

INSPECTION REPORT

Christchurch Junior School

Christchurch

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113733

Headteacher: Mr C Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mr J Palk
23630

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd January 2003

Inspection number: 247399

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Clarendon Rd Christchurch Dorset
Postcode:	BH23 2AA
Telephone number:	01202 485579
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Wood
Date of previous inspection:	12 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23630	Mr J Palk	Registered inspector	Science Geography English as an additional language Educational inclusion, including race equality	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and pupils' achievements.</i> How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9146	Mr M Brennand	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
24342	Ms D Franklin	Team inspector	Art and Design Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12112	Ms G Carter	Team inspector	Special educational needs, including the special unit	
25778	Mr A Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music	
32124	Ms H Ogburn	Team inspector	Information and communication technology History	
26603	Ms M Widgery	Team inspector	English Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Christchurch is a very large junior school catering for 520 pupils. There is no significant difference in the number of boys and girls. Pupils come from a broad range of backgrounds with about a quarter coming from local authority housing.

There are 16 classes and a speech and language base. The base is funded by the local authority and provides for pupils from a wider area than the school serves. There are 14 pupils in the base with statements for their needs; at times these pupils are also taught in mainstream classes. There are 31 per cent of pupils with special educational needs in the main school; this is above average. Their main difficulties are emotional and behavioural, speech and communication and moderate and specific learning difficulties. Twenty-two pupils in the main school have statements, which is above average. The average class size is 32 and the ratio of teachers to pupils is about average.

The vast majority of pupils are of White UK heritage. The minority ethnic groups represented in school are African, Asian and Chinese. A few pupils speak English as an additional language and the school provides extra support for these children if it is needed.

The entitlement to free school meals is below average. Attainment on entry into Year 3 is below average.

Since the last inspection pupil numbers have risen by 25 per cent and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the main stream classes has also risen. The pupils moved into a new school in September 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Christchurch is a good school. Pupils reach the standards expected of them by the age of eleven. The overall quality of the teaching is good with some that is very good. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils is very good and they respond enthusiastically to a rich curriculum. The headteacher, along with senior managers, provides a very clear sense of purpose and direction. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve good standards in reading, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Teaching is good; teamwork is very effective, and teaching assistants provide good support in lessons.
- There is good provision for the pupils in the speech and language base.
- The school makes good use of assessment information.
- There is a very good range of visits and extra-curricular activities.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- The school is very well led and managed.

What could be improved

- The standards attained in geography.
- The quality of information for parents about how well their children are getting on.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in January 1998 there has been good improvement. Standards have risen, particularly in reading, science and ICT. The vast majority of pupils are now achieving what is expected of them. The quality of teaching has improved and teachers have higher expectations of pupils,

rigorously backed up by assessment information. Improvement in the issues identified in the last inspection has been good. Reading is being taught effectively and the curriculum now provides well for pupils to develop as confident and self-reliant individuals. The planning and action taken to improve the school further is very well managed.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Standards attained by eleven year olds in the most recent tests are average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Overall the improvement in test performance has been in line with the national trend. The proportions of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics and science tests are rising, and are above average. Pupils are doing better in reading tests than writing. Overall girls do better than boys in tests. There is no obvious reason for this. In the latest tests in 2002 there was good improvement in all subjects and the school exceeded its targets.

Inspection found that standards are average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading and science. Pupils make good progress overall in mathematics and science and lower and higher attaining pupils do well in reading. The progress pupils make in writing is more variable. The higher attaining pupils achieve well and reach the standards they should. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their particular targets. Some slightly below average attaining pupils could achieve more in writing in some years, although their progress is satisfactory overall.

In ICT pupils exceed the standards expected. The standards attained in singing are above expectations but in geography they are below. The standards attained in history, physical education (PE), religious education (RE), design and technology (DT) and art and design are also in line with expectations. The school has set realistic but challenging targets for attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	A good feature. Pupils are very positive and show a genuine commitment to their school. They work hard and the majority take pride in their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are sensible and work and play very well together. They care for each other.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are very constructive between pupils and adults. Pupils show a good understanding of others' needs. The oldest pupils are mature and sensible.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils are punctual.

The very good relationships between staff and pupils make a vital contribution to pupils' learning. Throughout the school pupils respond very well to opportunities to collaborate and help each other. They present their work well. Pupils move about the school sensibly, show a high level of respect for each other and are particularly caring of pupils with specific needs and those new to the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good. During the inspection over half the lessons were good or very good with much that was very good or excellent. The teaching is more consistent than at the time of the last inspection, although there is still a small amount that is unsatisfactory.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan accordingly. The best teaching is in Year 6 and helps accelerate pupils' progress in all subjects. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good. The teaching of ICT skills is mainly good. The school makes good use of teachers' expertise to ensure effective learning in art, music, PE, and RE. However, subject knowledge is weaker in geography and this hinders the level of achievement in some aspects.

Teachers plan work well and they make good use of information from assessments to ensure pupils are given the work that demands sufficient of them. Pupils are generally very well managed. Teaching assistants are used well in the class and their own understanding of pupils' needs and the intention of lessons makes a very good contribution to the learning of these pupils. The specific grouping of pupils across each year group for mathematics is organised well by the teachers and has a positive impact on learning.

Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in class but this is more variable when they are withdrawn for lessons.

Marking is helpful to pupils. Satisfactory use is made of homework to supplement work in lessons, but this varies in quantity.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Plenty of additional experiences each year enrich most subjects. Most subjects are well planned to meet the range of needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. Those integrated from the base are very well supported. Pupils benefit from the support they receive and often make good progress, particularly in reading. Individual education plans are satisfactory but vary in quality.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision. There is routine monitoring of their progress. They receive effective help in lessons and often make good progress, particularly in mathematics.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	A strong feature of the school. Very good provision for social and moral development. Good provision for spiritual and satisfactory for cultural development, although there is not enough emphasis on preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse society.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils are well known and cared for. Very good arrangements for health and safety. There are good assessment procedures in the main subjects and the information is used effectively.
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The curriculum is meeting the needs of all pupils. Pupils do not always get enough opportunity for physical education lessons in the week. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is very effective. The management structure works very well and ensures the improvements in teaching and learning can be implemented swiftly. The school has a very clear sense of purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well organised and make a good contribution to the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation strategies are rigorous and the information is acted on.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the financial resources it has available. Effective use is made of the new school building, but the hall is not used for much of the morning.

The assistant headteachers and team leaders play an important role and make an impact across the school. The governing body is very active in helping the school monitor its progress and in seeking best value. However, as yet governors do not involve themselves in planning for school improvement. The management of the speech and language base is good. The provision for special educational needs in the mainstream is managed satisfactorily.

