

INSPECTION REPORT

MILLDOWN CE (VC) FIRST SCHOOL

Blandford Forum, Dorset

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113755

Headteacher: Mrs S A Ryall

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Allcock
19834

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th March 2003

Inspection number: 247401

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Milldown Blandford Forum Dorset
Postcode:	DT11 7SH
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Joseph Hickish
Date of previous inspection:	12 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19834	Michael Allcock	Registered inspector	English; history; music; physical education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19639	Gillian Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22654	Pat Wootten	Team inspector	Art and design; geography; religious education; Foundation Stage; special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
24891	Jackie Johnson	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology; design and technology; educational inclusion; English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Milldown Church of England First is a seven-class school for pupils in reception and Years 1 to 4 in Blandford Forum, a small market town in north Dorset. It serves the northern residential part of the town, but parents from outside the catchment area choose to send their children to the school, due to its reputation for an inclusive ethos. There are 180 pupils on roll, so it is smaller than the average. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds with about four per cent known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Children's attainments on entry to reception are broadly average. Most children have had some form of pre-school provision before entry. About 17 per cent of pupils have special educational needs. This is below the national average, but the proportion having a Statement of Special Educational Needs is in line with the national and Dorset averages at 1.7 per cent. The largest categories of special educational needs are emotional and behavioural difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. Just over one per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. Only one pupil has English at an early stage of acquisition. There are a small number of traveller pupils at the school. Levels of mobility, in terms of pupils joining the school at other than the usual time, are high.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. The pupils reach average standards in almost all subjects by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4. In their five years at the school they achieve satisfactorily overall, taking into account the number who enter the school later than the reception intake and the special educational needs that pupils have. This is due to good teaching for reception and Years 1 and 2 pupils, and satisfactory teaching overall. There have been two new staff in the last year and most other teachers have had a significant change of role. These changes are taking time to bed down, but the new staff team is already gelling into an effective unit. Leadership now needs to provide a clearer academic direction, including more direct monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure consistency in provision and procedures. This should lead to an improvement in pupils' results in Year 2 national tests and in overall standards by the time pupils leave the school. Running costs are broadly average and the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the reception class get a good start to their formal education.
- The school provides a good range of well thought out learning opportunities for its pupils. There are good arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress and achievements.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes to the school, behave well and have constructive relationships, with good personal development.
- The school cares for all its pupils well. There is good provision for those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language.
- There is a very effective partnership with parents, the local community and other institutions.
- Governors are committed, knowledgeable and effective in their duties.

What could be improved

- The pupils' attainment and achievement in English by the end of Year 2.
- The pupils' attainment and achievement in art and design by the end of Year 4.
- The appropriate allocation of available time between the subjects of the National Curriculum so that it is used effectively.
- Some aspects of leadership and management, including the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning to pick up inconsistencies; for instance, in the teaching of mathematics.
- The planning of what pupils of differing ages and attainments will learn in lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since its last inspection in January 1998. The key issues raised then have mostly been addressed. Standards in subjects identified as below average have been raised, apart from those in art and design. Teaching quality is higher and documentation for all curriculum subjects is now in place, although monitoring to ensure consistency of provision and teaching is still unsatisfactory. Provision for multicultural education is now good. There is a closer link between spending on identified priorities and educational outcomes, though this could be sharper. However, there is still some underachievement by higher attaining pupils, who are not always challenged enough to achieve as much as they could. The new teaching team works effectively together. However, at present not enough is being done to meet the school's targets for improving standards of pupils' work, particularly in English.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	C	C	D	D
Writing	E	C	C	D
Mathematics	E	C	C	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In work seen during the inspection, standards in reading were broadly average for the current Year 2 pupils. However, there was some underachievement, as too few of the higher attaining pupils were working at the higher Level 3 or above. Standards in writing were below average overall. Standards in mathematics and science were about average. Many pupils join the school after the normal reception class entry date. In the school at present, 47 pupils entered after the normal time; about one in four of the current school roll. A significant proportion, 66 per cent, of these pupils have special educational needs of some kind. All the pupils at school with a Statement of Special Needs joined in this way. This has had an impact on standards.

Children enter reception with broadly average attainments overall. This was the case for the current Year 2 pupils. However, there is some variation between year groups, depending significantly on the level of mobility. The pupils who made up Year 2 in 2002 entered reception with above average levels of attainment in language and literacy in 1999. On the basis of this, their performance in last year's tests was disappointing. Since then, a new Years 1 and 2 teaching team has been deployed. Indications are

that this is improving overall standards. However, this is unlikely to produce average results in writing or in reading in the 2003 Year 2 tests. To do so, more higher attaining pupils need to achieve in line with national norms in the tests, which both inspection evidence and school records suggest is doubtful.

Children make good progress in lessons and achieve well in their time in reception. Almost all are on target to meet the Early Learning Goals in all Foundation Stage areas of learning before, or by the time, they enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 achieve satisfactorily overall. By the end of Years 2 and 4, they attain average standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, design and technology, history, music and physical education. Pupils attain average standards in art and design by the end of Year 2, but standards are below average by Year 4. In geography they attain average standards by Year 2; there was not enough evidence to judge standards by the end of Year 4. Standards in English by the end of Year 2 are below average, but pupils achieve average standards by Year 4. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most are eager to learn and try hard in their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, although the behaviour of some older pupils can deteriorate if they are not well managed.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Boys and girls of all ages, backgrounds and races get on well. Pupils are willing to take responsibility, when given the opportunity.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils' attendance is well above the national average. There is little unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was very good in more than one lesson out of ten and good in a further four in ten. Teaching in about four out of ten lessons was sound. However, teaching was unsatisfactory in nearly one lesson in ten. The teaching of English is satisfactory with some effective features seen in the best lessons. This enables pupils to acquire sound skills of literacy by the time they leave the school. The teaching of mathematics is also satisfactory overall, but one half of the unsatisfactory lessons seen were in this key core subject. However, pupils are acquiring useful numeracy skills, which they apply in other subjects of the curriculum, like science and design and technology.

Teaching is stronger for pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2 because planning is more detailed, enabling the basic skills within subjects to be taught more effectively. Pupils are better managed, so they stay on task for longer, work more productively and acquire skills and understanding more quickly. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language learn well in the early years. Their learning is satisfactory overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Broad and made relevant by the cross-curricular approach, but lacking in balance within and between subjects for pupils in Years 1 to 4.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The needs of these pupils are accurately assessed. The targets on their individual education plans are well thought out and achievable.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Support is well targeted so pupils quickly become independent.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. It is good for their spiritual and cultural development. The school's inclusive ethos prepares pupils well for life in a diverse society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures are very effective for promoting high attendance. Good procedures for child protection and to ensure pupils' overall safety and welfare.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Clear pastoral direction given by the headteacher. More delegation of responsibility to the staff team. The school now needs to focus on improving pupil standards in lessons and end of Year 2 tests.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are knowledgeable and effective. They understand the school well and use this knowledge carefully when making decisions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There are effective strategies to appraise staff, but otherwise insufficient direct monitoring of performance.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Available money well targeted, but priorities identified in planning have not raised academic standards. Principles of best value soundly used.

There are a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified staff to meet the requirements of the school's curriculum. The school's accommodation, inside and out, is spacious and well maintained. Resources are satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching is good, promoting good progress in lessons.• Behaviour is good, which means that their children like coming to school and are becoming good citizens of tomorrow.• They are well informed and feel that the school is responsive to their suggestions.• Their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They are not sure that their child gets the right amount of homework.

Inspectors agree with most of the parents' positive views of the school. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, not all pupils make the progress they should in lessons and achieve as well as they could during their time at the school. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, but some improvements should be made. The homework pupils are set is appropriate for a first school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The way standards are judged has been modified since the time the school was last inspected in 1998. Then, judgements about results in Year 2 national tests were based upon the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 or above. Now, points are allocated to the levels attained by pupils and schools' average points scores are compared. Overall, pupils' standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science, the core subjects assessed at the end of Year 2, have been maintained since the last inspection, when they were broadly average. However, there have been significant variations in the performances of groups of Year 2 pupils, in tests particularly, compared with all schools. The 1999 cohort attained well above average standards in reading, but below average standards in writing. The Year 2000 cohort attained average standards in reading, but standards were well below average in both writing and mathematics. Some consistency has been restored across subjects subsequently, but reading declined from well above average in 1999 to below average by 2002, prompting school targets to improve standards in this strand of English. This has been successful to a degree and more successful in terms of targets set to raise standards in mathematics. However, a significant decline in standards of writing amongst the current Year 2 group had not been identified until pointed out by inspectors, despite clear evidence in the school's own assessments of writing standards.
2. There has been good improvement overall, in the subjects judged below average for attainment and where pupils were not achieving as well as they should in 1998. Standards in ICT, history and music are now broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 4. Standards in art and design are average by the end of Year 2. Pupils now achieve satisfactorily in these subjects. There was insufficient evidence to judge pupils' attainment in geography by the end of Year 4. Standards in art and design by the end of Year 4 are below average, as was found in 1998. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in this subject. Overall, since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement in this aspect of the school's work.
3. Schools are not only compared with all other schools of the same type nationally, but also with schools having similar levels of free school meals. Milldown First has a relatively low take-up of free school meals, which places it in the category of the most socially advantaged schools in the country. The school accurately states that this varies from year to year, but acknowledges that for the 2003 Year 2 group this assessment of free school meal take-up is correct. However, the school's own research indicates that in 2002 more families were eligible for free school meals than actually took up the entitlement. Other evidence, including census information, points to the pupils' socio-economic status being above average overall. Compared with schools with similar levels of free school meals, the Year 2 pupils attained average standards in mathematics, but below average standards in reading and writing in the 2002 national tests. The school, supported by its local education authority, appropriately analyses information from national test results and its own effective assessment regime. It draws valid conclusions about the value it adds to year groups as they progress through the school. However, there is insufficient analysis at present about different groups of pupils; for example, boys, girls or pupils with special educational needs, as the school is at present unable to track the progress of these groups using computer systems. In recent Year 2 tests, girls outperformed boys in reading and writing, but the boys were ahead in mathematics. There were no significant differences between the school's results and the picture seen nationally.
4. Children in the reception class are making a positive start to their school careers. Taught by a newly qualified teacher, they are attaining above average standards overall. Standards in lessons seen indicate that children attain well above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development and above average standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development. This is good achievement in these areas of learning, as standards on entry for this year's group were broadly average overall. Children's attainments in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development are broadly

average, showing satisfactory achievement. Children are well prepared for the National Curriculum by the stimulating provision made for them in their reception year and the good quality teaching they receive.

