

INSPECTION REPORT

DURWESTON C OF E FIRST SCHOOL

Durweston, Blandford Forum

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113798

Headteacher: Ms Janet Cole

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jane Morris
18270

Date of inspection: 10 - 13 February 2003

Inspection number: 247408

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Durweston Blandford Forum Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jayne Hosford
Date of previous inspection:	10 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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18270	Mrs Jane Morris	Registered inspector	English Science History Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9756	Mr Kenneth Parsons	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?
19302	Mrs Christine Perrett	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28088	Mrs Christina Raymond	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Music Foundation Stage Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Durweston Church of England First School is a smaller than average primary school, situated in the Stour Valley near to the town of Blandford Forum. It serves the villages of Durweston, Bryanston and Stourpaine. Some families choose to transport their children to the school from further afield. Pupils at the school range in age from four to nine. At present the school has 85 pupils on roll, taught in five small classes. Indications are that numbers are falling, partly due to a steep rise in housing costs in the area and employment issues. Children come from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances that include housing association, council and owner-occupied homes. A small number of children of traveller families attend the school. Attainment on entry to the school is variable but is generally about average. The majority of children have attended a pre-school setting before starting at Durweston School. Nine pupils are eligible for free school meals (10.6 per cent). This number is below the national average but has shown a significant increase over the last two years. The number of pupils with special educational needs is 28 (33 per cent), above the national average. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need (2.4 per cent) and this too is above the national average. Their needs are varied but include learning and behaviour difficulties. No pupils have English as an additional language and the vast majority are of white British background. During the last school year 15 pupils either joined or left the school at times other than those expected. At 16 per cent this figure is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Durweston is a good and improving school which is very effectively led by its headteacher. Staff work very well as a team and there is a collective determination to succeed. Pupils thrive in the positive, friendly, caring environment where all are valued. They achieve high standards because teaching is consistently good and the needs of all pupils are recognised and supported. Although costs per pupil are high, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science, even though a significant number of them have special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching is good, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons.
- The headteacher provides a clear vision and direction for the school through her strong leadership and management. Governors, particularly the chair, have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The school provides a wholly inclusive, supportive atmosphere which is highly valued by parents. This ensures that pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to school.
- Very good social and moral development is fostered effectively throughout the school and is supported well by the behaviour policy.
- Teachers' planning ensures that subjects are linked closely together and pupils develop their writing skills very successfully in all areas of the curriculum.

What could be improved

- The schedule for the school day, so that timetabled sessions do not contain small pockets of unstructured lesson time.
- Monitoring procedures so that strengths and weaknesses in curriculum areas are identified and the very good teaching and learning, evident in literacy and numeracy lessons, are shared and promoted effectively.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Since then there has been a fall in the number of pupils on roll, greater mobility in the number of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the expected times and a rise in the percentage of pupils entering the school with special educational needs. Even so, standards at the end of Year 2 have risen in English, mathematics, art, design and technology (DT) and history. They have been maintained in the other subjects. Standards at the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school, have also shown an overall improvement in art, DT and history, and are still above average in English, mathematics and science. This is because the overall quality of teaching has improved. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully and have had a very positive impact on standards. The school has also concentrated on pupils' behaviour and personal development, and this too has had a significant and favourable effect on pupils' attitudes to learning. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and those who are higher attaining. The key issues from the previous inspection have all been addressed. Improvement has been good. The school is well placed to build on the progress it has made and improve further.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
reading	B	C	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
writing	A	D	A	A	
mathematics	C	E	B	B	

At the end of Year 2 in 2002 standards in reading and writing were well above average when compared with those in all schools and in similar schools. In mathematics, standards were above average in relation to those in all and similar schools. Teacher assessments of standards in science were also well above average in comparison to those in all and similar schools. This is a positive picture and reflects the efforts the school has made to ensure that all pupils are challenged and supported to make good progress and achieve high standards in relation to the ambitious targets that the school sets itself. This is even though almost a third of them have special educational needs. The school's relatively small year groups of pupils mean that trends are difficult to follow and results can fluctuate dramatically. However, test results have shown improvement over time and have been consistently in line with or above the national averages in mathematics and above them in reading and writing. The school's comprehensive data explains the 'dip' in 2001, when results were influenced by the specific needs of that group of pupils.

Children entering the reception class have, overall, average ability. They make satisfactory progress and the majority are on target to reach the anticipated 'Early Learning Goals' before they start Year 1. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve above average standards in English, although listening skills are not as well developed as other aspects of the subject. Pupils also achieve high standards in mathematics, science, art, DT, and

history. Standards in all other subjects are at least satisfactory. Pupils continue to achieve well during Years 3 and 4, reaching standards that are above the national expectations in English, mathematics, science, art, DT and history. Throughout the school handwriting standards are particularly commendable, as are Year 4 swimming standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to school. They show a keen interest in and participate well in what the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, with just occasional examples of a minority not meeting the school's expectations.
Personal development and relationships	Good. There are productive relationships between staff and pupils, whilst pupils themselves get on with each other well.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It is in line with national averages for 2001-2002, and has shown improvement during the current year.

The school has made determined efforts to ensure that pupils respond to the recently reviewed 'Behaviour Policy'. This has been particularly successful and the enthusiasm for 'Golden Time' has had a very positive impact on attitudes, behaviour and personal development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection 28 lessons were observed. All were at least satisfactory. Four lessons were very good, 13 were good and 11 satisfactory. High-quality lessons were seen in Years 2 and 4.