There are sufficient and suitably qualified teachers. The school is adequately resourced. The quality of the accommodation contributes to a very positive working environment for staff and pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the way the school is led and managed • pupils are well behaved • the teaching is good • there is a good range of activities • children are expected to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping them informed about their child's progress • greater involvement in what goes on in school • more information about what is required of homework

The views are based on those expressed at the parents' meeting, together with conversations with inspectors during the week and the questionnaires sent to all parents. Forty-six per cent of parents returned completed questionnaires. The parents are justified in their positive views and also their concerns. Children work hard and the school is very well led and managed. The school provides parents with regular information about its work and curriculum but reports do not include enough information about pupils' attainment and progress. The inspection upholds parents' views, feeling that a more gradual introduction to life in the junior school should be adopted with increased access to teachers during the early weeks and clearer guidance on homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall standards have improved since the last inspection. Results in National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds have been erratic and there has been some underachievement in previous years in all subjects. In the most recent tests, results in English were average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. Results in mathematics were above average and well above average in science. This represents a significant improvement over the performance of the last three years. Pupils performed better in reading than writing, although the proportion reaching higher levels in writing was above the national average. The proportion of higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science was well above that of similar schools, with very few pupils not reaching the expected standards. Overall, pupils who were with the school for four years made satisfactory progress in English and good progress in mathematics. The school's targets were exceeded, as a result of some very good gains made by both lower and higher attaining pupils in their last year at the school.
2. Test results show some variation in the performance of boys and girls. Girls overall are attaining higher results than boys, particularly in mathematics and science. Inspection findings show that higher attaining pupils achieve well, and in most years there are more higher attaining girls than boys. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well particularly in mathematics and reading. The pupils in the base make good progress towards their particular targets. Lower attaining pupils make good progress from a low base of skills but those at the lower end of average, who are not identified as having special educational needs, could achieve more in their writing as they move through Years 3 and 4.
3. The inspection found that the recent improvement in standards is being maintained. An inconsistency in the progress of pupils between years has largely been eradicated. Pupils learn very effectively in the last year of school due to some consistently good, and often very good teaching and overall progress is good through the school. Standards in both English and mathematics are average and they are above average in science. Nearly all pupils learn to read to a satisfactory standard with over a third above this. Pupils learn to read fluently, with expression and a quick eye for detail in the books they read that help convey the subtle intentions of the author. They extract information successfully from reference books and develop sound research skills. Standards in writing show greater variation with small proportions of pupils working at below average levels. Progress in writing is still erratic with those slightly below average attaining pupils often making only satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4. Skills in writing improve at a faster rate in Year 6 and by the time pupils leave the school they have a satisfactory level of basic skills in writing. Most write using basic grammar and for different purposes. The organisation and style of much of the written work is sound, and most pupils express their ideas and explain their views successfully. Handwriting is generally above expectations, and spelling is average. The majority of pupils have a basic command of spoken language, but only a few adapt this for a range of purposes. Pupils generally listen well.
4. The majority of pupils have a good base in computational skills. They are particularly good at recalling tables rapidly, they use high numbers confidently and have a good range of strategies that they apply to solving problems. There is an improving picture of pupils' ability to interpret and make use of data as a result of the good work

undertaken in information and communication technology (ICT) lessons. In science, pupils are very knowledgeable about a range of subjects studied. They have a good understanding of the technical language and apply this knowledge well. They collect and interpret information from investigations clearly and accurately.

5. The school's provision for teaching ICT has improved greatly. Pupils are making good progress in learning new skills and standards are now above expectations. This shows considerable improvement since the last inspection when this area of pupils' learning was judged to be poor. Throughout the school standards in history, art, music, design and technology (DT) and physical education (PE) are in line with the national expectations. Pupils achieve particularly well in singing skills in music. There is not enough challenge in the work provided in geography to extend pupils' skills in a number of aspects and standards are below expectations. The standards attained in religious education (RE) are in line with expectations.
6. Those pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in English and good progress in mathematics and reach average standards. The last inspection highlighted that many pupils were not achieving as well as they should and progress was unsatisfactory. There are a significant number of pupils entering the school with standards below national expectations. The school has high expectations of what pupils should achieve and has taken effective measures to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning improves to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they should.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The way in which the school manages the attitudes and behaviour of its pupils is central to its goal of developing well-rounded individuals. A particular strength is the way pupils are accepting and tolerant of each other. Pupils new to the school settle in quickly. When pupils from the base are included in mainstream classes, they are keen to co-operate with their peers, behave well and are fully accepted by other pupils. Parents indicate that they are delighted with how confident and sociable their children are and this has much to do with the very good way in which the school manages its pupils.
8. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. They are keen and inquisitive, particularly in lessons when teaching is good. Even when teaching is satisfactory, pupils maintain their concentration and work hard. The pupils value the work they are set and this is reflected in neat presentation in all subjects. They also demonstrate high levels of interest for extra-curricular activities such as tag rugby, football, running club, tennis, volleyball, choir and orchestra. Pupils with special educational needs are as positive in their response to lessons as any others and are keen and enthusiastic learners. Pupils identified as having emotional or behavioural difficulties manage to settle and co-operate in class because they are well managed by teachers and effectively supported by teaching assistants. Other pupils often help those who find learning more difficult than they do themselves.
9. Behaviour is very good. Interviews with pupils indicate that they have a good grasp of right and wrong and they value the consistent way in which rewards and sanctions are applied. Outside the classroom pupils are very friendly and polite with many offering to help with directions around the school and holding doors open for one another. The school handles incidents of bullying well and these incidents are rare. There was one exclusion last year.

10. Pupils appreciate the impact of their actions on others. The assemblies and the personal, social and health education lessons empower pupils to make the right decisions about their behaviour. Pupils show their respect for one another by working constructively together in lessons. A typical example of their community spirit was seen as classmates cheered a child from the base over the line during a games lesson.
11. Since the last inspection the school has taken the key issue of developing pupils' responsibility and independence earnestly and this feature of pupils' personal development is now very good. Year 6 pupils act as reading partners to those in Year 3 and through this arrangement an informal 'buddy' system has emerged. Pupils apply for jobs as monitors and librarians and the school council has become a forum for pupils to raise their views on how improvements can be made to the running of the school. The arrangement for the shared use of the playground at break and lunchtimes is just one example; council members are currently considering how best to implement a healthy tuck-shop. Once a year pupils organise their own tabletop sales and this provides good experience in managing a project from start to finish. Outside visits are held for each year group, culminating in the week long trip to Paris for Year 6 pupils. This makes a tremendous contribution to personal development and particularly to the relationships which pupils have with one another and their teachers. These are judged to be very good.
12. Attendance is satisfactory. The school is fortunate in that the majority of the parents consider education to be a priority and as a consequence they ensure that their children attend. Most absences are due to sickness with a smaller number a result of holidays taken during term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching is good; 60 per cent is good or very good, with 23 per cent very good or excellent. The quality of teaching, and as a consequence pupils' learning, has improved since the last inspection. It is generally more consistent, with some very good teaching in all year groups, although there is a small amount of weaker teaching in Year 3.
14. Teachers work hard. They enjoy teaching and are particularly keen to take account of the range of pupils' needs. They think creatively about resources to inspire and motivate pupils; they are good at managing the time to allow pupils to discuss their work and summarise what has been learnt at the end of lessons. In nearly all lessons pupils are very well managed. They are given clear explanations about what to achieve and there is a balance of praise and encouragement throughout the lessons. The excellent relationship teachers establish with their pupils means that behaviour management is rarely an issue. Pupils are inclined to give their best and this is encouraged through effective marking. In the few lessons where learning is not effective the teachers are not clear about what is expected of pupils and this leads to a lack of application.
15. Lessons are well planned and prepared. The teachers are very clear about what pupils of different abilities need to learn and provide them with the right amount of challenge and expectations. The teaching assistants are used very well to this end. They work with the groups of pupils and in the most successful lessons supplement and enhance the quality of teaching. This was very evident in an English lesson for

Year 5 pupils. During the first part of the lesson, the teaching assistant working with a lower attaining group carefully repeated the sentence read out by the teacher to help the pupils identify the correct use of the apostrophe. She was well prepared and the copy of the questions being asked helped her keep the group up with others in the class. During the main activity she skilfully helped the group to prepare to write a short picture book story by working on each of their particular strengths in story telling. A very good balance of independent and group discussion was maintained and pupils made good progress in writing the accompanying text as well as improving their personal skills in co-operating with others.