5. Progress slows in Years 1 to 4. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in these years, so by the time they leave the school they are attaining broadly average standards overall. Good teaching is a strong feature of work in Years 1 and 2, but standards of teaching are lower in Years 3 and 4. The high level of inward mobility and the significant special educational needs some pupils have are key reasons why standards are not higher. However, the impact of the new Years 1 and 2 teaching team should have an effect on Year 2 standards in 2004. Standards seen in Year 1 during the current inspection, and the school's own assessments of the attainments of those pupils suggest that this improvement is happening, particularly in mathematics. The school must now more closely scrutinise the quality of teaching and learning, so that there is greater consistency in this key aspect, so that all other efforts focused on raising standards are supported by consistently effective lesson delivery.
6. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, they have broadly average standards in English and achieve satisfactorily. Standards of literacy are sound. Teachers plan appropriately for core literacy skills to be practised and reinforced in lessons across the curriculum. However, their expectations for writing are not high enough, so inconsistencies in handwriting, grammar and spelling and overall presentation are not always rigorously challenged to help to drive standards higher. Overall, standards of writing are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils have above average standards in speaking and listening. The school makes good provision for oracy, using activities like drama and 'hot-seating' pupils so that they perform in role, often in appropriate costume, as in Years 3 and 4 lessons when volunteers dressed up and acted as evacuees and responded spontaneously to questions from their peers. Most pupils listen carefully to their teacher and classmates before answering questions. They speak fluently, the higher attaining pupils linking ideas into complex sentences. By the end of Year 4, pupils have positive attitudes to reading. They read an appropriate range of books for pleasure and to find information, deploying helpful reference skills when they undertake research. Not all younger pupils have secure skills that they can use to access unfamiliar words in texts that are new to them.
7. Standards in mathematics are broadly average by the end of both Years 2 and 4. Pupils achieve satisfactorily over their time in the school. The school has appropriate strategies for teaching numeracy, but pupils' skills and understanding of concepts are not well enough reinforced in lessons across the curriculum. Year 2 pupils add and subtract simple numbers confidently. However, pupils are not always able to apply these skills to other calculations, for example, when dealing with money. They weigh and measure accurately. Most can recognise and name some of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional solids. Year 4 pupils are developing sound competence in the four rules of number. The higher attaining pupils are able to apply these to solve problems. However, at present planned opportunities to use and apply mathematics regularly in other subjects are underdeveloped. This has already been identified by the school in its current school development plan.
8. Pupils attain average standards in science, both by the end of Year 2 and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4. They achieve as well as they should. Year 2 pupils recognise differences in materials, understand that their properties can be altered and that not all change can be reversed. They know that growing things also change and plot changes that have occurred to themselves as they grew from a baby. Most can construct a simple electrical circuit, although some need help. By the end of Year 4, pupils correctly identify the different parts of plants. They consider the conductivity of various materials and assess the results of adding water to a range of materials. Pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to think for themselves as scientists; for example, by suggesting ideas for investigations or ways of reporting outcomes. This inhibits their capacity to use and apply the scientific skills they have acquired.
9. Pupils develop useful ICT skills as they move through the school, achieving satisfactorily. Standards are broadly average by the end of both Years 2 and 4. Year 2 pupils can use a graphics package to recreate colourfully the work of Piet Mondrian. They control a floor turtle, sending it

along a predicted route. They simulate dressing a teddy on screen. By the end of Year 4, pupils use a variety of fonts, changing colour and size when word-processing. Literacy and numeracy skills are appropriately supported by work pupils undertake in ICT.

- Standards in religious education are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 4. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Year 2 pupils know many of the main tenets of Christianity and identify some of its symbols, including those seen during a visit to Salisbury Cathedral. They are learning that other faiths have symbols that are important to them; for example, the Shabbat meal for Jews. Year 4 pupils recall accurately some of Jesus' miracles, including the feeding of the five thousand. Using their work on Islam, they recognise that there are many similarities between the major world faiths.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- Overall, pupils show a very positive attitude to the school and their behaviour is good. This represents a good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Parents are very appreciative of their children's enthusiasm for school and this inspires their own commitment to support the school actively. Pupils of all ages respond well to the school's strong moral and social ethos and to their teachers' calm management of their behaviour. They know that they are expected to be 'hardworking, make people feel special and happy, and be polite' and they comply well. There is very little oppressive behaviour or bullying. There has been one, fixed-term exclusion in the last year.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and happy to be in school. Their eagerness to come to school creates a very good start to the school day; for example, a Year 2 English lesson first thing in the morning was calm and purposeful. The pupils' very positive attitudes and good concentration make a positive contribution to their learning and achievement. Pupils show good levels of interest and involvement in their activities and in very well taught lessons this can be very good. In an English lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils showed good levels of concentration and interest in their work because the work and the teaching methods used were well matched to their individual needs.
- Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. It can be very good when teachers manage them very well; for example, in a religious education lesson in Years 1 and 2, the teacher used praise and encouragement to motivate pupils and they responded well by expressing their views confidently. There is no oppressive behaviour including bullying because the school takes strong steps to prevent it. The 'buddy system' ensures that no child is isolated in the playground. Ethnic minority and traveller children are accepted well because they are well supported and their contributions to the school are valued.
- Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. They are underpinned by the emphasis the school places on encouraging pupils' social and moral development. Pupils work together very well in lessons and there is a real sense that all pupils are fully included in the school. They have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others well. This is encouraged by the good role models provided by adults, who show mutual respect, care and courtesy in their relationships with pupils and each other. Circle time is used successfully for building and reinforcing pupils' self-esteem, respect for others and the ability to listen to others' views. Overall, pupils' initiative and personal responsibility are good. Year 4 pupils take their responsibilities for younger pupils in the buddy scheme very seriously and this contributes well to their developing maturity. As at the last inspection, there are too few opportunities for pupils to take initiatives and older pupils, in particular, need to take more responsibility for their own learning. Relationships are good because the school sees fostering them as underpinning its whole work. It thus invests time to develop them through aspects such as 'Golden Time' and circle time. Despite this, a very small number of boys have difficulty in working well together. The school provides an inclusive environment in which all groups of pupils are fully involved and able to respond well to questions in lessons.
- Attendance is very good, being well above the average for a school of this type. Pupils are happy and very keen to come to school. Parents bring them to school punctually and unauthorised

absence is negligible. There has been a good improvement in attendance since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, it is good for children in the reception class and pupils in Years 1 and 2. This contributes to the broadly average standards that pupils attain by the time they leave the school and their sound overall learning. Teaching was good or better in over one half of all lessons and satisfactory or better in over nine out of ten. However, it was unsatisfactory in almost one in ten, which is too high. As at the time of the last inspection, the strongest teaching was seen in the reception class, but the difference between teaching quality in reception and the mixed Years 1 and 2 classes was less pronounced during this inspection. As in 1998, the teaching of Years 3 and 4 pupils was least effective, though it was satisfactory overall. Compared with the rest of the school, there was a wider spread of teaching standards in these year groups; there was a higher proportion of very good lessons seen, but also most of the unsatisfactory teaching was for this age group. The key point is that the percentage of good and better lessons seen in Years 3 and 4 was less than one half of that seen in the rest of the school. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the overall quality of teaching and learning. There were fewer high quality lessons then and significantly more unsatisfactory teaching was reported. The introduction of an appropriate policy for teaching and learning, and more effective subject documentation to support teachers' planning, have helped to raise teaching quality. The regular sampling of teachers' planning and pupils' output has also proved helpful. However, there is at present insufficient rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons to ensure that all teachers are working to a consistent standard, delivering a broadly similar provision through agreed procedures.
17. Teachers display sound subject knowledge overall. They teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and core skills of the other subjects appropriately, though this is an effective feature for pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good in ICT, history and music. It is satisfactory in English, mathematics, science, religious education, art and design and physical education. Not enough evidence was obtained to judge the quality of teaching in design and technology and geography. Planning is detailed. However, what pupils of different attainments in mixed-age classes are expected to learn is not always made sufficiently clear. Learning objectives are not always shared sufficiently with pupils during lessons, or reinforced in end-of-session reviews. Pupils may miss the key points of lessons because of this, as too much emphasis is placed on the activities rather than the underlying concepts they are devised to teach. The three-part lesson structure of teacher's introduction, pupils' activities and lesson review is most often used in literacy and numeracy lessons and widely across the curriculum. However, the final plenary session is often rushed, sometimes missed and seldom given the priority it needs to reinforce learning and test pupils' understanding of the key objectives of the lesson.
18. The setting of pupils in the mixed-age classes in Years 1 to 4 for English and mathematics means that teachers are able to direct teaching at a narrower range of attainment, and usually of age spread, than normal. In the best lessons seen, teachers further refined planning for the range of attainments within each set, so matching the tasks more accurately to the learning needs of groups and individual pupils. However, too often teachers' expectations for pupils are not high enough. Tasks are not always well matched to their prior attainment. Only slightly modified expected outcomes or levels of support are provided in teachers' planning. This approach does not challenge the higher attaining pupils enough and they are not always achieving as much as they should. This is particularly noticeable in the amount of writing they are expected to do in other subjects than English, where too often too little is demanded of them and untidy presentation goes unchecked.
19. Teachers manage pupils well overall. The majority of pupils display positive attitudes to their learning and concentrate over long periods in many lessons, not just those for literacy and numeracy. This means that classroom management can be relaxed, particularly with the younger learners, so that overt discipline is rarely necessary. However, some older pupils find it harder to stay on task and work at pace and, if the teacher does not apply agreed behaviour management

procedures consistently, problems can occur. Younger pupils show keen interest in their work. Reception and Years 1 and 2 pupils are encouraged to be independent in their learning. They take increasing responsibility, showing appropriate awareness of their own learning needs. For example, higher attaining Years 1 and 2 pupils undertake personal research. One pupil downloaded material about Florence Nightingale from the Internet to support a recent class history topic. Her teacher mounted this prominently in an effective display of classwork. Older pupils are given fewer choices and opportunities to display independence. In physical education, for example, although younger pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2 are encouraged to put out their own apparatus, with support, Years 3 and 4 pupils are given low level tasks to occupy them while their teachers do this with a small number of pupil helpers.

20. Teachers use an appropriate mix of teaching methods and learning styles in lessons to interest the pupils. Direct teaching and question and answer sessions are common to all lessons. Teachers use ICT appropriately within lessons and produce a satisfactory level of worksheets and other material to support pupils' learning on computers. Pace flags in extended introductions to some sessions, as many are timetabled for one hour. One dance lesson posted to last an hour overran, while the rest of the school and a visiting minister queued outside to get into the hall for assembly. The routine monitoring of teaching would help to eliminate this kind of technical problem. Teachers plan and work productively with their classroom assistants in most lessons. However, on occasions, up to two classroom assistants sat unproductively in physical education lessons, where no specific deployment had been planned.
21. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of assessment since the last inspection. Ongoing assessment of pupils within lessons is satisfactory, although marking is not consistent. It does not routinely give pupils of differing attainment and needs a clear enough indication of how they could improve their work. It is better in English and mathematics than in other subjects. Marking often includes praise and supportive comments, which are sometimes more lavish than is deserved. Homework is appropriately used to support pupils' work, mainly in the core subjects. However, open-ended tasks are also set, so that pupils can research topics they are studying. In a Years 1 and 2 history lesson, pupils were challenged to find out about the 'Great Fire' that destroyed much of Blandford, before its rebuilding as an elegant Georgian town, to compare and contrast it with the 1666 'Great Fire of London'.
22. Information about special educational needs pupils is readily available in the classrooms and teachers know their pupils well. Relationships with pupils are good and most teachers use praise and encouragement effectively to motivate and recognise their small successes. However, most often the work set for pupils with special educational needs is the same as that for the rest of the class, albeit with additional support to do it, rather than these pupils being given work tailored to their needs. Most pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory and often good progress; a similar judgement to that made after the last inspection. The school is particularly successful in raising the self-esteem and improving the behaviour of these pupils and this has an impact on learning.

