior staff;
- the school is judged to give good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. The inspectors agree with the objectives outlined in the school's development plan. In order to further improve the standards of education, the governors, headteacher and **staff should:**

1 continue to develop assessment procedures\*\* by:

- providing staff training on matching pupils' work accurately to National Curriculum levels;
- providing regular opportunities in all subjects to moderate pupils' work between classes;
- ensuring subject leaders develop marking and assessment procedures that are used consistently in all classes;
- making greater use of assessment information to set targets for individual pupils and groups of pupils;
- involving the teaching assistants to a greater extent in gathering and recording information about pupils' work;

(paragraphs: 47 - 52)

2 improve the provision for design and technology by:

- ensuring the programme of study is fully covered in all year groups and classes;
- ensuring that pupils experience elements of designing and evaluating the things they make;
- providing subject training for staff;
- establishing a detailed subject action plan to secure improvements;
- strengthening the role of the subject leader;

(paragraphs: 114 - 116)

3 ensure the most gifted and talented pupils reach their full potential\*\* by:

- identifying the most gifted and talented pupils in all subjects;
- ensuring the work set is always sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils;
- including learning objectives for gifted and talented pupils in the schemes of work and lesson planning for all subjects.

(paragraphs: 3, 20, 31, 92, 98, 101)

## OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

Governors may consider including the following less important issues in their action plan:

- improving attendance through urging parents to ensure their children do not miss school;
- developing a policy for personal, social and health education.

(paragraphs: 33, 44)

\*\* Already identified in the school's development plan

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
7	31	31	28	3	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	266
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	54

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	41	41	82

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	33	40
	Girls	35	36	36
	Total	65	69	76
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (87)	84 (91)	93 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	39	36
	Girls	35	36	36
	Total	64	75	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (89)	91 (98)	88 (83)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

*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	266	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	29.6

### Education support staff: YR-Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	213

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	40
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	20

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	543,066
Total expenditure	554,375
Expenditure per pupil	1,852
Balance brought forward from previous year	65,409
Balance carried forward to next year	52,043

## Recruitment of teachers

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 69%

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	207

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	37	2	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	47	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	38	16	5	2
The teaching is good.	70	25	4	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	33	17	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	25	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	43	45	11	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	54	36	6	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	40	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	33	18	8	14

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents think it is a caring school and the good relationships show a trust between staff and pupils.  
Parents would like to see more male role models in the school.

## 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<sup>9</sup>

#### Strengths:

- Excellent planning in both nursery and reception classes
- Very good teaching across the Foundation Stage ensures the children make rapid progress
- Children make very good progress and achieve high standards in their personal, social and emotional development
- Parents and carers are made to feel very welcome, and the very effective use of parent volunteers promotes a positive environment for learning
- Very good leadership and management ensure that staff, helpers and children are always purposefully engaged in carefully planned activities

There are no significant areas for development, but the school may wish to consider these areas for further improvement:

- Improvements to the outdoor areas for reception classes
- Establishing a covered area for outdoor play in the nursery

74. The arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage of their education are very good and a strength of the school. The school admits children to the nursery class after their third birthday, and they transfer to the reception class the following year. Most children in the reception classes attend the school's nursery before they enter full-time school. The nursery makes very good provision for children's all round development and education. The reception classes build very effectively on the work of the nursery. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning promotes the early learning goals<sup>10</sup> very successfully in all areas of development. The nursery class is accommodated in a large well equipped unit, which contributes to the very good provision for their education. There is a secure and specifically designated outdoor area for use by the children in the nursery. However, as there is no covered area for outdoor play, children's access to some equipment and outdoor activities is restricted in bad weather.
75. Planning for the Foundation Stage is excellent, and this means that children have a very firm foundation for their future learning and a smooth transfer from nursery to reception class, and then to Year 1 when they begin working to the requirements of the National Curriculum. All members of staff who teach children in the nursery and reception classes have a clear commitment to raising standards. The record keeping and assessment systems are clear and informative and provide a good base from which to plan work for individual children and groups. Staff ensure that all children are fully included in all activities and have equal access to all areas of learning. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very effective in promoting high standards in all aspects of planning, teaching and learning.
76. The majority of children enter the nursery with standards that are in line with expectations for their age in most areas of learning. However, a small, but significant number have poorly developed language skills. Children respond positively to the high quality provision in the nursery and make good progress, particularly in the development of their social

<sup>9</sup> The **Foundation Stage** curriculum is made up of six areas – personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. Standards are measured by the **early learning goals** – what children are expected to know, understand and be able to do in the six areas by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1.

<sup>10</sup> QCA (Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early learning goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

skills. This continues during the reception year. Because of this good progress, many enter Year 1 with standards that are above average and almost all meet the expectations of the early learning goals, or exceed them. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good overall. In the nursery, teaching is never less than very good, and some lessons observed during the inspection were excellent. In the three Reception classes, the quality of teaching is more mixed, and varies from satisfactory to excellent. The very good teamwork seen between teachers and teaching assistants and the contribution of parent helpers enhance the quality of provision.

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

77. Children settle quickly into the security of the nursery and make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Members of staff encourage parents and carers to stay with their children until they feel confident. This, along with the calm and caring attitudes of the nursery staff makes the children feel secure. They are self-possessed and confident when moving around the nursery and outside play areas. Most children share and take turns willingly, for example when using outdoor equipment. They concentrate hard on all their tasks; for example, three children worked together with a high level of concentration on a computer program for over 15 minutes. Children clearly enjoy their work in the nursery. They take care of classroom equipment and soon develop independence; for instance they learn to put on overalls to work on messy activities without being told, and to tidy up after themselves. They continue this level of personal development as they enter the reception classes. Parents and carers are encouraged to visit the reception classes and to help with reading and a range of other activities. Their support and help makes a positive contribution to children's very good social development. Children persevere to finish their tasks and talk eagerly about their work. They quickly understand the routines of school life and move quietly and confidently around the school. They walk sensibly to the hall for assemblies and play happily together at break times. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, all children, including those with special educational needs, meet or exceed the levels expected in their development of social and personal skills.