16. Team planning is a particularly strong feature of teaching, allowing teachers to raise their expectations of the year group and seek the best strategies for moving learning forward. Teachers make effective use of the grouping for mathematics across the whole year and good use of the strategy to provide the right amount of challenge. This is of particular benefit to lower attaining pupils who have good levels of support and work at their own pace. Teachers make good use of each other's subject knowledge to ensure they get the best from pupils and compensate for any weaknesses in their own expertise. This is a particularly strong feature in the teaching of art, music and PE.
17. Many lessons are successful because teachers' own subject knowledge enables them to teach confidently and move learning along at a good pace. This good subject knowledge combined with real enthusiasm leads to some outstanding teaching. In an English lesson with Year 6 pupils the focus was an extract from a suspense story. The questions the teacher asked were open and invited thoughtful answers. The skilled, confident and flexible way the learning was organised ensured the lesson was very successful. These features come together in a number of other lessons. For example in an ICT lesson with another Year 6 class, the focus was on inserting video clips into text. This was new work, but through careful prompting the pupils shared what they already knew about combining text and graphics. By encouraging pupils to work together, a real eagerness to develop their skills was generated. The teacher set short tasks with specific time limits that tested out what they had learnt, maintained a brisk pace and maintained concentration. Using the information gained she went on to provide those lower attaining pupils with cue cards to ensure they were sufficiently stretched, whilst setting demanding expectations of the others to complete the task by the end of the lesson.
18. Lessons get off to a good start, often with a recap of what is already learnt and the focus of the lesson is made clear to pupils. For the most part, the questions the teachers ask are relevant, penetrating and encourage thoughtful responses. Teachers mark and assess pupils' work with some considerable diligence. Particularly useful for older pupils has been the individual marking of written work that ensures weaknesses are tackled systematically. However, in Years 3 and 4, there are not enough strategies used to address the spelling and vocabulary weaknesses of pupils with lower average ability and this reduces the pace with which they make progress.
19. Standards of teaching pupils in the base and when they are included in mainstream classes are generally good. Teachers proceed in a series of small steps, supporting learning by practical demonstrations wherever possible, thereby helping pupils to develop and strengthen their understanding. For example, a teacher helping pupils to come to terms with tens and units used cubes very successfully to clarify his explanations and pupils were quickly able to follow his train of thought. In another lesson, a teaching assistant in the ICT suite demonstrated the categories of a data base by first grouping the children themselves according to height, eye or hair colour.

Teachers are aware of the need for consolidation and repetition and give pupils many opportunities to practise new skills. However, there are a few times when pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes, withdrawn for additional work not related to the lessons in class, are not given the same quality of experience. The activities lack the necessary clear objectives and this reduces the impact of these sessions.

20. Resources are used well. The use of individual white boards in mathematics and science enables all pupils to be involved in problem-solving. In English lessons the use of overhead projectors enables all pupils to have access to the texts used. In ICT lessons the use of a large screen linked to a computer ensures that all pupils can follow the teacher's instructions and share quickly what they have learnt.

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

21. Since the last inspection the quality and range of learning opportunities have improved and are now good. Teaching time is now in line with recommendations and the curriculum meets statutory requirements in all subjects. However, the timetables are not sufficiently well organised to make maximum use of the school hall throughout the day and this affects the number of regular physical education lessons the pupils experience through the year.
22. Curriculum planning is comprehensive and is effectively monitored by both the team leaders and subject managers to ensure continuity across the year and progression of skills. The school is successfully using the national guidelines for literacy, numeracy and most other subjects as a basis for curriculum planning. Work is well matched to most of the pupils' needs. A strong feature of the curriculum is the use of teachers' expertise for some of the non-core subjects, for example music, PE and RE. This ensures good quality provision and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
23. The school effectively teaches the literacy and numeracy strategies and this supports learning in other areas of the curriculum well, particularly history. There are good cross-curricular links with most other subjects. However when geography is taught within a 'topic' there is not always sufficient time allocation to ensure that aspects are fully covered in sufficient depth.
24. Pupils with special educational needs participate in the whole school curriculum. When pupils from the base are included in the mainstream classes they follow the same curriculum as all the other pupils, but are helped to access it by good support from base teachers or teaching assistants. The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all aspects of the school's life, including extra-curricular activities, teams, trips and residential experiences and they are fully accepted by their peers and their teachers. There is a weakness in the writing of some individual education plans (IEPs), and some targets are too vague to be helpful in measuring progress. This issue has arisen because of the long-term absence of the special needs co-ordinator, and should be rectified on her return. Fortunately, regular pupil assessment enables the school to keep a check on their progress, and this information is well used to monitor the movement of pupils through the stages of the code of practice for special educational needs.
25. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities. These include various sports clubs, choir, orchestra and line dancing. All clubs are very well attended

and most parents are happy with the provision. There are also many visits to places of interest, including local study centres, museum visits and visits to the church that benefit pupils' education. The school welcomes many visitors to support learning. For example an African choir sang in assembly, local residents share their experiences of the Second World War and a drama group helped pupils to perform a play written by Shakespeare. Residential trips are offered to pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. The school is very well supported by the peripatetic music service, which provides tuition in a range of instruments. As a result of this very good provision for extra-curricular activities, learning is interesting for the pupils and helps them to achieve well.

26. The school is fully committed to providing pupils with full access to the curriculum. However, at times, pupils withdrawn from class for additional literacy support miss valuable parts of lessons in other areas of the curriculum. For example during the inspection week pupils were withdrawn from music and art lessons. In an art lesson, the pupils were ready to start their activity when they had to leave the class. Although the teacher ensured that they knew what they had to do on returning, their learning was impeded because they were less enthusiastic than at the start of the lesson.
27. The school has a comprehensive programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) which is well supported by the community. Teachers regularly use times when pupils sit together in a circle to discuss issues. Pupils feel that these times are very important to them and they feel confident to talk about issues that are causing concern both in the classroom and in school generally.
28. Good community links also contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Members of the community regularly help pupils with reading and by talking about their lives in the past. The local area is used adequately to support work in history and art but not in geography. Links with partner schools are satisfactory overall, whilst there are good links with the local secondary school whose staff contribute to the teaching of DT and art.
29. Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has improved significantly overall since the last inspection. Good provision for spiritual development has been maintained since the last inspection. Assemblies are well planned and provide good opportunities for pupils to explore values and beliefs. A well-attended weekly 'Encounter Club' is run at lunchtimes for pupils who wish to find out more about Christianity.
30. Provision for moral and social development is very good and these areas are closely linked. Provision for the development of social skills has improved significantly from the last inspection when it was less than satisfactory. Pupils are given a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and are fully aware of the school's behaviour policy. Older pupils are provided with a very good range of responsibilities and opportunities to contribute to the running of the school. The whole ethos and general very good relationships around the school provide pupils with very good opportunities to develop their moral and social skills.
31. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for cultural development. Provision for pupils to understand local culture and British heritage are good, often taught through history topics and visits to places of interest. A good range of visitors and visits, such as an African choir, drama workshops and visitors in historical costumes supports cultural development well. Visits are made to local churches but the school does not visit places of worship for other religions. Links with a school in Africa and the music and art curriculum support multicultural provision satisfactorily but opportunities for