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

23. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities and the appropriate statutory curriculum is in place. The curriculum for the youngest pupils is good overall, but for the pupils in Years 1 to 4 it is satisfactory because of weaknesses in the balance between subjects. The school has satisfactorily addressed many of the issues identified as weaknesses in the last inspection and all subjects now have policy statements and schemes of work based on national and local education authority guidance. However, the expectations for each year group in mixed-age classes have not been sufficiently defined and the same work is planned for all pupils. This reduces their acquisition of knowledge and development of specific skills. However, the use of sets for English and mathematics enables a closer match of task to pupils' needs to be made. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully implemented and the curriculum for the children in reception is appropriately based on the stepping stones set out in national guidelines. The use of ICT is being developed effectively across the curriculum.

24. The curriculum breadth and balance provided for the youngest children is good and overall, takes account of the need for them to be active learners for much of the day. Review of the timetable would improve provision still further. Children are expected to sit on the carpet for too long in some literacy and religious education lessons and this affects their concentration and interest. Compared with the national average, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 spend too little time in lessons over a week and the time available is not sufficiently well planned to ensure a balanced curriculum. Although there are breadth and quality learning experiences in most subjects, the balance between subjects and use of time available is unsatisfactory. This means that in some foundation subjects such as art and design, history and geography not enough time is allocated to enable pupils to study in sufficient depth or achieve the skills they need to reach higher standards. This was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection and not enough improvement has been made. Time allocated to subjects varies between classes in the same year groups and lessons often do not start on time or they run over into the next lesson.
25. Currently in Years 1 and 2, almost three hours each week are allocated to 'plan, do and review' and 'Golden Time', whereas National Curriculum subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, geography and history, are taught in blocked units. Currently the whole school is involved in 'Golden Time' on Friday afternoons. This provides a good social experience for pupils and is in keeping with the community ethos of the school. Staff organise groups of pupils across the school and explore a wide range of activities such as cooking and large textile collages. However, not all pupils experience the same range of learning opportunities and the planning does not link into previous learning or build systematically on what they already know and can do.
26. The school makes good provision for personal, social and health education. It has been awarded Healthy School status and as part of this has recently focused on community and sexual health. The sex education and relationships policy is effective and the school nurse works in partnership with teachers on this aspect of the curriculum. The school makes good use of the local education authority Life Education Programme. There is good provision for education about drug use and abuse and the whole school has recently been involved in 'Keeping Myself Safe'. Extra-curricular provision is sound. A range of clubs including football, recorders and knitting take place.
27. The school has very good links with parents, the wider local community and partner institutions. Parents show an interest in what the pupils are learning and support them at home or by helping in school. Relationships with the adjacent middle school and other schools in the pyramid are very good. Curriculum agreements have been reached to ensure that pupils who transfer at the end of Year 4 have covered the appropriate parts of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Pyramid curriculum initiatives, such as the visit to the National Gallery, enrich provision. There are very good links with other agencies, such as the local health authority, to support pupils with special educational needs.
28. The school makes good overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Provision for moral and social development is very good; provision for cultural and spiritual development is good. The school very successfully creates an ethos where all pupils can grow and flourish as individuals. Acts of collective worship comply with statutory requirements and make a good contribution to spiritual development. These are joyful occasions and time is given in them for focused reflection. There is a very supportive community atmosphere in the sharing assembly and the pupils feel valued for what they have achieved and learnt. In some lessons, pupils are totally involved in their work, as was seen in one art and design lesson. In some religious education lessons pupils are beginning to ask questions such as, "Who was Jesus anyway?" Arts weeks and visits to places such as Roche Court outdoor gallery enable pupils to marvel at human achievement and enjoy their own experiences. However, some opportunities for spiritual development in lessons are missed because they are not effectively identified in planning.
29. Provision for social and moral development is very good. There is a strong emphasis on inclusion and community ethos. This is reflected in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs who choose to come to the school. Almost all pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and respond well to the praise given to them by adults. School and class rules are on display and teachers and other staff are very good role models in their relationships with

each other. Staff have high expectations of pupils showing respect for each other, working together, taking turns and listening. All pupils have the opportunity to become a school council member, older pupils a 'Cool Calm Kid'. The school council influences decision-making and the 'Cool Calm Kids' take their responsibilities as peer mediators and staff helpers very seriously.

30. The school provides well for cultural development across the curriculum, such as in religious education and the study of the other world faiths of Judaism and Islam. Visitors are welcomed into school to explain how being Muslim affects their daily lives. Pupils study the development of their local area in geography and history and are introduced to their local culture through visits and visitors. They study life in India and Mexico and have explored the heritage of aboriginal art and music. They experience what life was like in wartime Britain when they visit a living museum in Weymouth. Visits to art galleries and taking part in pyramid events all add to the good provision. Overall, the school makes effective provision to prepare pupils for life in a diverse, multicultural society.
31. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils of all abilities to access the curriculum. In English and mathematics, pupils from the mixed-age classes are taught in ability sets throughout the school with work generally appropriately matched to the needs of groups within the sets. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and individual education plans are appropriate. In some areas of the curriculum the needs of higher attaining pupils are not met. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language are supported well in the classroom by class teachers, and by support assistants when present. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the curriculum, but there are instances where pupils regularly miss a lesson in their own class because they are receiving support elsewhere. In science, ICT and the other subjects in the curriculum, all pupils are often set the same task. This does not always ensure that higher attaining pupils receive appropriately challenging tasks or that lower attaining pupils can complete tasks without extra support and become independent learners. All pupils have equal access to extra-curricular activities and out-of-school visits. 'Golden Time', which takes place each Friday as a timetabled event and 'plan, do and review' sessions each morning allow pupils to access curriculum areas by their own choice.
32. The few pupils with English as an additional language make sound achievement over time. They receive effective support in lessons and in the one-to-one support provided in withdrawal sessions. On some occasions, however, the pupils give one-word answers to questions and are not encouraged to answer in simple sentences to develop their language skills even further. Generally, these pupils cope well in the classroom.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. Pupils are cared for well due to the commitment of staff, which has a positive impact on standards. Overall, the procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. Staff are very alert to the needs of individual children, tailoring an effective response to meet them. This is particularly effective because the staff are very good at listening to both pupils and parents and, as a result, give very good support to all pupils regardless of their level of needs. All new pupils have an older 'buddy' to look after them. Year 4 take this responsibility seriously and are caring and supportive towards the reception children. The headteacher and teaching assistants give extra support for pupils who find circle time difficult, ensuring that they can benefit fully from the experience. There is very good support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service with anger management for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school follows locally agreed procedures for child protection conscientiously. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory. However, while new procedures are mostly in place and effective, the overall policy needs further refinement and not all procedures have appropriate review dates.
34. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development, and the educational and personal support and guidance they receive, are good. All teaching and support staff know pupils very well and provide effective and caring support for their personal development. Staff respond in a very skilled way. For example, in Years 1 and 2 when two separate incidents

occurred during one lesson, the class teacher made the pupils directly involved feel secure and comforted, without disrupting the learning of the rest of the class. Together with parents, teachers are an integral and effective part of the school family of support. Circle time is used well to monitor and promote personal development, and even younger pupils respond with clearly enhanced self-esteem and a developing respect for each other. Support and guidance in raising academic achievement is improving and feedback to pupils is becoming increasingly constructive. However, although pupils are involved in the setting of global targets for themselves, these are not specific, measurable or with a deadline for achievement. Hence their usefulness is limited.

35. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance and punctuality are very good and ensure that attendance is sustained at very good levels. Pupils arrive on time and there is very little lateness because pupils enjoy being in school. Registers are well kept and carefully monitored by the educational welfare officer who gives good support.
36. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are good. A positive approach reinforces good behaviour and the very good provision for moral and social development also has a powerful impact. Older pupils in Year 4 are encouraged to take responsibility for younger ones and this has a very good influence on the behaviour of both groups. The good quality of behaviour management in classes is reflected in the positive way pupils respond to it. However, it is not always successful in keeping a small number of boys who have difficulty interacting with each other, fully engaged. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Bullying is dealt with immediately and the school has the confidence of parents in this respect.
37. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and achievement are good overall and have improved since the last inspection. Assessment in English and mathematics is good. All pupils undertake the standard assessment tests in these subjects at the end of Year 2 and optional assessment tests in Years 3 and 4. Other assessments covering reading, writing and numeracy are completed regularly, three times each year for all pupils. Results are analysed and used appropriately to track individual pupil's achievement over time and any changes in their rates of learning, so that these can be investigated and action taken. Assessments also help teachers to place pupils in appropriate sets and identify different learning groups within these sets. Although the national test results are used to identify where underachievement may exist, all assessment results are not yet used to track the relative progress of different groups of pupils within each year group. Consequently, the school does not yet ensure that the progress of different groups, such as higher attaining pupils, boys and girls, pupils with English as a second language or pupils with special educational needs, is appropriate. Some examples of the use of individual targets were evident in pupils' books, but these were not in current use and so pupils are not involved in their personal achievements at this level of detail. Pupils' individual achievement is tracked well in English and mathematics.
38. Assessment procedures in the other areas of the curriculum are broadly satisfactory. They consist of national assessments at the end of Year 2 and end-of-topic assessments in science, and a record sheet completed annually with the pupils together with a portfolio of work for ICT. Pupils' work is satisfactorily marked and annotated in these and other subjects, but the quality of this is not totally consistent. Assessment is not consistently used to provide well-focused work for the range of pupils in the mixed-age classes in these subjects of the curriculum or in the identification of specific areas of learning for which teaching may be less effective, so that whole-school responses can be planned.
39. The use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is satisfactory overall, although more effective in English and mathematics. In these subjects, areas where pupils are underachieving are identified and whole-school responses planned. Good examples of this are the identification of reference skills in reading and problem solving strategies, where the school is already addressing the raising of pupils' skills. However, progress in meeting targets to improve pupils' standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 is too slow. Overall, the school has made good improvement in its assessment procedures and their use since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school's partnership with parents is very good and is a major strength. Parents want to be fully involved with the school, "because of the way our children feel about it". Parents are happy to be in school. This positive relationship with parents is an aspect that the school has worked hard to achieve and has improved since the last inspection.
41. Parents consider this to be a very good school and almost all those who replied responded positively to the parents' questionnaire. On only one question did the response fall just below 90 per cent, on the amount of homework. Some parents support the school by giving added inspiration to their child's love of learning. This was seen in the reception class, where one child was totally absorbed in an exceptional painting of a train. Another child was equally interested and knowledgeable about dinosaurs, having been taken to museums by his parents.
42. The school's links with parents are very good. There is very good response from parents when support is requested by the school. For new pupils, home visits by school staff get the partnership off to a good start, and the school's induction process takes this further. Regular meetings between teachers and parents throughout the pupils' time at school maintain this very effective link. There are home-school agreements with different expectations for pupils of different ages. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. This is seen in the unusually high and enthusiastic support of a large group of members of the 'friends' of the school, who give very good support for fund-raising and social activities. Staff work hard to support the 'friends' and run crèches when parents attend meetings.
43. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is good. Parents feel well informed; for example, through newsletters and curriculum evenings. All staff, including the headteacher, are accessible to them both formally and informally. However, the annual reports on pupils' progress, whilst saying what a child knows and can do, do not include sufficiently specific or measurable targets. The headteacher invites suggestions from parents via newsletters and questionnaires; their views are taken on board and often put into practice. Any complaints are taken seriously and dealt with very effectively.
44. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is very good and the school is never short of any extra support it needs from parents. Parents make a very good contribution to stimulating children's learning both in school, supporting the work of teachers, and at home with their own children. Very good relationships between all members of the school reinforce the sense of a whole-school family. The school has the full confidence of all sections of the community it serves.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. This maintains the standards reported following the school's last inspection. The leadership offered by the headteacher is satisfactory. She has successfully established a positive ethos in the school, where pupils feel happy and secure. Parents are very supportive of the quality of pastoral care their children receive. However, although most of the problems with standards in ICT and some foundation subjects identified in 1998 have been addressed, standards in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 tests have fluctuated since then. Overall, given the average, and in some years above average, attainment on entry in these key areas, not enough progress has been made in some years by pupils by the end of Year 2, especially in reading and writing. This puts additional pressure on Years 3 and 4 teachers. The headteacher has responded by changing teachers' roles and the classes many of them teach. Early indications are that this may prove beneficial over the longer term. The targets the school has set and priorities for raising standards have not been wholly successful to date. The school understands that it must now focus more clearly on raising standards in lessons and end of Year 2 tests and then maintaining this progress for the following two years. More rigorous monitoring of lessons to ensure consistent application of agreed procedures will help. This was a key issue for the school's attention following the last inspection. It remains a key issue in the school's planning for improvement.