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

78. The provision for the development of language and literacy is very good. A number of children enter the nursery with under-developed language skills and immature speech. They receive a good level of individual help and support to increase their speaking skills. Teachers model correct speech and language structures and encourage children to repeat them. For instance, one child remarked, when looking at a picture, 'Him boat on'. 'Yes', said the teacher, 'It's got boats on. Tell me again'. They make good progress with all aspects of language development including enjoyment of books and stories. They quickly learn how to handle books correctly and understand that pictures and print convey meaning. All children learn to use pencils correctly. They increase their early writing skills in a range of activities that increase their hand and eye control. For instance, they respond to letters and postcards written to their class, showing developing phonic skills in their attempts to spell words. In the reception class, very good teaching contributes to continued good progress. The teaching of the key skills of reading is very effective. Children know their initial letter sounds, and are confident to go to the whiteboard and point out the sound 'b' in the word 'bear'. The more able identify the difference in the middle vowel sound in similar words such as 'bed' and 'bud', and can find other words that rhyme with them. Because the teaching of letter sounds and other early reading skills is good, most children are established on the school's reading scheme by the end of reception. They know that books are read from left to right, and the more able know the terms 'author' and 'title'. The teaching of writing is good. By the end of reception, children write their names unaided and most write short sentences, which are mainly accurately

spelled, sometimes with capital letters and full stops. Progress in this area of learning is good, and by the time children enter Year 1 they meet the expectations of the early learning goals, with more-able children established on the early levels of the National Curriculum.

### **Mathematical development**

79. The provision for children's mathematical development is very good. Most children make good progress in consolidating their number skills through counting and ordering activities, and developing awareness of shapes and measures. Children in the nursery class sort and classify postcards into sets, saying why they match each other, and then count the cards accurately. They find the correct numeral to label their set of postcards and copy it carefully on the whiteboard. A very able child counted the number of children in the class, and informed the teacher, 'There's 24 children today and there's 3 grown ups. That makes 27 altogether'. Construction activities with large bricks and blocks help to promote children's awareness of shape and size, and support the development of control skills. When they join a reception class, children have a session of structured number work each day. They read, write and order numbers up to 20, with many doing so to 30 and beyond. They show good understanding of 'one more than' and 'one less than'. The most able estimate 'how many?' up to 20 by making a 'sensible guess', and they then check their answers. This is a good example of how the learning needs of the more able are met. In the same lesson, children who are still insecure in counting to 10 worked effectively with a teaching assistant in counting objects and writing numerals. Teachers introduce appropriate mathematical language and children learn and use the terms 'estimate', 'over', 'under', 'more than' and 'less than' correctly. All children in the Foundation Stage learn and sing number rhymes. Their learning in mathematics is supported by the structured use of number games and practical apparatus. Because they make good progress, children meet the expectations of the early learning goals, with many established on the early stages of the National Curriculum when they enter Year 1.

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

80. The nursery and reception classes make very good provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Teaching is very good and this makes a strong contribution to the progress made. There are many opportunities in the nursery for children to explore the natural and man-made world. For example, they investigate the environment of the beach, and through experience of natural materials such as pebbles, sand and shells, learn about the properties of different materials and the effects of water on them. Children in the nursery use computers as a matter of routine, and confidently control the mouse to 'click and drag' a shape to make a picture. Children continue to consolidate and increase their learning as they progress through the reception classes. Through their work on 'bears', children learn about environments and climates. They explore the properties of ice, and discover what happens to it when it is left in a warm place. They have experience of using construction kits, and show good skills of making. Through stories they develop an awareness of the wider world and cultures and religions which are different from theirs. By the time they leave the reception class, most children exceed the expectations of the early learning goals.

### **Physical development**

81. The Foundation Stage classes make good provision for children's physical development, and children make sound progress. They have access to pencils, crayons, scissors and glue from the beginning of their time in the nursery, and soon learn to control and use correctly a range of basic equipment. The direct teaching of skills enables them to

increase their fine control skills, and they are encouraged to decide for themselves which implement to use. For instance, children were offered a choice of thickness of paint brushes, and so discovered how to obtain a thicker or finer line. Children in the nursery develop their climbing and balancing skills effectively using both indoor and outdoor equipment. They have opportunities to run, jump and skip and use wheeled toys with an increasing awareness of space. Children in the reception classes have opportunities for outdoor play in the areas outside their classrooms, but provision for outdoor activities is less well developed than it is in the nursery. They regularly go to the main hall to play ball games and they gain confidence and skill in using a range of other apparatus. By the time they enter Year 1, they meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their physical development.

## **Creative development**

82. The provision for children's creative development is very good. Children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage as they learn basic techniques. This enables them to use and control materials effectively. They paint, print, cut and stick to create pictures and patterns. They sing songs tunefully and use percussion instruments to create patterns of sound. A range of dressing up clothes enables them to engage in role-play in the home corner and in a range of other contexts such as 'going to the beach'. In the reception classes they enjoy experimenting with a range of art and craft materials including collage. They enjoy familiar songs and rhymes, and during the inspection made good progress in learning the words and accompanying actions for 'A Bear Hunt'. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children are on target to meet or exceed the early learning goals.
83. The high quality of teaching they experience in the nursery and reception classes is reflected in the level of progress children make in their early years at school. Teachers and support staff provide a good balance between the direct teaching of specific skills, such as how to hold a paintbrush, and opportunities for independent learning. They encourage children to work independently and make choices. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. Both teaching and the provision generally are now very good, with some excellent features.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Strengths:**

- Leadership and management of the subject are very good
- Very good planning means that teachers and pupils are clear about what steps in learning will take place in each lesson
- Good assessment of strengths and weaknesses in the subject, for example the recent identification that aspects of writing, including handwriting, are areas for improvement
- Good teaching of key skills
- Effective teaching of all pupils, with work carefully matched to ability and learning needs
- The successful introduction of the Early Literacy Strategy for those identified as in need of additional support during Year 1

### **Areas for development:**

- The use of assessment information to refine curriculum planning and set targets for individual pupils
- Monitoring pupils' choice of reading books to ensure the most able are fully challenged
- The use of information and communications technology to teach literacy
- Development of drama within the regular programme for literacy