pupils to learn about the rich cultural diversity in Britain today are often missed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school cares very well for pupils' health, safety and welfare; educational support and guidance is also good. Staff and governors place great emphasis on providing an atmosphere in which personal and academic development is valued, supported by a healthy and safe environment.
33. Arrangements for child protection are very good. Arrangements for health and safety are also very good. The governing body is very active in maintaining high standards of safety with regular safety audits of the building. The commitment of the governor with this responsibility makes a significant contribution to health and safety within the school. Provision for first aid is also very good. The school employs a member of staff with a specific responsibility for child welfare and this strengthens the provision. Trends in injuries are tracked by year group, and this was instrumental in changing the nature of play at break and lunchtime for pupils in Year 3. The number of injuries has been dramatically reduced as a result.
34. Arrangements for monitoring attendance are satisfactory. Systems for monitoring behaviour are good, being consistently applied and managed across the school. The system of sanctions is robust and ensures pupils learn from any transgression. Pupils have been given an opportunity to have a say in how their school runs and this has had a big influence on the way they behave. Pupils appreciate rewards in the form of house points for good behaviour, a weekly award at the celebration assembly and the occasional letter to parents. The absence of oppressive behaviour is very much the result of the way in which the school monitors incidents of bullying and racism. The head is aware that occasionally bullying does occur, but such incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively.
35. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and the information is used effectively. A range of appropriate tests and assessments is used to determine the attainment of pupils at the end of each year. Targets are set for pupils across the school in reading, writing, mathematics and science and regularly reviewed to ensure that teachers plan work that is accurately matched to pupils' needs. Marking is increasingly linked to the intended learning in order to help pupils develop their work. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and one that has helped bring about good progress through the school.
36. The arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. A record of the child's progress is recorded in the annual reports to parents at the end of the year. Annual reviews for all pupils with statements are carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and the full range of advice and views is sought for every pupil. The efficiency of these procedures is much enhanced by the good work done by the administrative assistant who deals specifically with special educational need issues. IEPs are kept under regular review and discussed termly with staff and parents. However targets set vary in quality across the school: in some classes they are not measurable and do not allow staff to plan the sort of structured teaching programmes that can help to accelerate progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. At the last inspection the school's partnership with parents was deemed to be satisfactory. Since then much work has been done to improve the relationships that it

is now good in a number of aspects. Overall the discussions held at the parents' meetings, along with the high number of parent questionnaire, were positive about the way in which the school is being run.

38. The effectiveness of the links that the school has with parents is satisfactory. Parents receive regular information on what is happening in school through a regular supply of newsletters and termly curriculum letters, which outline the topics to be covered during the term. Both the school prospectus and the governors' report to parents meet statutory requirements and are of good quality. The quality of reports to parents are appropriate in that they meet statutory requirements but are rather limited in terms of the lack of targets to address weaknesses. In addition they do not give an indication of the level at which each child is working and whether this is appropriate to his or her age. There are two formal meetings, in the Autumn and Spring term, when parents can meet with teachers and there are some informal opportunities provided in the year for parents to follow up any concerns they might have about their child's progress. Parents of pupils in Year 3 or new to the school do not have enough access to the teachers to share information on a daily basis and they are often unclear as to how they can help their child settle into junior school life. In contrast parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed about their children's progress and of particular benefit is the home school diary by which information is passed on.
39. The quantity and quality of homework was judged to be satisfactory. For most parents education features high on their list of priorities which means that the majority of homework is completed and handed in. There is more emphasis given to English than other subjects. The homework is conscientiously marked. However there have been some inconsistencies in Year 3 teachers regularly setting homework that has led to some confusion for pupils and parents. This is now being rigorously addressed. The information about what is expected is given verbally rather than formally, and is therefore not always clear to parents and carers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The headteacher, working closely with senior managers, provides very effective leadership and management. A strong sense of purpose is communicated effectively to all the adults working in the school. There is a clear vision of the way the school needs to move forward and the plans in place are ensuring that this is successfully achieved. Teamwork is the great strength of this management structure and this has enabled the school to speed up the pace of development.
41. The year leaders contribute towards the school's successes and its capacity to build on them. They have clearly defined roles in the management of the four classes within their year group which ensures they play a full part in the monitoring and evaluation of school improvement. In the last twelve months there has been a focus on improving teaching through careful monitoring and this has been successful in raising the quality of teaching throughout the school.
42. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science and ICT play an important role and make a significant impact in improving teachers' expertise. This is evident in the improvements in provision and standards. Co-ordinators for other subjects have not yet established their role in the new management structure, consequently a rise in standards is proving more elusive.
43. The responsibilities of the special educational needs co-ordinator have been

satisfactorily managed during her absence and statutory requirements are met. However, there has been some slippage in the quality of IEPs for those pupils who do not have statements. The implementation of changes to systems, procedures and resources that will benefit the provision for pupils with special educational needs is falling behind that of other areas of the school's work.

44. Since the last inspection the school has implemented some significant improvements. Standards are rising. There is a comprehensive approach to the collecting and analysis of information about pupils' performance and this information is used particularly well to gain improvement. The development of this work has had a significant impact in shaping clear priorities for school improvement. Much work has been done to improve the process of school development planning. The plan is an effective working document that contains priorities, specific targets, timescale for completing actions and statements to evaluate success. However, some subject specific action plans are over-ambitious or vague in their intentions and this results in some slippage in planned activities. For example, there has been no action on providing clear guidance on teaching geographical skills to underpin the development of broad-based topic work.
45. The governors are effective in holding the school to account. They are well organised and well informed about the work of the school, but are still not sufficiently involved in setting the strategic direction of the school. They were, however, involved in the partnership created to rebuild the school and brought a good deal of expertise to the process. Financial management is good. The governors are appropriately involved in setting and monitoring the budget. There is good use made of resources; there is a clear correlation between the school's priorities for action and the pattern of resource allocation. This is very evident in the strategic decision to restructure the deployment of teaching assistants and provide additional training for them and in the allocation of resources to support the management structure. The school does well in managing a budget that is lower than most schools of a similar size. Governors are thorough in applying the principles of best value.
46. Resources in all curriculum areas are generally satisfactory and good in English, DT, ICT and music. Resources for special educational needs are adequate, though the school lacks some of the up-to-date resources to help staff dealing with low-incidence needs such as Aspergers or speech and language disorder. There is also a shortage of materials to help teachers to cater for the needs of special needs pupils in their classes. The new system of allocating funding for curriculum resources through year leaders is currently working well.
47. The newly built accommodation is of a very high standard and well maintained. It provides designated spaces to enhance teaching and learning, including an excellent library, ICT suite, music room and quiet work rooms. The grounds have been very well developed and include some very interesting sculptures, created in partnership with the local secondary school. The building represents a successful partnership between governors, the local authority and the contractor and serves the needs of all the pupils well.
48. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is good. Staff have particular expertise in the teaching of English, mathematics, science, music and ICT. There are very good systems in place to support new staff when they join the school and also to provide training opportunities for both teachers and support staff. The school is ably supported in its day-to-day management by a highly effective and efficient office administration team.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to raise standards further and improve the quality of education the governing body working closely with the headteacher and senior staff should:
- (1) Raise standards in geography by: making sure that teachers have the necessary knowledge and understanding; ensuring that the guidelines for teaching geographical skills and knowledge are developed; giving more emphasis to field work. *Paragraphs 5, 23, 44 and 89 to 93.*
 - (2) Provide more information to parents about their children's attainments and progress. *Paragraph 38 and 39.*

Minor issues

- Ensure more consistency in the quality of IEPs for pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes. *Paragraphs 19,24, 36 and 43.*
- Provide more opportunities to extend pupils' awareness of the diversity of contemporary British culture. *Paragraph 31*
- Improve the quality of supporting strategies for teaching writing in Years 3 and 4. *Paragraphs 3, 18 & 61*
- Improve the timetabling of the hall to ensure it is fully used to provide more opportunities for teaching PE skills, during the school day and throughout the year. *Paragraph 21 and 112.*

The speech and language base

50. The speech and language base is funded directly by Dorset Local Authority as a specialist provision for 14 pupils with specific speech and language problems. All the pupils have statements of special educational needs and are selected from a wide catchment area than the pupils in mainstream classes.
51. Pupils work confidently in the base where they feel secure and valued. They enjoy their work and are aware that they receive help appropriate to their needs.
52. The nature of their difficulties with processing and classifying information, remembering instructions and expressing themselves clearly means that they underachieve in most areas of the curriculum. However, observations in classrooms and from an examination of pupils' records show that they make good progress during their time in the base.
53. Teaching in the base is usually closely related to IEPs that are well-structured with measurable targets that are consolidated by both teaching and speech therapy staff. Teaching of both mathematics and English follows the appropriate year group planning as far as possible so those pupils do not miss out on their entitlement. Despite the fact that pupils often live at some distance from the school, they take part in extra-curricular activities along with their peers because parents come and fetch them instead of expecting them home on the transport that is provided. The school's provision for inclusion is good, and pupils from the base are fully involved in the complete range of events, visits, teams and residential experiences.