46. There is improved delegation to teachers who have management responsibility. The deputy headteacher is effective in her role as curriculum manager. The headteacher is effective in her role as special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Senior managers, with responsibility for reception and for Years 1 to 4, are working hard with their colleagues to ensure that pupils get a broadly similar provision in the three mixed-age classes in each part of the school. Variations in lesson pace and delivery, and in teachers' expectations of pupils, must now be reduced. The subject co-ordinators, some of whom have a significant burden of responsibility, managing up to three subjects, including one core subject, make a sound contribution to the school's development. The recent decision to appoint a part-time teacher to co-ordinate English, where standards have been most variable, puts a degree of pressure on a willing and effective practitioner. The school meets almost all its aims and values in full. However, at present too few of these are clearly aimed at enabling pupils to fulfil their academic potential. All within the school's community are dedicated to improving provision for pupils. The school has the capacity to improve further.
47. The governing body has become a more effective partner in management. Governors are regularly involved in lesson observations and other school visits. The governing body is more aware of the strengths and areas for development within the school, and asks the senior managers of the school to account for perceived weaknesses; for example, not meeting targets set for groups of pupils in national tests. Governors are proactive in school development planning. The headteacher's suggestion to involve all those within the school's community more closely in deciding priorities in planning was taken up by Governors. The school calls this 'Dreamtime'. It has become both a way to sample parents' and community views about the school and to reinforce the value the school places on its very effective partnerships. Overall, school development planning is satisfactory. The plan is appropriately focused on raising standards and shows clearly how success will be measured and by whom. It deals mainly with a single year, so insufficient forward planning over a longer term is being carried out. At present, the strategies the school has put into place to enable it to meet success criteria on planning have had limited success, in terms of raising academic standards. This is a performance management issue for individuals within the school. Governors have been successful in ensuring that their statutory duties are fulfilled, analysing carefully what they do against the criteria provided.
48. Financial control and management are good overall. The Chair of the finance sub-committee is a financial professional and there are other governors with significant expertise in finance and management. The governing body responded promptly to falling pupil numbers in the area by agreeing a small deficit budget with the local education authority, rather than compromising priorities; for example, low class sizes. Key managers, including the headteacher, the Chair of Governors, and the effective administrative officer, regularly meet to monitor the budget, enabling them to respond quickly to any variations. The school responded promptly to recommended improvements on its most recent audit report. New technologies are appropriately used. The school, including pupils, accesses the Internet and uses e-mail. However, there are some areas, such as the tracking of individual pupil's attainment patterns, that the school is unable to do using computers at present.
49. Leadership and management of special educational needs is good. The SENCO and special educational needs teaching assistant (SENTA) know the children well. The stages of special educational need are well documented and regularly reviewed. Pupils move on and off the school's register of need. Pupils at School Action stage are reviewed at least termly and the individual education plans checked for appropriateness. The SENTA works with teachers to advise and support. All the statutory requirements are fully met. Currently the school spends more than allocated for special educational needs, but does not fund additional support for a child with significant behaviour difficulties in reception, which has a detrimental impact on other children's learning. The special educational needs governor is a parent of two pupils who have special educational needs. She is well informed and involved in assessing who should go on the register. The schools works hard to promote racial equality in its policies and practice. Support for pupils speaking English as an additional language and those who are the children of travellers is good.

50. The school is adequately staffed with teachers qualified to meet the needs of the primary curriculum. The lack of expertise in, ICT, art and design, history, geography and music noted in the last inspection report has been addressed and this has had a positive effect on pupils' learning in these areas. There are strengths in the teaching of literacy, but weaknesses in expertise in physical education, which have an adverse effect on pupils' achievement in this subject. Most teachers have considerable experience, with recent appointments providing a balance of less experienced staff. Responsibility for subject management does not generally match these teachers' subject specialisms, but, where there is a mismatch, experience and their individual interests ensure that all subjects are covered at least satisfactorily. The individual strengths of teachers are used well, both in the teaching of literacy and numeracy sets and by team teaching in Years 3 and 4 lessons, in design and technology and music, for example. There are a good number of well-qualified teaching assistants, who provide effective support for pupils in lessons. Some have undertaken external courses in order to enhance their input in ICT lessons. The school administrator is effective in her support of the school, as are the care-taking staff and lunchtime supervisors. All staff work well together effectively, enhancing educational provision.
51. The school's induction process is satisfactory and supportive for new staff, enabling them to be appropriately assimilated into the life of the school. However, the locating of a newly qualified teacher in temporary accommodation external to the main school building has meant that his day-to-day support from colleagues has been limited. Arrangements for performance management are good and the dissemination of information gained on in-service training is effective. These are linked to the needs of the school, as laid out in the development plan, and to the individual needs of teachers. This is effective in supporting school development as shown by the enhanced provision of ICT.
52. The accommodation is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school occupies a spacious, pleasant site, which includes playgrounds and a playing field. The grounds are used well to support learning in geography. The playgrounds are well marked out for pupils' play and the site is clean, tidy and secure. The classrooms in the main building and the temporary hut are of adequate size, have access to water and sink facilities and contain well-presented examples of pupils' work and teachers' displays. There are useful quiet areas attached and overall, they enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. The school now benefits from some specialist accommodation in the form of an ICT room, a room for special educational needs and a kitchen used for design and technology. The hall is satisfactory, but the library accommodation is small and can only be used by a small number of pupils at a time.
53. The provision of books, materials and equipment in classrooms is adequate to support learning. The lack of a sufficient number of computers and software to support learning across the curriculum, noted in the last inspection report, has been addressed. There are an adequate number of fiction and non-fiction books in the library, although the small area housing these makes it difficult for more than a small number of pupils at a time to access them

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The headteacher, governing body and staff should give detailed attention to the following matters in their efforts to raise standards and the quality of work in the school:

- (1) raise levels of attainment in reading and writing and ensure that pupils achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 2 by:
 - ensuring that all pupils have effective strategies to access words they do not know in unfamiliar texts;
(paragraphs 6, 63, 73)
 - matching the books pupils read accurately to their current levels of attainment;
(paragraphs 61, 63, 73)
 - raising teachers' expectations of pupils' writing in English lessons and across all other curriculum areas.
(paragraphs 6, 18, 46, 61, 74, 75, 91, 101, 107, 126, 127)
- (2) raise pupils' standards in art and design and improve their achievement by the time they leave the school.*
(paragraphs 94-97)
- (3) improve the overall curriculum time available, the balance between subjects and the way time is used in lessons.
(paragraphs 3, 20, 24, 25, 68, 69, 75, 76, 92, 97, 100, 103, 104, 108, 116, 119, 122, 124, 128)
- (4) further improve leadership and management by:
 - more rigorously monitoring the curriculum and teaching and learning, particularly in English and mathematics, to ensure that the school's expectations are being met and procedures are being followed closely;*
 - (paragraphs 5, 16, 17, 19, 28, 45, 46, 73-76, 80, 81, 83, 84, 93, 100, 108, 123, 124, 129)
 - ensuring that performance targets set for individuals and groups of pupils are challenging and achievable and action taken to achieve them is more focused and vigorous.
(paragraphs 34, 39, 43, 45, 48, 76, 83)
- (5) plan more clearly what pupils of different ages and attainments will learn in lessons.
(paragraphs 17, 18, 23, 31, 38, 46, 55, 61, 65, 73-76, 81, 83, 84, 96, 97, 101, 103, 107, 114, 124, 126-128)

In addition to the above, the following points for development should also be considered for inclusion on the action plan:

- improve the use of information and communication technology to help to more rigorously monitor pupils' progress;*
- (paragraphs 3, 37, 48, 93, 115)
- make sure that there is progressive acquisition of skills by pupils in physical education;
(paragraphs 19, 122, 124)
- apply the marking policy consistently so pupils are given appropriate information on what they need to do to improve.
(paragraphs 21, 38, 75)

*Items already identified for improvement by the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

46

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	20	16	4	0	0
Percentage	0.0	13.0	43.5	34.8	8.7	0.0	0.0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	180
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	29

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	14	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (94)	88 (94)	88 (94)
	National	88 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	19
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	30	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (97)	88 (94)	97 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	172	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	1	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	25.7

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	156.25

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	395,319
Total expenditure	406,259
Expenditure per pupil	2,244
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,700
Balance carried forward to next year	-240

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	180
Number of questionnaires returned	96

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	44	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	63	4	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	47	10	2	0
The teaching is good.	62	34	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	36	6	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	20	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	36	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	47	49	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	66	32	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	30	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	49	7	1	12