84. Overall, when pupils enter Year 1 they have literacy skills that are above average, owing to the very good start they make in the nursery and reception classes. The results of the 2002 national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 indicate that the standards achieved when compared to all schools with infant aged pupils were below average in reading and average in writing. The same results when compared to similar schools<sup>11</sup> were below average. Attainment has risen slightly during the last two years, improving on previous standards that were well below average. This trend of attainment reflects the severe staffing difficulties at school after the last inspection when several former senior teachers were seconded to work in other schools. Currently, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls
85. The standards of work seen by inspectors in the current Year 2 are now above average expectations in both reading and writing and better than the previous 2002 results. This is confirmed by the 2003 teacher assessments and demonstrates that the school has been successful in continuing to raise standards, which are now higher than at the time of the last inspection. Standards have continued to improve due to:
- highly effective management of the strategy to improve literacy skills;
  - better use made of assessment information;
  - the regular reviews of teaching and monitoring of pupils' work;
  - improved teaching and learning throughout Years 1 and 2;
  - more detailed curriculum and lesson plans;
  - better use being made of the teaching assistants.
86. Standards in speaking and listening are also good, with pupils making good progress during Year 2. Because of very effective support from teachers and teaching assistants, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The more able pupils make good progress in writing, and their progress in reading is sound.
87. By the end of Year 2, pupils' skills in speaking and listening are good. In lessons pupils listen attentively to the teacher and to each other. They value the contributions of their classmates. When working with teaching assistants and parent helpers, pupils listen carefully and respect the additional support they receive. Pupils speak clearly and confidently and willingly initiate conversations. They are very polite in saying 'good morning' to visitors. Teachers' good questioning skills encourage pupils to offer extended answers to questions, and to explain the reasons for their answers. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson when pupils discussed with their teacher and each other what they had enjoyed about a recent visit to Portland Castle and explained in detail which was their favourite part of the visit: 'I liked the quarry because I liked the sculptures and the horse on the wall'. 'And why were they your favourite bits?' probed the teacher, eliciting more information and thoughtful comment from an able pupil. In Year 2 pupils spoke confidently and clearly when they read sentences they had written in a literacy lesson to begin to compose riddles. There are occasional drama workshops run by outside specialist teachers, and this provision contributes to pupils' skills in speaking and listening. Drama and role-play do not feature regularly as part of the literacy provision in all classes, so whilst speaking and listening skills are good overall, they are not consistently extended through drama.
88. Standards in reading are above average because pupils are successfully taught the key early reading skills, particularly the use of letter sounds and picture clues. The work completed in sessions based on the Early Literacy Strategy makes a positive contribution to this. By the end of Year 2, pupils read accurately and fluently. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and blends to read new words. Pupils enjoy reading and talk confidently about books they have read. They know and explain the terms 'author' and

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<sup>11</sup> Schools with between 8 - 20% of pupils claiming free schools

'illustrator', and the more able understand the use of the contents page and the index. In stories they show good recall of the plot and talk about the characters. Year 1 readers achieve well, and the most able give preferences for favourite authors: 'I like Roald Dahl. 'The BFG' is my favourite'. The most able readers are sometimes assigned levels of reading books that do not offer sufficient challenge. Self-choice occasionally leads to pupils selecting books that are too hard or too easy. Regular sessions of guided reading ensure that on these occasions texts are well matched to pupils' abilities. It is evident that some pupils enjoy more interesting, challenging and appealing books at home than those they read at school. All pupils take books home regularly, and parents add comments to the reading record book. This additional parental involvement supports good standards in reading throughout the school.

89. Standards in writing are above average by the end of Year 2, and pupils make good progress in developing their skills of punctuation, spelling and grammar. Their writing is varied and interesting, and they have opportunities to engage in different kinds of writing, such as poetry, instructions, descriptions and stories. More able pupils in Year 2 use dictionaries independently to check spellings, and work successfully in pairs to compose interesting sentences to include in riddles. The less able and those with special educational needs are helped by the provision of writing guidelines and the support of a teaching assistant. Handwriting is satisfactory, with the majority of those in Year 2 completing their work in a well-formed joined style. Most work is neat and well presented, but in some classes there is insufficient emphasis on details such as layout of work, underlining titles and other features of presentation. There are occasional examples of word-processed writing in folders, but information and communication technology is not used extensively in the teaching of literacy. Written comments in 'writing progress books' which pupils complete each half term gives them useful feedback on what they have achieved and what they must do next to improve their writing. This target setting has been significant in the improvements seen in the standards of writing this year.
90. Throughout the school pupils display good attitudes to their work. Their behaviour is very good, and most sustain interest and concentration well. They take pride in the work they complete and are pleased to read it aloud to an audience. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, which underpin the successful management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils work together successfully in pairs and small groups. The support of teaching assistants contributes to the smooth running of lessons and ensures that all pupils participate fully.
91. The quality of teaching is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. In most lessons planning is very good, and ensures that pupils receive work that is appropriately matched to their ability. Pupils know what they are to learn because objectives are made clear at the beginning of the lesson and re-visited at the end. A variety of activities are included in the best lessons, so that a good pace is maintained and pupils' interest does not flag. In satisfactory lessons, aspects of classroom management are less strong; for example teachers do not provide shorter tasks with prompts to remind pupils of the need to complete work by a given time, or how to get on independently, such as by using a dictionary.
92. Assessment has been a focus of development in the teaching of English, and there are now good systems and procedures in place to monitor and track pupils' progress in reading and writing, and to regularly grade their work according to National Curriculum levels. The co-ordinator has analysed areas of weakness in past national tests taken at the end of Year 2, and has identified aspects where teaching needs to be strengthened. This has contributed to improvements in both reading and writing this year. Nevertheless, assessment information is not fully exploited to set targets for pupils' future learning, particularly in reading. The school has not devised sufficient strategies to support the

most gifted and talented pupils. This has resulted in some pupils reading at a level which is not challenging them or helping to extend their reading and writing skills and strategies.

93. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. There are updated policies and guidelines to support teachers in the planning of English, and the co-ordinator has run several in-service workshops for staff on aspects of teaching and assessment in literacy. Data analysis of tests is producing useful information on the strengths and weaknesses in literacy, which the school is using well to improve the provision. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the use of assessment information to guide future planning and teaching, and to set challenging targets. She has produced an action plan to address this issue. Resources for the teaching of literacy are adequate for current needs, and the provision of books in the library and in classrooms is satisfactory.

## MATHEMATICS

### Strengths:

- Standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national average
- Pupils' number work is strong
- The overall quality of teaching is good
- Good leadership is helping to raise standards

### Areas for development:

- Pupils' problem solving skills are not consistently developed
- Teachers do not assess pupils' attainment and progress in relation to the National Curriculum
- Identifying the most talented pupils to provide them with a suitable challenge

94. At the end of Year 2, standards are currently above the national average. The standards achieved in the 2002 National Curriculum statutory tests have been maintained. Standards are higher than at the time of the previous inspection and show a significant increase in the well below average results achieved in 1999 and 2000. Teacher assessment results for 2003 show that the proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding the level expected of pupils at this age has increased compared with last year. There are no significant differences in the attainment or progress of boys compared with girls.
95. A contributory factor to this improvement is the good analysis of last year's test results by the subject leader. From this, teachers identified weaknesses in pupils' learning and took steps to address these in their teaching during the current year. This good practice has been further developed in recent weeks through an analysis of pupils' performance in this year's tests. Whilst pupils successfully recognised number patterns, many incorrectly identified the missing number in a sequence. As a result, Year 2 teachers have revisited this topic with their classes before their move to junior school.
96. Pupils' work in number is strong. In Year 2, most pupils can count to 100 fluently; write down numbers in the correct order; add two and three digit numbers and multiply and divide by single units. Their recall of pairs of numbers making 20 or 30 is swift and many pupils can suggest alternative ways of undertaking a calculation, for example, when adding 19 to a number. In Year 1, pupils' recall of number bonds to ten is quick and good questioning from teachers helps pupils to check their answers, for example, by asking '*What number do I have to add to four to make ten?*' In exploring numbers to fifty, pupils understand that, for example, 47 is made up of 40 and 7 and that this is written as  $40+7=47$ .
97. In other areas of mathematics, pupils' work is secure, but just not as strong as in number. Those in Year 2 successfully identify quarters, thirds and halves of shapes, work with money in calculating the change from £1, and weigh and measure in metric units. Pupils

demonstrate a secure understanding of how to interpret and illustrate information in the form of a chart. Work on symmetry is suitably linked to information and communication technology. The subject leader is currently looking at the organisation of topics to ensure a fuller coverage of all aspects of the subject. The standard of presentation of pupils' work is satisfactory, but some teachers do not consistently apply strategies to correcting and marking the work.

98. Teachers' recent emphasis on developing pupils' use and application of mathematics is helping to raise standards. Overall, attainment in this area is good at the end of Year 2, but there are inconsistencies between classes in both year groups. In the best practice, regular emphasis on using correct mathematical terms means that pupils have a good understanding of the meaning of important statements, such as *more than* and *less than*. In the best lessons observed in both Year 1 and Year 2, pupils successfully explained their thinking and overcame difficulties themselves when solving problems. In other lessons, teachers provide suitable explanations but do not provide pupils with sufficient challenge to develop their own thinking, especially the most talented pupils.
99. In both Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in mathematics. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress because of the support they receive from adults and their classmates. The organisation of lessons allows these pupils to work alongside those of higher ability and they benefit from this. Their progress is also aided by the structure of the numeracy strategy, which enables them to systematically build up their skills in the use of number. Teaching assistants and, on occasions, parent volunteers, work hard to provide individuals with suitable support and guidance. They make good use of praise to encourage greater effort.
100. Teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the structure of the numeracy strategy. The movement between whole class and group work is generally well managed. Clear, whole class introductions to lessons help pupils to settle down quickly. In many lessons, pupils prompt the teacher to share with them the learning objectives for the session. This is good practice. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and watch the demonstrations on the interactive whiteboard intently. They show a genuine enjoyment of number work. They particularly like whole class recitals of numbers, such as counting forwards and backwards. Most are quick to answer questions, but teachers make sure that the less able and those with special educational needs have a chance to answer by waiting for their responses.
101. Although teachers plan suitable work for pupils who work at different rates, the pace of some lessons is not fast enough. When this happens during the mental mathematics starter at the beginning of a lesson, a small number of pupils lose their concentration and, if unchecked, slow the learning for others in the class. Overall, higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged by their work and make good progress, but the school does not, as yet, identify gifted pupils.
102. Most teachers make effective use of whole class sessions (called 'the plenary') at the end of lessons to reinforce learning. They make good use of examples of pupils' work to demonstrate effective methods. Pupils show a keen interest in each other's work and they listen carefully to explanations of how others have tackled problems.
103. The school has successfully implemented the numeracy strategy and this is well supported by the provision of a good range of books and other equipment. Teachers keep useful ongoing records of what pupils have learnt and understood in relation to the numeracy strategy but, as yet, they do not habitually assess pupils' work and progress in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards in Year 2 classes and there is satisfactory use of number and other computer

programs in Year 1. Improvements in this provision are planned to begin when a new computer system is introduced at the start of the new school year.

104. The subject leader took over leadership of the subject earlier in the school year. She has worked closely with the local education authority's numeracy consultant to identify and analyse strengths and shortcomings in the school's provision and has drawn up a good action plan to address identified needs. Her good leadership is helping to successfully raise standards. Overall, there have been good improvements since the last inspection.

## SCIENCE

### Strengths:

- The standards of pupils' work are steadily improving
- The teaching is good and results in a high level of pupil motivation and interest
- Effective leadership and management are helping to raise standards
- The wildlife area in school enhances the curriculum

### Areas for development:

- National Curriculum levels are not used to assess and monitor pupils' attainment and progress
- The pupils are not always challenged to achieve the highest standards through more difficult work or carefully targeted questioning
- Science written work is recorded within other subjects, which does not allow pupils to see a clear progression in their learning

105. Results have improved since the time of the last report, particularly for the number of pupils gaining the higher grades. In the 2002 teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level (Level 2) were below the national averages and those for similar schools. The percentage of pupils who gained the higher level (Level 3) was above the national average and the average of similar schools, which indicates good progress being made by the more able pupils. The 2003 teacher assessments show that the proportion of pupils who reached Level 2 has risen significantly, and is likely to match the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who have gained Level 3 has fallen slightly. There is no significant difference between the work of boys and girls.