54. Parents have frequent contact with the base staff through daily use of home/school notebooks and regular meetings to discuss their children's progress. They also make use of telephone contact whenever they feel the need. They attend annual reviews and are involved with the drawing up of IEPs, so parental involvement is good overall.
55. The teacher in charge has only been in post since December and is already making positive changes to enhance the quality of the provision. The new teacher in charge of the base has recently set up a simple but efficient system to enable pupils' progress to be followed very easily, and this will be an asset in the overall monitoring of the effectiveness of the base.
56. Staff have responded very positively to her determination to create a strong and united team and feel themselves to be valued and appreciated. Inclusion has been increased for pupils, and stronger links forged with mainstream classes. Documentation has been clarified and simplified so that staff find assessment and recording systems clear and manageable.
57. Local authority funding for the unit is generous in terms of staff provision, but the accommodation, although attractive, is very cramped, especially for pupils who sometimes need space around them to concentrate and work quietly. Resources are adequate, but there are few materials that might help mainstream teachers to provide suitable work for base pupils when they are included in their classes. There is limited storage space.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	58

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	14	32	34	2	0	0
Percentage	7	16	36	39	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	520
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	27
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	35
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	126
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	94.2
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	67	65	132

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	49	53	61
	Girls	57	56	63
	Total	106	109	124
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80(67)	83(67)	94(75)
	National	75(75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	46	52	55
	Girls	50	49	57
	Total	96	101	112
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73(68)	77(79)	85(79)
	National	73(72)	74(74)	82(82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	472	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	32

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	360

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	1,002,237
Total expenditure	997,892
Expenditure per pupil	£1968
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,203
Balance carried forward to next year	4,345

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	513
Number of questionnaires returned	236

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	43	4	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	52	5	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	56	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	55	14	5	2
The teaching is good.	38	52	3	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	48	21	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	37	7	3	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	36	4	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	31	46	14	4	5
The school is well led and managed.	50	42	3	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	52	3	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	48	6	2	2

Other issues raised by parents

Seventeen parents attended a meeting prior to the inspection and views were sought during the inspection, from parents and parent governors.

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

ENGLISH

58. Standards attained by the majority of pupils at the end of Year 6 are at least in line with national averages, over a third of pupils are working at higher levels in reading, with a small percentage (11%) at higher levels in writing. There has been an improvement in reading since the last inspection and in writing, in the last year. Many pupils begin school with below average levels of achievement in reading and writing but by the time they leave most are achieving as well as they should. This has been largely the result of good, sometimes excellent teaching in Year 6, however, the planning and pupil tracking that is now in place is ensuring greater consistency across all year groups.
59. Pupils' skills in listening are very good, they are usually very attentive and settle quickly to writing or reading tasks, having clearly understood what is expected. Speaking skills are satisfactory overall, however when pupils speak or read aloud they sometimes lack clarity and expression. In the most effective lessons, pupils are encouraged to speak clearly and respond in complete sentences. For example, in a Year 6 RE lesson, pupils discussing Islamic beliefs followed the argument intently and justified their responses when challenged. Drama activities, such as role-play, are used as part of history lessons across all year groups. These provide some opportunities for pupils to develop speaking skills, but there is no regular provision across the curriculum to ensure all pupils make better than satisfactory progress.
60. As they move through the school, pupils' skills in reading improve and progress is good for all pupils. There are regular opportunities for class and group reading in the literacy hour and in further designated reading sessions. All pupils make very good use of the excellent library facility, which provides a comprehensive range of fiction and non-fiction. Computerised tracking provides good information to help teachers track pupils' progress. In Year 3 and Year 4 classes home-school reading diaries are used regularly to help track progress. Good guided reading sessions were observed in Years 5 and 6. In these sessions teachers drew attention to the features of books such as punctuation and grammar and encouraged pupils to read with expression. The majority of pupils were articulate about their choice of books and favourite authors; the cover, the blurb and reading the first few lines usually influenced choices. The majority of pupils understand how to find information in books, using the table of contents, index and glossary. Higher attaining pupils have good skills in inference and deduction, for example, when discussing the impact of a character on a particular event or building suspense into a story.
61. The school has made the raising of standards in writing a key focus in its development plan and as a result the range of opportunities for writing has improved. Throughout the school pupils learn to write in a variety of forms, for example: stories, letters, playscripts, instructions, letters and poems. Overall writing skills are taught effectively. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher very effectively demonstrated the features used to create tension in suspense stories: for example, short sentences; 'scary' vocabulary such as 'suddenly, without warning' and the use of adverbs. Higher attaining pupils use good descriptive vocabulary and complex sentences to engage the interest of the reader. They generally make good progress. The progress the slightly below average pupils make is erratic. These pupils are well supported by teaching assistants and though their spelling and grammar is not always correct, they are able to write at length and use the main features of the text. However little use is made of other support programmes to teach spelling and extend their vocabulary, particularly in

Years 3 and 4. When pupils are competent with writing skills, the use of targets for writing, based on teachers' analysis, is contributing to their continuing progress as they move through the school.

62. Throughout the school pupils learn to write legibly and with a fluent and joined style. Teachers set high expectations. Marking supports pupils' learning, and work is well presented. Higher attainers spell accurately. Spelling skills of other pupils are improving as a result of a new programme being introduced across the school. Pupils begin to use a range of punctuation accurately as it is introduced in literacy lessons. Pupils make good use of their writing skills in other lessons, for example: letters and leaflets in history; accounts of experiments in science; and presentations using ICT.
63. Whilst standards of attainment for pupils with special educational needs are often below those of their peers, the majority of these children make good progress against the targets set. They benefit from having work planned specifically for their needs and from the good quality help and support given by teaching assistants in literacy lessons.
64. The co-ordinator has an excellent understanding of the needs of the school and a clear view of her role. The introduction of a system for assessing standards in written work has meant that teachers have a clear understanding of what pupils need to do next to improve. Pupils' progress in reading and writing is regularly tracked as they move through the school and teaching has been observed and work analysed. All this informs the support given by the co-ordinator and the next steps the school needs to take to continue to improve standards.