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. The school makes good provision for the children who are under five at the start of the year and they make a good start to full-time education in the reception class. Most children have some pre-school experience and attainment on entry to school is broadly average in most years, including for the current reception class. However, attainment on entry is sometimes above average in individual curriculum areas; for example, language and literacy. The quality of teaching is rarely less than good and sometimes very good, and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Most children achieve well, although a few higher attaining children could achieve even more if they were challenged to do so. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, where one-to-one support is available. Challenging behaviour in this large class is more difficult to manage without detriment to other children's learning, when learning support is not available, although withdrawal strategies provide some relief.
56. The classroom environment is welcoming and all adults work very well together, as stated in the previous inspection report. Relationships are consistently very good. Very good relationships are established with parents and the children come into school smiling and keen to learn. Parents are welcomed into school and have daily access to staff. They appreciate and value the home visits, which are part of the sound induction process. One parent commented, "The visit made me and my child feel special". However, the practice of bringing all the children in at the same time at the start of the year creates unnecessary pressure on staff. It does not enable them to settle small groups into the class routines or give individual children enough attention.
57. Curriculum provision follows national guidance and a good range of learning opportunities is provided. Time allocations to the areas of learning and the time spent on more formal aspects of learning are not always appropriate for these young children. Some sessions are too long and children are not interactive enough. The recent addition of a secure outdoor play area has potentially significantly enhanced provision. It has yet to be marked out and a plan for use developed.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Children achieve well in this area of learning and standards of independence are high. Most have made good progress since the start of the autumn term, when they found difficulty in working together and sharing equipment. Due to the good provision and high expectations of the teacher, most will exceed expectations for five-year-olds before they leave the reception class. This is similar to the judgement made in the last inspection.
59. Teaching in this area of learning is consistently good. The teacher has very high expectations and classroom organisation is very good. Routines are well established and children know what is expected of them. At the start of the day, they know that they can choose from activities marked with a star and they set them out and work happily with other children. They tidy away their activities and complete their pictorial work chart at the end of, 'plan, do and review' sessions. In circle time, they take turns and listen to each other. They express how they feel when someone is unkind to them and what makes them happy. They play well together sharing equipment and showing interest and excitement about their learning. The opening of the train station in the role-play area created great excitement and the children enjoyed taking turns to 'drive the train' or be a 'passenger'.
60. The majority of children behave very well and relationships are very good. They understand that children with special educational needs sometimes behave inappropriately and the teacher has to deal with it. When this happens they sit and wait patiently until an adult is able to give them some attention. They express how they feel about what has happened. They are courteous and polite to each other and adults. They dress and undress with very little help and many can fold their clothes into neat piles when changing for physical education.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Most children are achieving well in this area of learning, although a few above average children could achieve even higher standards in reading and writing if expectations were higher. Most children will meet or exceed the expectations by the end of the reception year and a few have already done so. This indicates an improvement in standards since the last inspection, particularly in reading and spelling.
62. Teaching is good, particularly in the teaching of writing and spelling and speaking and listening. There are many good opportunities in 'plan, do and review' sessions for children to talk about their work, ask questions and put forward their ideas. Most children can express their feelings and ideas clearly. They can talk about their work and explain what they are doing. The teacher has high expectations of listening and asks good questions to check understanding.
63. Good opportunities are provided in activity time for children to explore books and develop positive attitudes towards reading. Initial sounds are taught well through a commercial scheme, which involves actions linked to the sound and most children recognise many, if not all, initial sounds of words. Constant reference to the good labelling around the classroom and routines such as the weather chart and date, encourage children to read for themselves. Many children have made a good start to reading, but some associate reading too narrowly with reading scheme books and do not use strategies, such as picture clues, to work out what unfamiliar words might say. Some are developing good strategies for sounding out words, but others wait to be told. A few children are reading books that are too easy for them, but lack the confidence to read more difficult text until encouraged to do so.
64. Some children are able to spell simple three letter words such as, 'bed' and 'dog' and all can write their name unaided. A few children are writing recognisable words and phrases and enjoy writing about what they will see on an imagined train journey, creating lists and adding captions to pictures. All children are learning to form letters correctly, although some have difficulty with pencil control.

Mathematical development

65. Most children are on track to meet or exceed expectations by the time they leave the reception class and a few are already working in the first level of the National Curriculum. This indicates higher standards than in the last inspection. Most children are achieving well, but in some lessons there is not enough challenge for the most able. Higher attaining children can count well beyond 20 and add and subtract one, two, and three from thirty. They can write numbers up to 20, but a few show reversals of digits when writing higher numbers. Most children can count and recognise numbers up to ten and know simple two-dimensional shapes including a hexagon. Many are able to explain how many sides these shapes have. They are beginning to use mathematical vocabulary to explain position such as, 'first', 'second' and 'third'. Children show very positive attitudes towards mathematics and are keen to learn.
66. Teaching is good overall, and the teacher makes very good use of every available opportunity to reinforce understanding and to apply this to simple problem solving. For example, part of the daily routine is the counting of children who are present at registration and subtracting those who are absent. The daily completion of the date and weather board reinforces ordinal number and the days of the week. Children respond very well to these opportunities and are always keen to volunteer to count or write on the charts.
67. The teacher plans a good range of learning opportunities and keeps detailed assessment records that enable her to set realistic targets for individuals. Early morning activities give children the opportunity to explore a range of mathematical activities such as making patterns out of shapes, sorting objects and threading bead patterns.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. Most children will meet, and a few will exceed, expectations in this area of learning because of the good range of opportunities provided for them and consistently good teaching. It is not possible to make a judgement about improvement since the last inspection, as different activities are available and no overall judgement was made previously. Planning shows a good range of activities, but some sessions such as religious education are too long. Staff organise and manage activities well. Good questioning and expectations of sharing in review sessions ensure that children talk about their learning. Children are encouraged to see and wonder at seasonal changes in the world around them. They can recognise that flowers and plants start to grow in the spring and know that weather has an impact on living things. They explore why some cars travel down a ramp faster than others and discuss texture of the ramp surface in simple terms. A few knowledgeable children are teaching the others to load a disk into the computer and select icons using the mouse. Most children can assemble construction apparatus to create train carriages to fit a teddy bear and a few children add additional features such as an umbrella to keep off the rain. They explore what will sink and what will float in the water trough. The children enjoy singing songs and joining in clapping rhythm games. They enjoyed celebrating Chinese New Year and know that they have other special celebrations such as Christmas. They learn about journeys through playing on the train and can say what is different when they look out of the window when they are in the countryside. A few higher attaining children have detailed knowledge about topics such as dinosaurs. Children with special educational needs enjoy this aspect of the curriculum and achieve well.

Physical development

69. Only one gymnastic lesson and an outdoor play session were observed during the inspection. In these lessons, attainment was broadly in line with expectations and children are on track to meet expectations for the end of the reception year. There was no specific judgement in the previous report with which to make comparisons. In gymnastics, children are aware of the space around them and how to stay safe when travelling over a mat. They play a warm-up game and follow instructions. Some roll and demonstrate jumping from two feet. Most can push or pull themselves across a mat. Teaching in this lesson was sound overall, but the slow pace meant that children waited too long to take turns and there was not enough physical activity. Outside in the new, secure play area, children ride on tricycles and use one foot to scoot. They trundle wheelbarrows and give each other rides on the taxi tricycle. In other activities, most pupils show sound control over pencils and other small equipment, although some children have great difficulty in controlling the shape and size of letters and figures. Most can cut fairly accurately using scissors, and control the application of paint.

Creative development

70. The children are presented with a wide range of opportunities for creative development and teaching is consistently good because of the range of provision, good organisation and interaction to promote learning. This is similar to the findings of the previous report. Most children will meet or exceed expectations by the time they leave the reception class. The opening of the role-play area, 'The Milldown Station', created great excitement and the children are very enthusiastic about dressing up and going on an imaginary journey. They can talk about where they are going and what they will see. They enjoy mixing colours and painting from their imaginations. A higher attaining child showed exceptional ability in her train composition. The children enjoy singing familiar songs and clapping rhythms and when sharing books act out the role of the teacher. They create vehicles from boxes, add wheels using split pins and create labels to say what kind of a vehicle they have made. One boy enjoyed creating Postman Pat's van. Children with special educational needs enjoy taking part in this aspect of the curriculum and generally achieve well.

ENGLISH

71. Standards in English are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. However, in tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002, standards of reading were below average compared with all schools and with schools that have similar levels of free school meals. Standards of writing were in line with the national average compared with all schools, but below those of similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that, based on a points analysis, the current Year 2 will attain similar results, but that this year writing standards will be below those for reading. This suggests that the current focus on reading has had some impact, but also raises questions about the school's use of its own assessment data on writing, to ensure that it is given a similar priority. Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 4, but is unsatisfactory by the end of Year 2, including for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils learning English as an additional language. However, there are clear signs that recent changes in staffing are having an impact in the mixed-age Years 1 and 2 classes, and that attainment in 2004 Year 2 tests will be broadly average, with fewer pupils failing to obtain the expected Level 2 or above in the tests and more likely to attain the higher Level 2 subsections and Level 3.
72. Standards in speaking and listening are about average by the end of Year 2. Pupils enter school with varying speaking and listening skills and most pupils achieve well, due to the good range of class and school activities provided for them to listen actively and speak confidently. By the time they leave the school, pupils have above average standards of oracy. Throughout the school they listen well to their teachers and each other during whole-class lessons and group sessions. Year 1 pupils listened attentively to their teacher's reading of 'Handa's Surprise' and answered clearly and confidently, using simple sentences, her questions about the story. After subsequent group activities, higher attaining pupils drew parallels between Handa's Surprise' and another story, 'Emeka's Gift', used in the lesson, suggesting plausible reasons why they are both about Africa. In Year 2, pupils sharing their responses to the class text answered their teacher's questions confidently, using a range of words to describe a healthy diet. Year 3 pupils offering synonyms to describe mood suggested 'grumpy', 'astonished' and 'stressed' for a hero in trouble. Year 4 pupils in a high quality session discussing the life and works of Shakespeare, with particular reference to the witches' spell from 'Macbeth', responded enthusiastically to their teacher's probing and insistent questioning. This demanded their full attention and challenged their thinking, as well as developing their speaking and listening skills.
73. Standards in reading are below average by the end of Year 2. Too few higher attaining pupils are achieving as well as they should. The average and lower attaining pupils are not all sufficiently well challenged by the books they read. During the inspection, a Year 1 pupil who was asked to read a more difficult book that was new to him did so very confidently. Some Year 2 pupils did not use phonics and other word attack skills securely when reading unknown words in their current reading or in unfamiliar texts. Pupils willingly recount the content of books they have read and are keen to talk about their favourite books. By the end of Year 4, standards of reading are broadly average. Higher attaining pupils read expressively and accurately. They discuss favourite authors, are beginning to consider the kinds of books that appeal to them and why, and apply appropriate reference skills when accessing information in non-fiction books. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses to find the meaning of words. All pupils take part in whole-class and group reading activities in literacy lessons and read from a range of genre, currently retold, modern versions of traditional tales in Year 3 and poetry in Year 4. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in reading over their time in the school.
74. Pupils attain broadly average standards in writing by the end of Year 4. Achievement overall, is satisfactory. However, given the levels of attainment on entry it would be reasonable to expect a higher proportion of pupils to attain elements of Level 4 in their writing than was seen in lessons and pupils' completed work by the end of Year 4. Pupil records indicate that about 20 per cent of pupils are likely to attain this higher level by the end of their time in the school. This is not a high enough proportion. Pupils' writing is not promoted well enough in work they do in lessons across the curriculum. There is not enough extended writing expected by teachers in subjects like history or geography, or enough report writing in science. ICT is appropriately used to help pupils to redraft

their work, as in Year 3 and 4, where higher attaining pupils word-processed their version of the witches' spell from Macbeth', 'Ingredients for a hell broth', including the memorable line, 'The ear hairs from a dead tramp'. However, in displayed work around the school and in completed work sampled, insufficient evidence of published work applying good ICT skills was seen. Pupils' attain below average standards in writing by the end of Year 2. They do not achieve satisfactorily. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 has promoted the writing of higher attaining pupils, so that they are achieving as they should. Pupils are given well-planned activities, appropriately matched to their learning needs to challenge and motivate them as writers. However, there has not been sufficient time for the new teaching team to raise writing standards for pupils generally, and too few Year 2 pupils are working at the expected levels for pupils of their age.

75. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in English. However, it is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teachers show secure subject knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy. This enables them to teach the basic skills appropriately in English lessons and to reinforce the majority of literacy skills widely in lessons in subjects across the curriculum. The use of writing to support work in other subjects and to enable pupils to develop their writing skills further is an area for development. The teachers use the three-part lesson structure in almost all literacy lessons. However, the final plenary session is not always sufficiently well focused on reinforcing key teaching within the lesson. It is often not given enough time for any effective review of what individuals or groups have achieved in the lesson, or to build on ongoing assessments made to show pupils clearly what they should do to improve their performance. Planning is to a common format and is sufficient to support teaching and learning in most lessons. Learning objectives for pupils are identified in planning, but are not always shared sufficiently with pupils, or reinforced regularly enough in the end of lesson review sessions, particularly to support the learning of average and lower attaining pupils. Furthermore, tasks are not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' learning needs across the still fairly broad range of attainments in the three sets in each part of the school. Pupils are well managed, so lessons proceed at a steady pace. In the very good lessons seen, one each in Years 1 to 4 classes, pace was very brisk indeed. Pupils respond well and work hard in the majority of lessons. Almost all pupils work productively and stay on task for the extended sessions that make up literacy lessons. Some of these are made longer in all classes by being preceded by literacy skills acquisition sessions on most days each week. Marking is variable. It is evaluative and gives pupils a clear idea of what they should do next in Years 1 and 2. However, too often, untidy presentation is not commented on and praise is more generous than the work deserves.
76. The curriculum for English is based on nationally recognised schemes, which the school has adopted and adapted soundly. In addition, there are clear policies and guidelines for the development of skills in various strands of the subject. This is an improvement on the last inspection. The newly appointed co-ordinator has not monitored lessons yet and has no plans to do so during the rest of this school year. To do so is essential with a new staff team in place, including two newly qualified colleagues, in this key subject area. Assessment procedures are good, but insufficient use is made of information gained to plan the next stage of learning for groups and individual pupils to ensure that they make steady progress in all lessons. Targets set for English have not been achieved and priorities for improvement in key areas of weakness; for example, in writing in the current Year 2, have not been identified. The literacy governor is effective in her role. She is active in the school and has joined the co-ordinator to undertake a whole-school reading audit. One likely outcome is to introduce 'reading buddies' to extend the number of opportunities to read in school. The school commits an estimated 33 per cent of its time to English. This is very high, and the school needs to focus more on improving pupils' standards and ensuring good progress in lessons. Improvement in this key core subject since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall.

MATHEMATICS

77. National test results for the past five years indicate that pupils at the end of Year 2 have consistently attained results in line with the national average except for the Year 2000, when they fell below it. The results in 2002 indicate that standards are still in line with national averages, but with some underachievement by pupils who attained the lower Level 2. However, a higher than

average percentage of pupils attained Level 3. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. The school's average points score is in line with that of similar schools. Pupils enter the school with average standards of numeracy and the school maintains this level of attainment throughout, despite an above average percentage of pupils joining the school in the interim years.

78. The standard of work of pupils in the present Year 2 is in line with that expected nationally, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils of average attainment have a secure understanding of the process of addition and subtraction and add three single-digit numbers together appropriately and slightly larger numbers less accurately. However, pupils experience difficulties using these skills in money calculations. They use strategies like 'near doubles' as in the Years 1 and 2 lesson where pupils identified this and other strategies that would help in a series of calculations. They measure lines in centimetres and know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional solids. Higher attaining pupils are more secure in their skills of addition and subtraction. They add two and three-digit numbers and subtract small multiples of ten from larger two-digit numbers. They are developing an awareness of 'sharing', but cannot yet share 14 toy cars equally between two pupils. Lower attaining pupils add ten to single-digit numbers, but need support in the identification of odd and even numbers.
79. The majority of pupils in Year 4 are attaining average standards for pupils of their age as they were at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 4, pupils of average attainment multiply two-digit numbers by single-digit numbers by partitioning. They divide small two-digit numbers by a single digit by using the strategy of jumping back along the number line. Higher attaining pupils use their number skills accurately in calculations related to a school trip and lower attaining pupils identify, for example, multiples of five on a number square. Pupils enter the school with average attainment in mathematics and overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, make satisfactory achievement over time.
80. The pupils' sound number skills are used satisfactorily in other curriculum areas through measuring in design and technology in Years 3 and 4 when producing models of chairs, for example, and the use of timelines in history. However, the school does not yet support pupils' mathematical development through planned experiences across other areas of the curriculum as effectively as it could.
81. The quality of teaching overall, is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. It ranges from unsatisfactory to very good, with a minority of unsatisfactory teaching evident in both key stages. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and the majority of teachers aim to provide tasks that will challenge the range of pupils in the class. In an effective Year 4 lesson based on number sequences, pupils worked on a range of sequences that were appropriate for their particular needs, with questions for higher attaining pupils, for example, including negative numbers and decimals. By the end of the lesson, all pupils had extended their knowledge of sequences well through appropriately challenging tasks. In a minority of less effective lessons, all pupils are set the same tasks, so that many of them cannot complete them successfully. Even those pupils who are able to complete the task, with good quality support from teaching assistants, do not feel the satisfaction of being independent learners. Planning also includes the identification of key words for use in the lesson, indicating planned support for literacy enhancement as well as mathematical development. However, these are not always displayed clearly and referred to during the lesson to enable pupils to become accustomed to them.
82. Teachers employ effective methods and these generally captivate the interest of the pupils and raise motivation. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson, the pupils worked with animation in a 'Ping Pong' session designed to reinforce number bonds. In another Year 2 set, pupils worked with great concentration on a variety of interesting and challenging activities based on symmetry. In both these lessons pupils responded well to the tasks and learning was high. Teachers manage pupils well and good relationships exist between pupils and pupils and staff. Consequently, teachers can set pupils tasks to complete in pairs and small groups and know that pupils will collaborate well. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were able to discuss strategies for a particular calculation

with a partner before the teacher asked questions related to it in a whole-class session. This contributes well to pupils' social development.

83. All teachers use the allocated time appropriately overall, and lessons are well organised. Teachers know their pupils well and question them sensitively, being well aware of their differing levels of attainment. In the most effective lessons, teachers encourage pupils to explain clearly and question the class about alternative methods. In these lessons there is a high level of pupil input. However, in some lessons pupils are provided with few strategies to tackle a piece of work and learning is limited. In mental arithmetic sessions the use of open-ended questions or different questions to cater for different ability groups within the classroom is not often evident. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory overall. At its best it is annotated with helpful comments for the learner and the reader. The use of individual pupil's targets was evident in some pupils' exercise books, but this was not consistently used or updated sufficiently to have a positive impact on learning. The support of learning by ICT is an area of improvement that has been identified by the school and is developing satisfactorily.
84. The National Numeracy Strategy has been established appropriately and this constitutes good improvement since the last inspection, when there was no scheme of work and data handling was not sufficiently covered in Years 3 and 4. The school has correctly identified the need to improve the pupils' skills in using and applying mathematics as an area for further development. Assessment procedures are good. The analysis of the results of statutory and non-statutory tests is carried out appropriately and used to track pupils' progress. It is also beginning to be used to monitor the progress of various groups within each year group and to develop the curriculum in order to raise standards across the school. The experienced subject co-ordinator monitors learning appropriately, but her role has not yet been developed to include the systematic monitoring of teaching. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

85. Teachers' assessments for 2002 indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above and Level 3 or above exceeded national figures. At Level 2 and above pupils did less well in the area of 'scientific enquiry' than the other areas assessed, whereas at Level 3 and above pupils achieved better results in the areas of 'scientific enquiry' and 'physical processes'. Overall, the results are also above average compared with those of similar schools. Pupils enter the school with average attainment and this represents satisfactory achievement for this group of pupils.
86. The standard of work of pupils in the present Year 2 is in line with national averages and similar to that noted at the time of the last inspection. Pupils recognise, for example, that materials have different properties. They observe how heat changes materials and are beginning to develop an understanding that some changes are irreversible, as in the Years 1 and 2 lesson where pupils examined the ingredients required for making cakes and compared them with the cooked items. Higher attaining pupils understand and use the terms 'reversible' and 'irreversible' appropriately. Pupils recognise that living things grow and change and identify a variety of changes between a baby, a toddler and themselves. They list uses of electricity in the home and can draw simple circuit diagrams.
87. The standard of work of pupils in Year 4 is in line with that expected nationally and has been maintained since the last inspection. By the end of Year 4, for example, most pupils identify the different parts of plants and note accurately what happens when different materials are added to water. They understand that some materials conduct electricity, while others do not. However, in Years 1 to 4 overall, pupils are not involved sufficiently in discussions of 'how can we find out?' and so do not develop this aspect of scientific enquiry methodically over time. Overall, however, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as a second language, achieve satisfactorily over time.
88. The quality of teaching overall, is satisfactory with no unsatisfactory teaching observed. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching in Years 3 and 4 was unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning is generally clear, although it does not consistently address the range of

abilities of pupils within all the mixed-age classes. This has an effect on the quality of learning, as higher attaining pupils are sometimes under-challenged, particularly in Years 1 and 2, while lower attaining pupils often need extra adult support in order to access tasks.

89. Lessons are generally organised appropriately and teachers ensure at the start of the lessons that pupils understand what they are going to learn. In the most effective lessons, teachers capture the interest of the pupils through imaginative methods. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson based on how materials change when heated, for example, the teacher showed the pupils eggs, flour, sugar and butter before providing them with cooked cakes to look at. Pupils examined these carefully in an effort to ensure that no grains of sugar, for example, remained unchanged in the final product. This experience left pupils keen to find out more about 'changes' and resulted in a lesson where pupils were motivated and learning was good.
90. Teachers overall, manage pupils well and a positive working atmosphere is the norm in classrooms. Relationships in the classroom are good and this enables teachers to include partner and small group work within the structure of lessons. In Years 1 and 2, pairs of pupils discussed the meaning of the word 'change' at the start of a lesson before the teacher set this into a scientific context. In Years 3 and 4, pupils worked collaboratively together separating materials during a practical session. In both these lessons, all pupils were given the opportunity to contribute and learn from each other.
91. Opportunities to enhance pupils' attainment in literacy are satisfactory. Key words are noted in planning, for example, but sometimes do not become an integral part of the lesson. Where they are used well, they enhance the quality of pupils' written work. A good example of this was the Years 3 and 4 lesson based on the separation of materials, where the teacher had not only provided a list of key words for the pupils, but also associated words. Sound use is made of mathematics through measuring and the recording of results. A good example of this was the use of graphs to represent the absorbency of different types of paper in Year 4. The support of the subject by ICT is in the process of being developed, but the use of a microscope with visual display unit attachment is already having a positive impact on learning. Science contributes well towards pupils' spiritual and social development.
92. The curriculum provision has improved since the last inspection when there was no overall scheme of work. The school has worked with partner schools and the local education authority in the intervening years and the quality of provision is now good, with a recent in-service training session highlighting the need for more active participation of pupils in the planning of investigations. The time allocated to science, however, is below the national average and at best restricts the consolidation of skills.
93. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is sound, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Teachers mark and annotate pupils' work and in Year 2 pupils are assessed against national expectations. In Years 3 and 4, there is use of assessment tasks at the end of topics and a final summative assessment that is sent to the secondary school. However, the consistent tracking of pupils' achievement is not at the good standard noted in English and mathematics. The subject co-ordinator is new to post, but enthusiastic to develop the subject. A recent audit of resources has identified the need for some items to be updated. The role of the co-ordinator includes the monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work, but has not yet been developed to include the monitoring of teaching. The subject has made good improvement since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations and some pupils attain higher standards than those expected. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils are achieving well and building progressively on skills and knowledge. At the end of Year 4 when pupils leave the school, standards are below expectations and pupils have not continued to build on the good foundations laid lower down the school. This was also the finding of the last inspection

and not enough has been done to improve standards. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly to other pupils.