106. A scrutiny of work and observation of lessons reveals the standard for pupils in Year 2 is good. It is higher than the 2002 assessments indicate, as more pupils now reach the expected level. The improvement is mostly due to more effective teaching, detailed planning and a regular review of the pupils' work. All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Pupils make observations of plants and animals in the local environment to a satisfactory level. When investigating where ice melts fastest, their predictions are usually accurate, and very good when they explain that it is because the refrigerator is cold, and the heater is hot. They also know that living things grow, and can note the changes from birth to two years later. Their knowledge of food groups is satisfactory, and how diet affects health is good. Pupils readily explain why a balanced diet is necessary, with a good emphasis on the value of fruit and vegetables. Pupils have a sound understanding about the properties of materials, for example, explaining the use of wool and cotton in clothing. Some recognise that changes occur with heat, which they explained when water changed to ice and then back to water. They also know that not all changes are reversible, which they explained with reference to paper, which burnt to ash. They confidently compare the way different devices work and that different push and pull forces can cause a change in speed or direction.

107. The overall quality of teaching is good, and has improved since the time of the last inspection. Teachers plan well, and interesting resources are used which ensure that

pupils are fully engaged in learning. This was seen when pupils explored a variety of materials, discovering metals that were magnetic or non-magnetic, and surfaces that reflected light. Most teachers use questions well and carefully include all pupils. This ensures that pupils understand the topic. In a very good lesson, questioning was challenging and made pupils think more deeply about the answers. For example, a pupil was asked searching questions about a dolphin, until he explained how it was adapted to its environment. Another pupil was asked how he knew that a living thing was an insect, which reinforced earlier learning. Also, the activities were varied, and matched the ability of the pupils, with the more able pupils given additional activities, which encouraged them to learn by themselves. Not all teachers use questions that prompt particular pupils to reach a higher level of understanding, but such targeted questioning is needed consistently if standards are to be raised further. When additional challenging activities were introduced, pupils' learning was extended. Teachers mark thoroughly with positive comments, and targets for improvement where appropriate, but they do not expect a high standard of presentation when pupils record their work.

108. Pupils enjoy science, and this is seen in their animated conversations about animals and materials. They are keen to find out more about the topic, and take care to be accurate, using the appropriate dictionaries. They share ideas and resources, and respect each other's work.
109. Leadership and management are good. Documentation is detailed, with a clear development plan and careful monitoring of pupils' work. However, examples of pupils' work are not marked using National Curriculum levels. The curriculum is constantly evaluated so that areas in which there is success are built on. Pupils do not have separate books to record their science work; therefore it is difficult for them to see progression in the subject and their learning. The wildlife area is very well used to explore habitats and living things, and is a considerable asset to the curriculum. Teachers do not always plan to fully extend the average and the higher ability pupils through additional activities and by questioning. Although this aspect has not improved since the time of the last report, there has been good improvement overall .

## ART AND DESIGN

### Strengths:

- The quality of teaching leads to a high level of motivation by pupils
- Visits enhance the curriculum
- Regular evaluation of pupils' work leads to improvements in the curriculum provided

### Areas for development:

- Assessment does not relate closely to National Curriculum levels
- Department documentation is inadequate to move the subject forward

110. Only two lessons were seen, but scrutiny of work shows that standards are in line with national expectations, and pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Pupils record with confidence what they observe. For example, they drew pot plants, which showed an understanding of line and leaf detail. They use images as a source material, and this was seen when they chose animal skin patterns to enlarge their picture. They used pastels with confidence and there was a wide variety in their work. One pupil with special educational needs had focused on an eye, which required a great attention to detail. Pupils work practically and imaginatively with a variety of media. The life size scarecrows, the cameos of Wyke Regis, the alien models, and the sculptures using natural materials are impressive in their variety and the care taken in their making. The cameos are small and detailed, and the sculptures show an appreciation of shape and colour. For example, one used only blue stone and shells and wood of a putty colour,

which enhanced the whole visual effect. They also evaluate artwork thoughtfully. For example, one pupil said that the best of the fire pictures was one that showed the fire spreading across London and also the flames going upwards. They copy the work of artists well. For example, a pupil produced a flower pattern in the style of a William Morris design.

111. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, which is demonstrated by the quality and variety of artwork in the school. In one lesson, the planning and resources used stimulated pupils' imaginations. They had seen a video on the 'Great Fire of London', and they were encouraged to experiment with colour and tissue paper to represent images of fire. 'Busy' music was played, which helped the pupils to concentrate, and they achieved well in the lesson, making both three- and two- dimensional pictures. Where the pace of another lesson slowed due to poor classroom management, pupils did not have time to discuss and explain their ideas. They were not questioned to reinforce their understanding of shape in sculptures, and therefore less learning took place.
112. Pupils enjoy art, and usually concentrate hard in lessons. They work together very well, take care of each other's work, and are very ready to share resources. They are eager to explain their work and give opinions of others' work. When they were invited to look at all the 'fire' pictures, they did this seriously, stopping and peering at artwork that interested them. The visit to the local sculpture park made a tremendous impact on the pupils. Many stated that it was the favoured part of the day, preferred to the castle armoury.
113. Leadership and management are satisfactory, and the good evaluation sheets used by teachers lead to changes in the curriculum. However, future developments are not sufficiently detailed to ensure improvement. Pupils' work is not assessed using National Curriculum level descriptors, which does not allow progress to be noted and weaknesses identified. Pupils are not offered the experiences that would allow them to achieve even higher levels, such as selecting their own artefacts to draw or paint. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

### Strengths:

- **The** quality of teaching in lessons seen

### Areas for development:

- Pupils are not experiencing the full range of design and technology activities required by the National Curriculum
- Pupils do not adequately design, make and evaluate their projects
- Pupils' work is not assessed using National Curriculum level descriptors
- Documentation is inadequate to move the subject forward, as there is not a detailed subject action plan to ensure improvements
- Strengthening the role of the subject leader