MATHEMATICS

65. Standards are average and have risen in line with the national trend since the last inspection. Boys and girls perform equally well. Pupils have low standards in mathematics when they start at the school, but, because they are taught well, they make good progress and do as well as they should.
66. Consistent approaches to teaching mental and written calculations ensure that, by the time they reach Year 6, most pupils calculate accurately with whole numbers, decimals and fractions. A small number of lower attaining pupils make mistakes because they do not know basic addition and multiplication facts well enough, and some are not confident with written methods for multiplication and division. Higher attaining pupils know how fractions, decimals and percentages are related, and work confidently with algebraic equations. Pupils understand the metric system and know that measurements can be written in different ways, such as 0.8 litres or 800 millilitres. They find the area and perimeter of complex shapes and interpret a range of graphs and diagrams.
67. Teaching is good overall throughout the school. As a result, pupils make good progress. Teachers teach basic number skills well. Quick-fire questions in lively mental sessions at the start of each lesson give pupils good opportunities to show what they can do. For example in a Year 5 lesson pupils explained how to work out 14×51 knowing that 13×50 is 650. Clear explanations ensure that pupils know what to do in the main part of each lesson. Although questioning at the start of each lesson is good, questions at the end to assess how well pupils have understood are not a strong enough feature of some lessons.
68. The national numeracy strategy is well established and teachers ensure that work is

set at the right level for pupils in each teaching group. At the last inspection there was not enough emphasis on the teaching of problem solving and standards in this aspect were unsatisfactory. Teaching is now better because problem solving is an integral part of lessons, and standards have now improved to a satisfactory level. Adults working with lower attaining pupils in the mathematics groups offer good support and guidance; ensuring pupils consolidate their skills and move forward at an appropriate rate.

69. Teachers expect pupils to work to the best of their ability. Class relationships are very good and, as a result, pupils want to do well. They behave very well, are interested in what they have to do and work hard on their own and with others. Lessons are brisk and purposeful. The three-part numeracy lesson gives pupils opportunities to learn from each other which contributes well to their progress. Pupils help each other well. "Did you understand what I've done there?" was typical of the comments overheard as pupils practised and discussed a new method for dividing decimals.
70. Teachers assess pupils regularly and keep good records of progress. However, day-to-day marking does not generally show pupils well enough how to improve their work, for example, by setting work out correctly so that they do not make mistakes with written calculations. Careful analysis of test results has enabled the school to iron out some small pockets of under-achievement by targeting pupils for additional support and has alerted teachers to strengths and weaknesses in their teaching.
71. Some teaching is very good and occasionally excellent, especially in Year 6. In these lessons work is particularly demanding and teaching pace is very crisp. However, in some lessons, over-long discussions restrict the time pupils have for their own work and limit the progress they could otherwise make.
72. The co-ordinator knows what needs to be done to further improve standards and provision. Good targets for improvement are set out clearly in the mathematics action plan. Since the last inspection, standards have improved and the quality of teaching is now much better. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated, and the national numeracy strategy has led to significant improvements in planning and lesson organisation. There is a strong team spirit and commitment to maintaining the impetus of recent developments.

SCIENCE

73. Standards are above average. Nearly all pupils in Year 6 are meeting the expectations of eleven year olds with over a third exceeding these. Following the last inspection standards fell, but are now rising because of good teaching and effective planning. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels has improved year on year. Most pupils apply their scientific knowledge well to explain their observations and draw conclusions. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
74. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils accurately describe the processes at work when separating solids from solutions by evaporation. They explain how it is important to set up a control when investigating why bread goes mouldy, and use a range of charts and graphs to explain their findings. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will use the correct language when recording their work and this is helping pupils make good progress in their application of their knowledge. Lower attaining pupils accurately label diagrams to describe the forces at work that help heavy objects float or how tightening a drum skin affects pitch. Teachers prepare some exciting activities that further strengthen pupils' thinking. For example, in one Year 6 lesson pupils were set

the task of designing a game or entertainment that made use of a range of electrical components. This practical work was particularly successful in encouraging pupils to try out their ideas. The pupils demonstrated some good knowledge of why bulbs became dimmer or brighter depending on the set up of the circuit and were well on their way to applying their understanding of resistors as a way of controlling electrical currents.

75. Pupils in Year 5 have a good knowledge of the difference between solids, gases and liquids and describe these differences using terms such as particles that are fixed and those that are free and able to combine with others. In one lesson pupils of all abilities were challenged to explore their ideas further by setting up a question and answer game for others to complete. This excited pupils and gave them ideas about how to shape explanations with greater clarity.
76. Pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well from a low level of understanding. There is good emphasis on using a range of charts, diagrams and tables for recording work. There is plenty of opportunity for pupils to show independence and initiative in recording and reporting their work. Key vocabulary is included and this is helping improve a weakness in pupils' earlier attainment. During a Year 3 lesson testing magnets, the teacher insisted on estimations and sought reassurance from the pupils that they could justify their hypotheses about the relative strengths of each one. The teacher's questions were open and promoted thoughtful responses, whilst reinforcing terms such as 'force' and 'attraction'. A similar emphasis on vocabulary and justifying opinion was evident in a lesson on the human skeleton in Year 4. The statements that were to be tested were well phrased raising the hypotheses for example that not all children aged 8 are taller than those aged 7, or that boys' forearms are longer than those of girls. The pupils displayed a good understanding of accurate recording and towards the end of the lesson began to speculate on some of the trends in the data they were collecting. All pupils enjoy investigative work, and this is especially beneficial to pupils with special educational needs who receive good quality support from teaching assistants and other pupils in the lessons.
77. The quality of teaching is good overall with a number of strengths that account for the good progress now being made across the school. Teachers plan work together that ensures a greater consistency in the pupils' experiences. This also allows teachers to make best use of the resources and share what works and what doesn't. The teachers set regular tests at the end of units for average and higher attaining pupils to find out what has been learnt, and receive good evaluations from adults working with lower attaining pupils. This serves to modify later work, making lessons even more effective. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge; planning sheets have reference to the key questions that can be used during the lessons. The pupils paid careful attention to placing the object to be attracted at the same starting point and frequently collected two or three measurements to arrive at a reasonable result. In this way the lesson served to improve their weaker measuring skills as well as adding substantially to their understanding of fair testing.
78. The subject is well led. Planning has improved and, as a result, teaching and learning are better than at the last inspection. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to think and work scientifically and good quality resources ensure that lessons are effective. The pupils' development of investigative skills is carefully tracked. In the better examples of marking, the teachers encourage pupils to explain their results or find another way of recording their answers; such as using a distribution graph rather than a block graph to show the results of an experiment. Some of the marking,

particularly in Year 5, lacks the challenge needed to extend higher attainers. The co-ordinator has provided staff with a good set of guidelines that has helped improve confidence and expertise in teaching. Further work is planned to extend the use of the new school grounds as a resource for learning.

ART AND DESIGN

79. Standards in art are as expected of pupils by the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. Achievement is satisfactory and standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
80. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are able to explore ideas and collect visual and other information to help them develop their work. They have experience of using a range of materials and techniques to communicate their ideas. For example, pupils in Year 3 study the work of Lowry and use a range of materials, including paint and chalk pastels, to produce pictures in his style. Pupils explained the use of dark colours in their work. They produce detailed observational drawings of wild animals from photographs and attractive collages of mini-beasts. Pupils in Year 6 appropriately develop their expertise in the use of tone to create depth in their pictures. After experimenting with shading from light to dark they copied a small section from a picture called 'The Wave' and used tone effectively in their work.
81. Much of the work in art and design is linked to other subjects such as history and music and this has a positive impact on pupils' knowledge. The co-ordinator has carefully planned a scheme of work, linked to topics, ensuring an appropriate development of skills. For example in Year 5 pupils learn to design pieces of Egyptian jewellery, including arm bands, bracelets and necklaces using materials such as string, wire, pasta, beads and buttons. Other pupils used hieroglyphs well to write their names or a simple message to illustrate how they were used during Ancient Egyptian times. An example of art inspired by music was seen in Year 4 where pupils had designed and produced collages in response to music. Pupils are given good opportunities for cultural development thorough the study of a range of work by different artists. For example, pupils in each year have produced work in the style of at least one artist such as Monet, Hokusai, Lowrey and Cambier. This has a positive impact on learning and enables all pupils to make good progress in developing their skills and techniques.
82. Some good standards were seen in photographs and examples of pupils' work produced during 'Arts Week'. This took place during the summer term and pupils learnt a wide range of skills, including tie dying, screen-printing, painting, sewing, drawing and sculpture. Pupils used their knowledge and understanding of materials well to communicate their ideas and demonstrated a range of techniques effectively, producing work of a high standard. Teachers, parents and members of the community shared their experiences and expertise effectively, supporting each other well and as a result pupils produced work of a standard better than expected for their age. Staff and pupils from the local secondary school have provided good support to help pupils create attractive sculptures for the school grounds. This initiative has enabled the teachers to have more easy access to sculptures for their teaching, particularly for appreciation of art.
83. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and teachers have sound subject knowledge. However, the current scheme of work has only been in place since September and needs to be implemented fully before the co-ordinator can monitor effectively to ensure a clear progression of skills development and techniques.