95. In Year 2, there is some attainment higher than expected for pupils of this age. This is seen particularly in portrait painting, where many pupils achieve high standards, and creating sculptures from man-made and natural materials to represent a given theme, such as animals. Pupils can mix paints to create skin tones and paint recognisable portraits with facial features aligned appropriately. When creating a sculpture, they discuss ideas with their group, select materials and make changes to the composition to interpret the theme. Some pupils can explain why they chose their materials and what they represent. Pupils use a computer program to create exciting work in the style of Mondrian. In Year 4, pupils' work shows a lack of skill, detail and finish. Although a few pupils copy a two-dimensional drawing of flowers well, they struggle when asked to draw real flowers. Pupils lack experience in observational drawing using a range of pencils to create light and shade. Most draw from memory rather than careful observation, and very few pupils can draw to represent depth. Although they can mix paint colours, application lacks care and control and pupils working with pastels find it difficult to achieve the shades and tones they require.
96. The quality of teaching overall, is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers show good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject and this is reflected in the standards attained, as was seen in a sculpture lesson. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of teaching is more variable. At best, it is satisfactory. This is because learning objectives are not always sufficiently specific, resources are not well used, skills are not taught and practised systematically enough and not all teachers have secure subject knowledge needed to promote high standards. Pupils enjoy art and design and most concentrate well and try hard although they lack confidence with a range of resources such as pastels. The current use of sketchbooks in Years 3 and 4 does not enable pupils to build up a range of skills and techniques that they can then use, neither do they provide assessment information for teachers to enable them to refine their planning nor make judgements about pupils' achievement. Older pupils say they do not do enough art and design and would like to do more.
97. The art and design curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils, but not enough time to develop skills. This was also the judgement in the last inspection and not enough improvement has been made. Computer programs are beginning to be used to good effect to create work in the style of different artists. 'Golden Time' gives some pupils across the school good opportunities to work together to design and make a large textile panel representing the life of the school. Art weeks enable all pupils to work on impressive animal sculptures and explore art from other cultures such as aboriginal art. Visits to places such as Roche Court and visiting artists provide good curriculum enrichment. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The time allocated to art and design is not sufficient to enable pupils to explore a wide enough range of materials and methods or consolidate skills as they progress up the school. What pupils in each year group in mixed-age classes are expected to learn is not clearly identified and this has an impact on pupil progress. The subject leader is very enthusiastic and keen to move the subject forward. She has the capability to do so.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. The attainment of pupils at the end Years 2 and 4 is in line with national expectations as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils overall, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, make satisfactory achievement over time. In Years 1 and 2, pupils become accustomed to the process of 'plan, do and review'. In pairs, pupils design and make puppets, for example, and evaluate their success through the production of a puppet performance. They experience working together in a class project by designing and constructing a model of a children's play area and evaluate this as a group, led by the teacher. These experiences contribute well to pupils' social development. In food technology they plan, prepare, sample and evaluate salads and drinks like banana and honey whip.

99. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are encouraged to appreciate the value of research before planning. A good example of this is the homework where pupils collected pictures of various designs of chairs before planning, making and evaluating their own smaller models of chairs. The pupils' measuring and numeracy skills support this and similar activities satisfactorily. Some effective cross-curricular links are evident as, for example, in art and design, through the sketching of the chairs produced. Pupils' literacy skills are also used satisfactorily through written evaluations of work, particularly in Year 4. The support of learning by ICT is limited. However, the 'plan, do and review' sessions held at the start of each morning help to reinforce pupils' skills well. The inconsistent approach to pupils' planning and evaluation skills, noted in the last inspection report, has been addressed satisfactorily.
100. No lessons were observed during the inspection so an evaluation of the quality of teaching cannot be made. However, the scrutiny of work indicates that it is at least satisfactory. Teaching was judged as being sound in Years 1 and 2 at the time of the last inspection. The sound curriculum is based around the national scheme and has improved since the last report when there was no scheme of work. However, the time allocation for the subject is lower than the average and restricts the range of experiences open to the pupils. In Years 1 and 2, however, the construction aspect of a task is completed during a block of time of one to two days in order to allow pupils to become immersed in the task. Written assessment procedures are satisfactory and based around teachers' marking and evaluation of pupils' work and the school's annual report to parents. This form of assessment makes its use in curriculum planning difficult, however. Assessment procedures have not developed substantially since the last inspection with no record of pupils' development yet in place. The new subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic, but has only recently taken over the subject. The previous co-ordinator monitored teachers' planning, but the role has not been developed to include the systematic monitoring of teaching and learning. There is a specialist room for the use of group work in food technology and this supports learning well. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection

GEOGRAPHY

101. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations. This was also the judgement in the last inspection when attainment at the end of Year 4 was judged to be unsatisfactory. No geography was taught during the inspection and evidence of previous work was limited; therefore, it is not possible to form a secure judgement about standards when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily. From the evidence seen, pupils' achievement in Years 3 and 4 is broadly satisfactory, but there is little evidence of above average attainment because all pupils do the same work, and expectations are not high enough. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress because of the additional support provided.
102. In Year 2, pupils draw a plan of the classroom and a simple route map of their journey to school. A few pupils can label significant landmarks. They know about different kinds of houses and have some awareness of localities other than their own. They make comparisons between life in Africa and Blandford. In Year 4, pupils build effectively on previous mapping work and begin to understand scale and use of symbols. They develop an understanding of how Blandford has changed in the last century by comparing maps at different dates. They write simple statements making comparisons about life in an Indian village in relation to Blandford.
103. No lessons were observed during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about teaching. However, in Years 1 and 2 there is evidence of some good marking. The teacher clearly states what has been learnt and what needs to be improved. The curriculum is broad, but not balanced. Planning follows a two-yearly cycle and does not identify clearly enough what different year groups within mixed-age classes will learn or show high enough expectations of higher attaining pupils. Good use of the local area effectively develops geographical skills and awareness of environmental issues. However, the quality and quantity of work seen reflects the fact that not enough time is allocated to geography and standards could be higher. This is similar to the judgement made in the last inspection and not enough has been done to improve the time allocation or curriculum balance. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' broader cultural development through the study of Tocuaro in Mexico and Chembakoli in

India. There is little evidence of ICT being used to promote learning, however, literacy and numeracy are developed effectively.

HISTORY

104. Standards in history have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' attainments are now average by the end of Years 2 and 4. Pupils achieve as well as they should throughout the school. The problems with curriculum coverage that was reported are largely overcome. However, there is too little time spent on the subject compared with that seen nationally. Furthermore, the time that is made available is liable to be changed. For example, the Years 1 and 2 topic on Florence Nightingale due to be studied last term was a casualty of extended preparation for a Christmas play. Therefore, Years 1 and 2 had to fit in an additional topic this term. Presumably some other subject had to give way to facilitate this manoeuvre. The key issue to improve standards and allocate adequate time to history has, therefore, not fully been addressed.
105. Pupils have sound chronological awareness by the end of Year 2. Teachers plan effectively for pupils to use timelines, including a mammoth version on the school field and a five metre one in the classroom, with the dinosaurs at one end and man's conquest of space at the other. In between is the birth of Christ and the topics pupils have recently studied. Pupils acquire other historical skills in lessons, well supported by effective displays of the topics they are working on. They are encouraged to evaluate similarities and differences; for example, in hospitals at the time Florence Nightingale's reforms began and now, and in the Great Fires of London and Blandford. The class teacher effectively made research into the fire that destroyed their town in Georgian times the subject of a homework challenge following a good lesson on the 'Great Fire of London'. Pupils suggested lines of enquiry using the Internet, the school and town libraries and videos sources to aid their research. Some pupils had difficulty with the concept of the portrait of Samuel Pepys, whose eyewitness account of the fire they had heard, not being a photograph. Eventually, a higher attaining Year 2 pupil came up with the solution.
106. By the end of Year 4, pupils have a good level of knowledge about their topic on 'Britain in the Second World War'. Pupils know that many big cities were bombed and families, especially children, were evacuated. They empathised effectively with those children and their parents, understanding what it must be like to suffer such a separation in dangerous times. Their speaking and listening skills were well supported by work that four volunteers undertook in role as evacuees. They answered well thought out questions about the impact the process had on their lives and the huge differences between city and country life with which they had to come to terms.
107. The quality of teaching and learning in history is good overall. Pupils display positive attitudes to the active way in which the subject is taught. They stay on task, working productively for long periods. They willingly offer to undertake research and other work at home, developing independence as learners. Teachers plan motivational tasks, so that lessons fly by and little overt management is needed. Much of the work, particularly for younger pupils, is oral, so that the subject does not help to promote key skills in writing sufficiently. On the basis of the written work seen, teachers in Years 3 and 4 do not expect sufficiently high standards from all pupils. Written work seen was often short, possibly copied and frequently untidy. This restricted the challenge, particularly to the higher attaining pupils. ICT is used both at school and at home to support pupils' work in history. The school has a useful library of CD-ROMs and videos to support work in the topics it teaches. Resources overall are sound in quality, quantity and range.
108. The subject co-ordinator is effective in her role, but also manages science and geography, as well as co-ordinating the work of the reception and Years 1 and 2 classes. This is a significant responsibility, which she discharges with enthusiasm and conspicuous energy. She agrees that time pressures are considerable. A useful number of high profile visits are undertaken to support work done in school, including to Nothe Fort in Weymouth, where Years 3 and 4 pupils spend a day, in role as evacuees. There has been no opportunity recently for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning. This is an outstanding target on the subject action plan. Some analysis of planning and pupils' completed work has been undertaken. Training opportunities to support work