114. It is not possible to make a reliable judgement on standards in design and technology or the quality of teaching, as there was insufficient evidence available. Photographic and other evidence of a pop-up card, hand-sewn puppets, and one piece of written work were seen. However, these did not include any evaluations of the completed work or a design brief, though these are essential elements in the design and making process.
115. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen ensured pupils made good progress. However, teachers' plans indicate that provision across the school is inconsistent. The purpose of the lessons seen was on carefully focused tasks, but did not include the full designing, making and evaluating processes. The two lessons were planned well, and

pupils worked with components and materials that would provide the basis for them to generate ideas and plan their final project. Resources were used well. For example, many types of hinges were shown, and a toy car was taken apart. Following their experimentation, pupils discovered the basic principles of making wheeled vehicles, and the different ways in which hinges can be made. All pupils were involved, including those with special educational needs. One such pupil first made a hinge using a long thread, but realised that it would be more effective when joined with sticky tape. Questioning was very good as it made pupils think about the likely outcomes of what they were making. For example, a pupil was asked how the plasticine used helped the wheels turn, until she realised that to move it closer to the wheel would keep the wheel in place. A brief plenary was used effectively, when pupils were invited to talk about the problems they had encountered. Relationships are excellent, and this was shown when a pupil had made something weird and wonderful, and gentle encouragement by the teacher pointed her to altering her product to achieve her aim.

116. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, as monitoring does not ensure full coverage of all elements of the National Curriculum and work is not marked against National Curriculum level descriptors. Documentation is inadequate to move the subject forward. The subject action plan does not identify the most important areas for subject and staff development. Termly evaluation sheets are in place, and they have excellent potential for providing the basis for an effective scheme of work. However, there is no evidence that these sheets have been used to audit the quality of work or what pupils have learnt. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

### **Strengths:**

- The pupils are well managed and work in a pleasant atmosphere
- Pupils have positive attitudes to the subjects and speak with enthusiasm about what they have learnt
- The curriculum for geography and history is enriched by visits to local places of interest

### **Areas for development:**

- Monitoring of the subject to ensure greater consistency between classes
- Little use is made of information and communication technology to enhance the curriculum
- Additional materials and resources to enhance pupils' learning
- Assessment procedures to inform future planning and track pupils' progress

117. During the inspection, two Year 1 geography lessons and one Year 2 history lesson were observed. That so few lessons were available is partly due to the way the school organises the curriculum. Evidence about the subjects was gathered from a scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, reviewing teachers' planning documents and by talking to teachers and pupils. Geography and history are managed by the same subject leader, who is new to the role. By the end of Year 2, the standards of attainment for geography and history are close to national expectations for pupils of a similar age.
118. By the time pupils leave school, in geography sessions they show confidence in differentiating physical and human features and appreciate the reasons for differences found in contrasting environments. Pupils gain experience in using maps to locate places in and around their school and the local area. They use globes, atlases and maps of different scales to locate places visited on holiday. They share the first-hand knowledge of pupils who have experienced travel to different parts of the world. They conduct traffic surveys and explain why some roads are busier than others. In history, pupils develop an awareness of time by comparing then and now. For example, they compare the experiences of their parents and grandparents when they were children with their own

experiences. They contrast the differences at the seaside in 1900 to the present time. They understand that things and circumstances change over time and know some of the reasons why people acted the way they did. Pupils of all ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress due to good planning and lesson organisation.

119. The teaching of geography and history is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and are able to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of both physical and human geography and events in the past. The pupils are well managed and work in a pleasant atmosphere where all pupils make good efforts to complete the work set. They show enthusiasm for the subjects, reflecting the level of interest stimulated by the teachers. Teachers use good questioning skills to enable the pupils to think logically about cause and effect of why things occur as they do. The pupils have positive attitudes to the subjects and speak with enthusiasm about what they have learnt. They make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The curriculum for geography and history is enriched by visits to local places of interest, such as Portland Castle and by visitors to the school. In planning, steps are taken to establish links with other curriculum areas, for example by combining a history topic on *The Great Fire of London* with literacy and dance lessons. Both geography and history are used to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but this is an aspect that should be developed further. Little use has been made of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning, partly due to a lack of appropriate software and problems with the computers in some classrooms.
120. History and geography are managed by an enthusiastic, recently appointed subject leader. During the last two years, the school has rightly concentrated on raising the attainment in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, and there has been less focus on developing history and geography. Consequently, longer term planning is not very detailed and relatively little monitoring of the subject takes place. Officially recommended guidelines have been adopted and assessment records of pupils' progress have been introduced, but these are in the early stages of implementation and are not sufficiently developed to inform planning. There is a satisfactory range of resources, but additional materials would enhance the pupils' learning. Planned development includes greater use of computers and the refinement of assessment procedures in order to enable improved tracking of pupils' progress. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. For example, the scheme of work is now more detailed and it has been adapted well to meet the needs of the school. The policy has been updated and planning has taken account of wider links with all other areas of the curriculum.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

### Strengths:

- Pupils make good progress in the development of keyboard skills and gain much confidence
- Pupils regularly exchange e-mails with their e-friends in neighbouring schools
- The school is successfully implementing a challenging action plan to improve provision and raise standards

### Areas for development:

- Problems with the school's computer system mean that there are missed opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the curriculum
- Procedures for gathering and using information about what pupils know and can do