Some very good teaching was observed during the inspection. Explanations are clear and there are good demonstrations of techniques and expectations to support pupils' learning. Most teachers use sketchbooks to enable pupils to practise designs and techniques but few pieces of work are dated or marked. Therefore pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their work. There are currently no assessment procedures in place to track individual pupil's progress in skills' development. The co-ordinator is collecting samples of pupils' work to give staff ideas and to show expected attainment.

84. Management is good. The co-ordinator is very secure in her subject knowledge and supports colleagues well by giving advice and training. She monitors effectively through looking at samples of pupils' work, displays and discussions with teachers. Resources are satisfactory and used well to support pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve the standards expected of them. Boys and girls do equally well. Standards and progress are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
86. Pupils design and make a wide range of products. By Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of the design process. They research commercial products before making their own versions; they understand the purpose of a design brief and make appropriate suggestions for improvements once they have finished making their models. A range of models on display and photographs show that finished products are of good quality in all years. Materials are measured and cut accurately, models are robustly assembled and decorated attractively.
87. Pupils' work, together with a small number of lesson observations, indicates that teaching and learning is good. Teachers make good links with other subjects. Topics often support other subjects, such as Egyptian history when pupils make shadufs. Lessons are well organised, with sufficient tools and materials to hand.
88. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject. She supports colleagues well, for example in the preparation of detailed teaching plans for all topics in each year group. Her own teaching is lively and imaginative. There is a satisfactory system for tracking pupils' progress. Visits to the local technology centre make a good contribution to learning. The range and quality of learning resources has improved since the last inspection and contribute well to the quality of models that pupils make.

GEOGRAPHY

89. The last time the school was inspected standards just met expectations and progress was unsatisfactory. The standards shown by eleven year olds are below expectations and pupils' work across the school indicates that they are not achieving as well as they should in acquiring geographical skills and understanding.
90. Pupils' work and lesson observations show that teaching is no better than satisfactory. Much of the curriculum is taught through cross-curricular topics such as Ancient and modern Egypt, or the Inuits, but, because some teachers are unsure about how to teach geographical skills, pupils' learning is superficial.
91. In Year 3 teachers have worked hard to prepare a good set of resources that invite

pupils to consider some of the comparative qualities of life in Africa. However the teachers lack the knowledge necessary to ensure the questions develop geographical enquiry skills or further pupils' knowledge of the similarities and comparisons with their own area. A well-intentioned lesson in Year 5 aimed to give pupils the chance to select the best map for a study of river sources. Because pupils were not familiar with atlases and had uncertain knowledge of the landscape of the British Isles, the pace of the lesson slowed and the teacher was unable to reach her objectives. Some pupils in this year group were uncertain about fundamental knowledge of why rivers started in higher ground and how you could tell where land rose and fell from the information contained in map keys. In general, the planning to develop pupils' map skills is haphazard and development is erratic.

92. The quality of teaching varies and is indicative of the lack of well-developed guidelines to help teachers teach the subject with maximum impact. For example, Year 5 pupils listed basic facts about farming in Egypt and had found out some information about the dam on the River Nile, but this task was at a superficial level and lacked the probing questions which would help pupils explore the impact. Work on the Inuits in Year 4 is largely descriptive and doesn't get to the heart of how these nomadic peoples' lifestyles have changed over time. Where the teaching is better, higher attaining pupils are beginning to make the progress expected of them. Pupils in Year 6 relate erosion to how rivers move over time and the impact this has on human settlements. They are beginning to speculate on how waterways are managed to prevent flooding, and higher attaining pupils use geographical vocabulary such 'meanders', 'transportation' and 'deposition'.
93. The school has attempted to incorporate some key skills such as the development of fieldwork techniques alongside broad-based topic work. This leads to a very piecemeal understanding and not enough time is given for pupils to interrogate and interpret their work. There is little in-depth work on the locality and the opportunities to make use of data are rare. The co-ordinator is aware of these weaknesses. However, the subject development plan lacks the focus to make teaching more consistent, challenging and progressive. The teachers have no guidance to help them assess pupils' progress and consequently expectations are not as high as they should be.

HISTORY

94. Since the previous inspection, standards have been maintained as they are in line with the national expectation for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and overall progress is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils make good progress, as do those in Years 5 and 6. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
95. Pupils throughout the school show appropriate knowledge and understanding of the different periods of history they have studied. For example, Year 6 pupils thoroughly researched the development of medicine before producing a leaflet on Tudor medicines. In Year 5, pupils use a variety of sources in research to establish a range of information about an historical figure such as Tutankhamun. The pupils' understanding of reasons for historical events is a good feature of their learning. In Years 3 and 4 pupils recognise that their lives are different from the past and considering similarities and differences between themselves and historical figures. They are also beginning to make comparisons of life within an historical period, for example, between the Celts and the Romans. In Year 6 pupils gave good reasons to explain the differences between the actions of Tudor monarchs compared to present day rulers.

96. The analysis of work provides good evidence that pupils undertake their own research and present their findings on such things as Victorian life and the life of Tudor monarchs. In discussion with pupils it is clear that they are enthusiastic about history and have benefited from the opportunity to visit a range of places and take part in role-play on the themes of Romans, Celts and Tudors.
97. Teaching is at least satisfactory. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but teachers' planning, work samples and discussions with pupils indicate adequate planning with direct teaching of a broad curriculum through a good range of practical activities. Teachers make good use of the subject to enable pupils to apply and improve their literacy skills. For example, Year 4 pupils write a letter in role as a Roman soldier stationed in Britain and Year 5 pupils use their knowledge about Ancient Egypt to write descriptive openings to stories.
98. Pupils' ICT skills are used well. They listen to tapes, use the Internet and CD-ROM to develop their skills of enquiry. Pupils in Years 5 have created multimedia presentations that combine information about Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece from a range of sources including the Internet and their own research. Pupils' writing in Years 3 and 4 benefits from recalling the key features of a visit to Maiden Castle taken by digital camera.
99. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of her subject. She is supporting teachers through a review of planning and purchasing appropriate resources to support pupils with different needs in lessons. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the improvement of history, including the development of a more thorough assessment process that has already begun to impact upon standards in Years 5 and 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

100. By the end of Year 6 standards are above national expectations. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be below average. Standards have risen as a result of the improvement in resources; training for teachers and the enthusiasm and leadership of a knowledgeable co-ordinator. Progress for pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good and boys and girls achieve equally well.
101. Pupils have the opportunity to apply the skills taught in lessons in the ICT suite across the curriculum and the use of computers to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory. Links between ICT and other subjects is a strong feature of teaching in Years 5 and 6 where connections are made with a variety of subjects including: history through multimedia presentations; English through the presentation of text and graphics; science through the use of sensors and microscopes. Links are weak in Years 3 and 4 with little use of ICT across the curriculum. There is good use of computers to support learning in the speech and language base.
102. Year 6 pupils use computers with confidence to present work for a range of audiences and in a variety of styles. Multimedia presentations are created in the form of mathematical and general knowledge quizzes for pupils in Years 3 and 4 and research linked to a variety of historical periods. Electronic sensors and microscopes enhance scientific enquiry whilst Internet research supports work linked to art and history through Egyptian hieroglyphics. Dance performances are recorded on video for critical analysis.
103. In the majority of lessons, pupils demonstrate good application and concentration on

their work. They are co-operative and support each other, often working in pairs to complete a task and taking responsibility for their own learning. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and have a positive attitude towards ICT. These good attitudes contribute to the quality of learning as pupils share their knowledge and help each other.