in history have been limited. However, the school has devised a good quality curriculum for its pupils by judicious modification of national planning documents.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and Year 4 is in line with national expectations and has improved since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand that a variety of information, text and drawing can be entered and stored on the computer. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, use a suitable graphics program and draw pictures in the style of Mondrian, higher attaining pupils having good mouse control and including lines of differing thickness in their work. Pupils enter text appropriately, with the work of higher attaining pupils including changes of font, size of font and colour. They understand that movement can be controlled and directed and plan simple routes for a floor turtle to execute. They simulate series of actions from real life as, for example, when dressing a teddy.
110. By the end of Year 4 most pupils use a variety of fonts, sizes of fonts and colour in the presentation of their texts and can edit text. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, for example, pupils removed the word 'nice' from text and replaced it with a variety of other words. Lower attaining pupils needed extra support in order to do this. Pupils become accustomed over the two years to using the computer in their research. In science, for example, pupils find out about the sun and in history about the Ancient Greeks. The pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are developed satisfactorily through a variety of reading, spelling, number building, shape and database programs. The pupils' developing skills of producing bar charts; for example, on colours of cars, support mathematical learning. Art and design is further extended and pupils learn to repeat patterns. The use of a microscope with visual display also supports scientific learning well. A satisfactory selection of CD-ROMs are used to access information across the curriculum. Appropriate technology does not support learning in design and technology. However, pupils participate in an e-mail link with a school in America. A supportive parent has been instrumental in helping to establish a school web site, and this is used by pupils and other parents. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as a second language, achieve satisfactorily over time.
111. The quality of teaching and pupil support is good overall, with no unsatisfactory teaching evident. A support assistant carried out the direct teaching observed during the last inspection. Teachers have now received appropriate training and a number of teaching assistants have also organised relevant training for themselves. Consequently, the majority of staff have at least sound skills and this was evident in all the lessons observed. Planning is sound and teachers explain and demonstrate tasks clearly. Unfortunately, this is not always as effective as planned because the size of the screen used for demonstrations is not large enough if a whole class is observing.
112. Sessions are organised well and pupils respond positively to the methods used and the tasks set. In an effective lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, the pupils were inspired by the teacher showing them computer-aided pictures they had produced in the style of Gustav Klimt. The teacher used these well to remind pupils of the techniques they had used then. These, together with the clear demonstration of added tools, enabled the pupils to go on to produce impressive pictures in the style of Mondrian. Pupils quite rightly showed great pride in their results. The subject contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development.
113. The room used for teaching has insufficient facilities for all pupils to develop ICT skills at the same time. In some of the lessons observed, teachers arranged for one half of the class to be working with a teaching assistant in the classroom. In other lessons, the whole class was in the ICT room with one half of the class doing work in another subject while the other half were 'hands on'. Teachers' input at the start of these sessions covered two topics and a minority of pupils lost concentration, with subsequent difficulties later in the lesson.
114. Teachers' management of pupils is good and positive relationships are evident in lessons. When appropriate, teachers set pupils tasks to do in pairs. Pupils collaborate well, even if the pairs consist of pupils of different ages and attainments. In some lessons, the tasks set are not

appropriately challenging for the wide range of pupils in these mixed-age classes. Consequently, higher attaining pupils are sometimes under-challenged and lower attainers need support to access tasks.

115. The curriculum is broad and balanced and now fully covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. It has improved since the last inspection, as has the use of ICT across the curriculum. This is now satisfactory. Assessment procedures were unsatisfactory during the last inspection. These are now sound and motivate pupils through their participation in the process. However, teachers' records are not consistent in format and this makes the tracking of pupils' progress difficult. Resources have also improved since the last inspection and are now adequate in the support of learning. Plans to network the computers in the classrooms with those in the ICT room will provide improved continuity of work for the pupils. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to improve provision and overall, the subject has made very good improvement since the last inspection.

MUSIC

116. There has been good improvement in music since the school's last inspection. Pupils' standards are higher and they make steady progress as they move through the school. Some opportunities are still missed, however. For example, music used in assemblies is not always named and discussed with pupils. One of the issues for improvement from the last inspection was to improve pupils' listening and appraising skills. The hymn practice due to take place during the current inspection was cancelled. Standards of singing were criticised in 1998. Teaching quality is now good; that for the Years 3 and 4 pupils being delivered by the music co-ordinator. This high quality provision has helped to raise pupils' standards overall.
117. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards and achieve satisfactorily. Most pupils can follow and repeat a rhythmic pattern accurately, using good listening skills. They watch closely and play accurately when their teacher conducts from a simple notation. Higher attaining pupils defined the function of a 'conductor', but only one was able to supply the word 'orchestra', more were familiar with the word 'band'. By the end of Year 4, pupils sing confidently as individuals or as part of a group. When singing in parts, they listen to others carefully, watching the conductor closely. In formal music teaching of notation, pupils recognised rhythm cards, gave the ta-te' names for them and sang them and clapped the rhythm. In a class composition, pupils played untuned and tuned instruments to develop a repeated rhythm, others sang the lines of the central song, while others improvised, adding the names of birds and fruit.
118. Only two lessons were seen, one in Years 1 and 2, one in Years 3 and 4. One was taught by the deputy headteacher, the other by the Years 3 and 4 co-ordinator; also the subject manager for music. Lesson quality was high. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers display secure subject knowledge and teach the basic skills effectively, so that pupils acquire them readily. There is a good variety of activities from across the Programmes of Study within each lesson. Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to learn. They happily sing solos and play instruments confidently. They work at pace, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Teachers are confident managers, so the lessons are not interrupted for minor disciplinary reasons. Too little evidence of ICT is seen, though pupils do help to operate compact disc players and overhead projectors. The school has useful software to support pupils' composition skills, but this is not used at present.
119. The subject is effectively managed by an experienced co-ordinator. Adequate time is allocated to music and an effective scheme is in place, so the issues about curriculum coverage brought to the school's attention in 1998 have been largely addressed. However, there was a five-minute time slippage at the start of the Years 1 and 2 lesson observed, while the teacher waited for a colleague's class to change for physical education. Her own class is part of a double, open plan space and so not suitable for music teaching. Helpful monitoring of a newly qualified colleague's lesson has been undertaken. There have been significant levels of in-service training to further support colleagues who teach music. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the formulation of a manageable assessment procedure as a key priority on her action plan.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. The school has made satisfactory improvement in physical education since its last inspection. In the current inspection, as then, standards are broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 4 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory as they move through the school. Teaching standards are similar, with some unsatisfactory work seen in Years 3 and 4 in both inspections. Documentation for the subject has improved. The provision of adequate storage for equipment means that the hall is a much more helpful space in which to teach dance and gymnastics.
121. Years 1 and 2 pupils showed average levels of attainment in lessons seen in both the strands of dance and gymnastics. They moved well individually to the music, 'Zorba the Greek'. They responded to changes in the music by working at a variety of levels, moving at different speeds and in different directions. When asked to develop a dance in groups to the same piece, too much of the activity was follow-my-leader, with no apparent attempt to create a coherent dance. However, higher attaining pupils showed their awareness of the insistent rhythm and interpreted the composer's intentions well, both individually and when working in a group, sharing ideas and developing a series of sequences into a dance. In gymnastics, pupils showed average levels of control and co-ordination when working to develop carefully, skills of jumping and landing, both on the floor and on a range of simple apparatus. Pupils are aware of the need for appropriate warm-ups before and cooling down sessions following vigorous activity. One pupil graphically described tendons snapping like elastic bands if a warm up does not precede strenuous work! Pupils were confident when putting out their own apparatus, under careful teacher direction, even though this was their first gymnastics session for half a term, due to the way the curriculum is organised.
122. All three lessons seen at Years 3 and 4 were gymnastics, using the same planning format and broadly similar lesson delivery. An active warm up to a dance tape got pupils into a positive frame of mind. However, pace slackened when the teaching element prior to pupils' activities began. Pupils became disengaged as too long was taken explaining the five balances to be attempted. Chosen pupils demonstrated these showing average control and good extension in their balances. Lesson pace slowed further when the teachers then 'blue-tacked' and displayed the five balances on laminated cards around the hall and put out the apparatus with a small group of pupils, while the rest of the class rehearsed stretching exercises, led by a classmate. In two lessons, they grew increasingly restless and some were off task, often blatantly. Overall, standards in the balance element of gymnastics seen were just average.
123. Teaching standards are satisfactory overall, but range from good to unsatisfactory. Pupils are well managed in Years 1 and 2 and management is satisfactory overall. However, when lesson pace is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and insufficient challenge is presented to pupils, they lose concentration and display little interest in the work. If teachers' management skills are not well enough deployed, problems arise. Some pupils had up to three warnings and timeouts, without any specific further disciplinary measure being invoked. This is not satisfactory in the context of a gymnastics lesson. Teachers use demonstrations well to illustrate key teaching points. A good feature of work in Years 1 and 2 is that self and peer-assessment skills are being developed. This enables pupils to become increasingly analytical of their own and other pupils' performances and gives them insight into what they need to do to improve.
124. The school teaches all the strands of the subject. It commits an above average time to physical education overall. There is discontinuity and lack of progression in the subject. Wide variations in expectations exist between teachers of Years 1 and 2 and those of Years 3 and 4 pupils. Lessons are for extended periods for both dance and gymnastics. A shorter, more active session of 30 minutes, twice a week would eliminate the gaps in the curriculum currently caused by blocking time and enable teachers to build on skills more progressively. The hour-long sessions lack pace and purpose. The hour-long dance lessons seen for Years 1 and 2 pupils included cross-curricular work looking at maps and globes to find out from where the music came. This is useful learning, but does not need to take place while dressed for vigorous activity or in the hall. The co-ordinator is new to the school and to her role and has not yet monitored teaching and learning. Any inconsistency within the curriculum could also be monitored by this means. The subject makes an

appropriate contribution to pupils' ICT skills. Pupils operate compact disc players in lessons and video records are made of performances.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. Standards are in line with expectations set out in the Agreed Syllabus Steps at the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. This is the same judgement as the last inspection and standards have been maintained. Pupil achievement is satisfactory overall, although there is very little evidence of above average attainment. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly to other pupils because of additional support.
126. In Year 2, pupils know some key facts about the Christian faith. They know Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that he died on the cross. They remember facts about their visit to Salisbury Cathedral and recall some of the symbols they saw there. Pupils know that the dove, cross and fish are all Christian symbols and most understand what each symbol means. They know that other faiths also have symbols and the Shabbat meal is special for Jews. In Year 4, pupils know some of the miracles Jesus performed, such as the Feeding of the Five Thousand. They are able to reflect on what food they would like to share with their friends and think about how they could show their love for other people by helping at a party or helping someone who is sick. Pupils show some understanding of the Five Pillars of Islam and similarities between world religions. There is a lack of care and pride in written work, which is the same for all pupils in vertically grouped classes.
127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although some good teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. No judgement was made about the quality of teaching in the last inspection. In the good lesson seen, links were made with previous learning and the teacher used available resources well to engage the pupils' interest. She shared her own experiences and helped the pupils to reflect on symbols of their own happy and sad times. She consolidated learning by asking good questions and rehearsing key facts. The pupils were very attentive in this lesson and showed total concentration when the teacher asked them to visualise walking around the cathedral. However, there were missed opportunities to show reverence for Christian symbols. In Years 3 and 4, the written task limited the achievement of higher attainers and the responses did not fully reflect pupils' ability. Most pupils behave well in lessons and show an interest in what they are being taught
128. The religious education curriculum is satisfactory and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met. School acts of collective worship make a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of the Christian faith. Visits to local places of worship and Salisbury Cathedral enrich the curriculum. The school makes good use of visitors from local churches and other world faiths to help pupils to understand how religious belief affects peoples' lives. The weakness identified in the previous inspection regarding teaching about faiths other than Christianity has been effectively dealt with and pupils now study Islam and Judaism. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good. Time allocated to religious education is not consistent across all classes and not enough time is given for pupils to think and talk about what concerns or puzzles them. Expectations for each year group, in vertically grouped classes, are not explicit and the same work is given to both year groups, which does not adequately build on what pupils already know and can do or challenge the higher attainers enough. No evidence was seen of ICT being used in religious education, but there was good evidence of literacy skills being developed.
129. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified. Resources are currently unsatisfactory, but the school is addressing this issue. Some staff have insecure subject knowledge about world faiths other than Christianity and this needs to be addressed.