121. Standards in information and communication technology are similar to those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2. Although this reflects the judgement made at the time of the last inspection, the school's provision is improving in line with the national picture. The school is successfully implementing its action plan to raise standards. Significant investment in equipment and staff training is making a valuable contribution to achieving the challenging, yet achievable, goals the school has set itself.
122. Pupils demonstrate a good level of confidence and knowledge of a wide range of keyboard skills. They are familiar with different ways of gathering, modifying, storing, sharing and retrieving information. Year 1 pupils are familiar with the layout of the computer keyboard. They use the mouse smoothly and control the cursor accurately. They understand the function of specific keys and follow instructions such as *click on*, *drag and drop* and press *enter* confidently. Year 2 pupils are particularly knowledgeable about the uses of information and communication technology in everyday life. They readily describe how to use a television or video remote control, telephone or *game station*. They accurately recall the steps necessary to program a floor turtle. They are familiar with the Internet and regularly exchange e-mails with pupils from a nearby school.
123. In the development of these skills, pupils make good progress. Those with special educational needs make similar progress because of the good help and guidance they receive from adults. However, pupils' overall progress is only satisfactory because they have too few opportunities to apply and develop their skills across the curriculum. Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged because there are not enough opportunities for them to take their learning further. Many pupils have access to computers at home and, in discussion, some demonstrate a higher level of competency than is currently possible in school. A major obstacle is the unreliability of the school's current computer system, which has reduced the opportunities for teaching and learning. On a number of occasions during the inspection, one or more classroom computers were out of action. A new server is due to be installed for the start of the next school year.
124. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers pay careful attention to explaining and demonstrating skills and pupils listen attentively. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards in Year 2 for class demonstrations and pupils are very much at ease with this teaching aid. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Pupils' excitement and enthusiasm are handled well. Support staff give effective help and guidance to pupils working in small groups in the classroom or in the school's computer suite. Pupils are keen, concentrate well and work well both independently and with a partner. Although the school's lesson planning format prompts teachers to include information and communication when planning a series of lessons, teachers' identification of such activities lacks consistency.
125. Links with literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Pupils use a word-processing application for writing and send email messages. They use *function machines* on the

interactive whiteboard for solving problems in numeracy. Other applications help to reinforce and develop pupils' counting skills.

126. Good attention is given to Internet safety. Effective systems are in place to prevent pupils accessing unauthorised websites. Staff subject knowledge and confidence has improved since the last inspection as the result of in-service training. Adults now have a better appreciation of what pupils can achieve and this is starting to be reflected in pupils' acquisition of skills. Teachers make good use of digital cameras to record visits and special events but there are, as yet, few opportunities for pupils to use these to record their own work and observations.
127. The school's information and communication technology curriculum is based on nationally available materials and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject leader is already aware that the present arrangements for assessment are not rigorous enough. She is in the process of developing procedures for gathering and using assessment information for each of the topics studied to enable teachers to track pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school and help inform the next steps in learning.
128. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is working closely with the headteacher and subject governor to implement the school's detailed action plan for the development of information and communication technology in the school. Given the layout of the building, significant investment has been necessary in order to provide an effective infrastructure for the school's network. The school has received good support from the local education authority's advisory team in identifying and addressing the way forward. A visiting technician provides invaluable help in maintaining the existing system.
129. The overall quality of learning resources, including the new server, is good. There are, however, a number of issues regarding the accommodation to be resolved, most notably the permanent siting of interactive whiteboard equipment to save moving classroom furniture every time it is used.

## MUSIC

### Strengths:

- The development of pupils' listening skills
- The development of music through other subjects, such as dance
- Systematic teaching of music skills in small steps

### Areas for development:

- Use of information and communication technology in music
- Development of pupils' evaluation of learning and performances
- Provision of activities to extend the musical achievement of more able pupils

130. By the end of Year 2, standards meet national expectations. This indicates that the average standards reported in the last inspection have been maintained. The co-ordinator has recently revised the scheme of work. The planning of the curriculum indicates that there is provision for all elements of the National Curriculum in music. Pupils sing together well, and respond to a range of musical stimuli. They enjoy music, concentrate well and enjoy clapping games and speaking chants. They have opportunities to listen to and compose music as well as to sing and play. An appropriate range of percussion instruments is available and the subject is well resourced.
131. The progress made by pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. There are opportunities for singing, both in class lessons and in assemblies. Clear instruction is given to improve

pitch, rhythm and expression. Good use is made of both pitched and unpitched percussion instruments for performance and composition, with pupils listening to teachers and following them carefully. They learn to recognise a steady beat, although the less able have difficulty in clapping to a repeated pattern. For instance a Year 2 class was observed learning about rhythm and pulse in music. The majority were able to identify the pulse in a piece of music, first clap it and then play it on their choice of percussion instruments. Lower attaining pupils had difficulty in sustaining the regular beat, but most made good progress with the support of a teaching assistant and could clap in time by the end of the lesson. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils enjoyed composing a musical sequence to depict a walk through a garden. They used unpitched percussion to create sound effects for bees, a pond, long grass, crickets and a range of other garden features. They recorded the compositions on a pictorial score, and took pleasure in performing their pieces for the rest of the class. Pupils evaluated their own performances and those of others, using correct musical terminology and offering explanations of why they used a particular instrument to achieve an effect.

132. Pupils in Year 2 have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder, and two recorder groups meet regularly out of lesson times. Pupils enjoy these extra sessions, which enhance the musical education of those who attend. Pupils respond well to singing in lessons, showing involvement and enjoyment. In assemblies, they show satisfactory voice control and maintain the correct pitch and accurate rhythm. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils are motivated to learn and respond, and they display positive attitudes to the subject. They treat instruments correctly and carefully. Music is used well outside of music lessons in many classes, for instance as a signal to gather round the teacher for registration or at the end of the morning. Every class enjoys lessons in dance, which further contributes to their knowledge and understanding of music, including music from other cultures such as India.
133. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, attention is given to listening for particular features and learning basic techniques of pitch and rhythm. Skills to be learned are broken down into small manageable steps and practised. Pupils evaluate their own performances and those of others. In less successful lessons, pupils are asked to combine too many different aspects of performance, and no plenary is planned so that pupils can offer evaluations or comment on their own or each other's achievements. Planning for music lessons does not always include provision for the extension of more able pupils who quickly achieve the lesson's objective.
134. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a high level of personal subject knowledge in music. She offers support to her non-specialist colleagues, but does not have designated time in which to do this or to monitor the teaching of music through the school. Teachers record pupils' achievements in music, but assessment is informal and not consistent throughout the school. Information and communication technology is under-used.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### Strengths:

- Pupils move with sound athletic ability and show good co-ordination
- Pupils enjoy physical education and take pleasure in improving their skills and performance
- Good relationships between the teacher and pupils are a positive feature of lessons
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities

### Areas for development:

- There is inconsistency in the amount of progress pupils make between classes
- The longer term planning is not sufficiently detailed to ensure improvements across the school
- Assessment procedures are not focused closely on the National Curriculum or used to refine future planning
- Staff would benefit from further training to increase their confidence and raise standards

135. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, their standards in physical education are as expected for their age. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of knowledge, practical skills and understanding of physical education. The average standards identified during the last inspection have been maintained. During the inspection, it was possible to observe lessons of dance and movement being taught.
136. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the importance of a warm-up at the start of lessons. They understand the need for exercise to keep their bodies fit and healthy. Most pupils move with sound athletic ability and show good co-ordination in running, hopping, skipping, rolling and interpreting music to make simple movement sequences.
137. In Year 2, pupils show sound skills in gymnastics and dance, as the result of effective teaching. In Year 2 lessons, pupils were confident in planning and performing short dance sequences using a history topic, *The Great Fire of London*, as a stimulus for their movement. The higher attaining pupils had good body control and used their flexibility well to make good quality movements. They were aware that their body could move in different directions, at varying speeds and at high or low levels in relation to the ground. Pupils were able to work cooperatively to plan and perform a group sequence. The girls coped with this more complex task in a more mature way than the boys. Pupils in Year 1 were observed in a lesson using a parachute to work co-operatively. The lesson was not effective as the learning outcomes were not sufficiently clear and the tasks not appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils. In other lessons, the teaching assistants made a very effective contribution to the pupils' learning.
138. Pupils enjoy physical education and take pleasure in improving their skills and performance. They show a high degree of co-operation and enthusiasm and work together co-operatively.
139. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, and it is sometimes good. Teachers are skilled at planning work. Expectations are sufficiently high and most lessons are conducted at a lively pace. This was demonstrated in a Year 2 dance lesson when pupils had to sustain rigorous activity for several minutes. The organisation of lessons ensures pupils make satisfactory progress and teachers are particularly skilled at building pupils' confidence. Lessons have planned objectives, which focus on developing pupils' skills then using them to improve their performance. However, in some lessons the learning objectives planned were in fact the activities to be followed and the objectives did not focus on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work. Overall, learning is effective, because good attention is given to warm-up activities, safety issues are followed

and extended questioning is used to develop pupils' thinking. In some lessons, opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills were missed, but in others this was a strong emphasis for their learning. Good relationships between the teacher and pupils are also a positive feature of lessons.

140. The subject's curriculum is broad and balanced and physical education contributes well to pupils' personal development as it promotes self-esteem and teamwork. The subject has a clear policy and scheme of work, based mainly on officially recommended schemes of work. Overall, medium and short-term planning is satisfactory, with activities and opportunities planned for the consolidation and development of practical skills. However, there is a level of inconsistency between classes as planning is not sufficiently monitored. Assessment is not well developed and is an area for further improvement. Assessment procedures are not focused closely on the expectations of the National Curriculum or used to refine future planning. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that includes well-attended gymnastic and soccer clubs. The school makes good use of its hall, a large playing field and a hard court area with useful markings appropriate for infant aged pupils. Resources are satisfactory overall, but the school needs an even greater range of bats, balls and other small games equipment.
141. The school benefits from a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who is new to her post. There is an action plan to develop the subject, but it is not sufficiently detailed or ambitious to ensure improvements across the school. Some staff have benefited from recent training, but more is needed to have a positive effect on raising standards and teacher confidence. Improvements since the previous inspection have been satisfactory.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Strengths:

- Pupils have a good awareness of their own community and environmental issues
- Pupils make sound gains in their knowledge about different religions

### Areas for development:

- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to discuss and develop their ideas and thinking about different religions

142. Standards at the end of Year 2 are similar to those expected for the age group, as outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. This reflects the judgements made at the time of the last inspection.
143. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about Christianity and Judaism. Good emphasis on *special events*, such as Advent and Hannukah, helps pupils to both learn about different faiths and make comparisons between faiths. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn more about themselves and their environment. In discussing their locality, Year 1 pupils demonstrate strong views about litter and the importance of recycling waste materials. They suggest that clothes that no longer fit should be donated to a charity shop and that unwanted household goods be sold at a car boot sale. They assert that unwanted toys can be washed, repaired and handed on to a younger child. These discussions successfully help pupils to be more aware of issues that face us in our everyday life. Furthermore, through this topical approach, pupils come to appreciate the importance of moral and social codes. Year 2 pupils know that the Jews worship in a synagogue, that the *Torah* is a special book and that the *Shabbat* is celebrated every Friday night and Saturday. They successfully compare this to their work on Christianity, remembering that Christians worship in a church or chapel, that the *Bible* is the Christian's special book and that Sunday is the traditional day for Christian worship. They have visited the parish church, watched a video of a Jewish family's *Shabbat* and accurately name different artefacts.

144. Pupils make sound progress. Those with special educational needs are well supported by staff who help them contribute to discussions and prompt them with the correct vocabulary, as necessary. Helpful links are made with literacy when pupils read from the class *big books* about different religions. Teachers identify opportunities for pupils to use the Internet to find out further information, although this was not observed during the inspection. The use of the school's digital camera to record the pupils' visit to the parish church provides useful reference material for further study.
145. Teaching is satisfactory. In the best practice, as seen in a Year 1 lesson on rubbish, planning is very clear and resources are well prepared. In this lesson, the teacher was very successful in involving pupils in making and justifying decisions, and in thinking not just of themselves but of others. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils make suitable gains in their knowledge of religion, but there is limited opportunity for them to discuss and compare what they learn from it. Some lessons are too short and this limits the amount of time available to develop pupils' understanding.
146. The school meets the requirement to follow the Dorset Agreed Syllabus and has successfully adapted nationally available materials to support teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. There is a helpful collection of pupils' work that reflects the expectations of the agreed syllabus. This shows what pupils in each year group should achieve in each aspect of their work.
147. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The current subject leader has recently taken on other responsibilities within the school and is waiting to hand over responsibility for the subject at the start of the next school year. The school has access to a suitable range of learning resources for religious education.