104. Overall, teaching is good with some lessons that are excellent. Planning is detailed and includes clear objectives and opportunity to track progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use insightful questions to draw upon pupils' prior knowledge. They make good use of the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate skills and are supported by able teaching assistants. The specialist ICT teaching assistant is particularly effective and provides invaluable support for teachers in lessons and with the maintenance of the ICT suite.
105. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has identified the need to monitor standards and progress beyond the simple teacher assessments and basic pupil tracking system presently in place.

MUSIC

106. Pupils reach expected standards by the end of Year 6. Singing standards are above expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress over the time they spend in the school and achieve levels in line with their abilities. Boys and girls do equally well.
107. Clear musical direction and attention to details leads to higher than expected standards in singing. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils sing expressively, in tune and with a good sense of rhythm. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils sing unison hymns and rounds in up to three parts very well. They hold their part securely and sing with sensitivity, showing awareness of the meaning of the words. The quality of performance singing is good.
108. Pupils in all years make sound progress in composing, performing and evaluating their own music. They support each other well during lessons, ensuring all learn at a steady pace. Group compositions, on themes such as 'Dolphins swimming' or 'Stormy weather' are imaginative, well rehearsed and performed confidently. Older pupils, particularly those who play instruments, often record their work using standard musical notation. Pupils make considered judgements of their work and suggest ways in which it could be improved. They use a satisfactory range of musical terms when talking about music, such as 'tempo' and 'jazz'.
109. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is shared between the co-ordinator, who is a music specialist, and class teachers. Lessons are well planned and organised. Instruments are readily available and often set out before lessons begin. Lessons start promptly and pupils are active from the beginning. Classes are managed effectively and pupils with special educational needs receive good support, enabling them to take a full part in lessons. Pupils enjoy music making, especially when composing, and work well together.
110. Teaching is very good in the lessons taken by the co-ordinator and in singing practices, and choir and orchestra rehearsals. She teaches practical skills well, demonstrating and explaining clearly what she wants pupils to do. She helps pupils to develop their musical ideas well when they are working on their own compositions and ensures that learning is brisk. In other lessons, teaching is satisfactory because teachers' expertise is not sufficient to challenge pupils' musical abilities fully. In a Year 6 lesson, for instance, pupils were not given enough guidance on choosing and using

percussion instruments effectively to represent river features such as a 'waterfall'. As a result pupils' creativity was not challenged enough.

111. The co-ordinator leads subject development well. Although new to the post, she helps colleagues prepare teaching plans, and has recently established two school choirs and an orchestra. Woodwind, brass, violin and guitar lessons, taught by visiting teachers, are popular with pupils and are a very good addition to what the school provides in lessons. The choirs, orchestra and instrumental tuition make a good contribution to pupils' musical progress and their personal development. The music room is well equipped, although a little small and noisy for larger classes when they are using instruments. Standards are similar to those at the last inspection, and with the good leadership the school is well set to build on its recent developments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

112. By the end of Year 6 overall standards are average and similar to when last reported. A few pupils' attainment in games is better than expected for their age because the school offers pupils a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Teachers are using a comprehensive scheme of work written by the co-ordinator, which is beginning to ensure progression of skills throughout the school. Schemes of work for gymnastics, games and dance have been completed and those for swimming and athletics are being planned. All are in their first term of use, which explains why standards in these areas are not yet better than expected in all areas of the subject. The current timetable arrangements do not make best use of the school hall in the mornings for physical education lessons. This means that pupils have only one physical education lesson each week and there is no indoor provision for games if the weather is not suitable for pupils to participate outdoors. Consequently there are limited opportunities for pupils to consolidate their achievements in games and gymnastic skills. Pupils have not been able to swim for the last two years because of building works but the pool is now ready for use in the summer term and all pupils should have access to swimming lessons at least twice a week.
113. Teaching is good and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. By the end of Year 6 pupils have developed good passing and catching skills in preparation for rugby. They understand attack and defence well. Good individual teaching of skills enables many pupils to make good progress during games lessons. Teachers make good use of themes from other lessons when teaching dance. For example Year 5 pupils used their knowledge of Ancient Egyptian society to represent the different roles in a range of movement patterns performed to Egyptian music.
114. Good warm-up sessions prepare pupils well for the main part of the lesson; pupils have a sound understanding of the reasons for the need to warm-up before an activity. Behaviour management is good and as a result pupils respond and concentrate well in lessons. Teachers use praise effectively. Good demonstrations and individual support enables pupils to make good progress in lessons. However, there are currently no assessment procedures and so individual pupils' attainment in each area of physical education can not easily be tracked to ensure progression of skills.
115. Resources are satisfactory. The school makes very good use of members of the community to support pupils' learning, such as the town's football club, the county cricket team and the local tennis club. Management is good and the co-ordinator is well qualified. She has worked hard to support teachers with planning and by organising training.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. Standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall in their learning. Overall teaching is satisfactory, this is a change from last inspection when it was good. Most lessons are based on worksheet activities that often lack the challenge necessary to deepen understanding of religious issues. The planning is in line with the locally agreed syllabus but little use is made of other faith communities to extend pupils' knowledge in this area.
117. By the end of Year 6 most pupils know the detail of some of the practices and beliefs of Christianity and those of the major world faiths. Pupils explore the values and beliefs of Islam and relate them to their own life and Christianity. They understand that the Qu'ran is a holy book, that it has to be treated in a special way and that Muslims can only touch the book after they have washed their hands. Most know that the Bible is important to Christians. In a lesson about the Islamic attitude to the natural world, pupils followed a line of argument and justified reasons for not ill treating animals, developing the idea that Muslims believe we have a responsibility for the natural world.
118. During their studies of Christianity, in Year 3, pupils learnt the key events of Jesus' young life and that the parables are stories with special meanings. In a lesson on parables, the teacher made good use of pupils' work in literacy on fables to draw out the messages. The pupils clearly understood the special message of the story of the Prodigal Son 'being able to say sorry for what you have done wrong and being forgiven'. In a Year 4 lesson pupils took part in focused discussion about the various vestments worn by the local vicar and found out what they were. The lesson promoted a good deal of discussion about symbolism and made satisfactory contribution to pupils' knowledge. Year 5 pupils continue the focus on Christianity. They study special people and special qualities; particularly looking at St Paul's Journeys and the work of Mother Teresa. Much of the work involves completing worksheets and does not give pupils sufficient opportunities to express opinions about what it means to be a Christian.
119. Assessment activities are part of the planning but they are in an early stage of development. The co-ordinator has made a sound contribution to the development of religious education across the school by providing planning for each year group, based on the locally agreed syllabus. Resources are very limited, particularly the use of artefacts, visits and visitors from the faith communities other than Christianity and this remains an area for development identified at the last inspection.