The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in reception, with some good features. All teachers have a thorough understanding of the curriculum for their age groups, and lessons reflect the need for pupils to concentrate on literacy and numeracy skills. Opportunities for moral and social development are promoted very effectively.

In Years 1 to 4, good teaching ensures that English and mathematics are taught particularly well and pupils learn successfully. They make good progress as teachers have high expectations. Lessons are organised and planned well and have clear objectives. Teachers have a very good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this greatly enhances their teaching of the basic skills. Links made between subjects are very productive, as are the opportunities to develop literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Teachers question skilfully, assess prior knowledge and usually find different ways to motivate pupils. Where information and communication technology (ICT) is integrated appropriately into lessons it has a positive impact on learning. Less effective, but still satisfactory, lessons are characterised by overly long introductions and missed opportunities

to get pupils started on practical activities. Sometimes lessons lack identified times for pupils to discuss their ideas with each other. There are also some lessons that do not fill the allotted space on the timetable, leaving gaps that are not as productive as they might be. During lessons teachers almost always make sure that higher-attaining pupils are challenged. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by a team of dedicated teaching assistants. Their involvement in the support packages that enhance the national strategies are especially productive.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a rich curriculum for all pupils which is enhanced by valuable links with the community. Teachers make very useful connections between subjects, and opportunities for developing literacy skills are particularly strong.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported because activities are planned that closely match their learning needs. The support they receive from adults is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with particularly strong provision for promoting moral and social development linked to the school's behaviour policy and the use of a reward system known as 'Golden Time'.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. The school provides a safe and caring environment for pupils. Teachers know their pupils and support their personal development well.

The school's partnership with parents is particularly strong. Parents are very pleased with the relationships they forge with the headteacher and staff.

The school is justifiably proud of the way in which it recognises and addresses the needs of all pupils. Support from the community makes a valuable contribution to the school's curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school has a clear educational direction focused on raising standards. This is guided by the strong leadership of the headteacher and her senior teacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. The chair of governors is very well informed about all that is happening in the school. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and constructive monitoring systems are developing satisfactorily.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Results are monitored very closely and appropriate action is taken to improve them. There are comprehensive assessment procedures in place for English and mathematics. Procedures to monitor and improve teaching and learning are well established for literacy and numeracy but are underdeveloped in other areas of the curriculum.
The strategic use of resources	Financial control is good, and identified educational priorities are targeted clearly in the School Improvement Plan.

The school has sufficient and well-qualified staff. The accommodation is of a good standard both inside and outside. There are very good displays around the school. A good range of quality resources supports the curriculum. The school applies well best-value principles by comparing its standards and provision particularly in relation to the size of classes and the needs of its pupils. This ensures that good value is obtained in its spending, although the cost per pupil is high.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>There was unanimous agreement that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children like coming to school; • the quality of the teaching is good; • children are expected to work hard; • the school helps children to mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of parents feel the school could provide a greater range of activities outside lessons.

Parents' views of the school are very positive in all areas except with regard to the range of activities provided outside lessons as after-school clubs. The inspection team supports the very positive opinions that parents have expressed. Although the inspection team agrees that the number of activities provided as clubs is very limited, the school does do a great deal to augment the opportunities for pupils' learning over and above what is expected. Visits away from school, including residential experiences, visitors to the school and the rich diversity of additional contributors to school life have a positive impact on pupils' schooling, especially during events such as 'Healthy Schools Week' and 'Arts Week'.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children joining the reception class come from a wide variety of home backgrounds and have a range of pre-school experience. Approximately two thirds have attended a pre-school setting. Some are articulate and demonstrate average and above average attainment when they start school. However, there are some who have below average skills when they join the school. Results from initial assessments in the reception class show how groups of children vary from year to year. Some groups have more needs than others, as indicated by the group who took end-of-Year-2 tests in 2001. Successful teaching ensures that children are given an interesting programme and they make satisfactory progress and work confidently towards the 'Early Learning Goals'¹, which the majority reach.
2. The 2002 results of the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing for seven-year-olds were well above national averages. They were also well above the average for similar schools. Standards in mathematics were above both the national average and that for similar schools. Standards in science, based on teacher assessments, were very high and in the top five per cent both nationally and in relation to similar schools. A significant proportion of pupils gain higher levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science. A number of pupils in this group had special educational needs. Boys and girls do equally well.
3. Standards in English and mathematics have improved since the last inspection. The school has done well to raise standards as there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. The school's efforts at concentrating on the development of basic skills of literacy and numeracy are successful, although the furtherance of listening skills is still recognised as an area for ongoing improvement. The school has a wealth of data that shows how each pupil is tracked and specific targets are set. All pupils' needs are identified and all are well supported, including talented pupils and children from traveller families. The school's relatively small year groups of pupils mean that trends are difficult to follow and results can fluctuate dramatically. However, test results have shown improvement over time and have been consistently in line with or above the national averages in mathematics and above them in reading and writing. The school's comprehensive data explains the 'dip' in 2001 when results were influenced by the specific needs of that group of pupils, as mentioned above.
4. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented very successfully alongside a scheme to guide progression in phonics. This scheme is very effective in helping pupils learn how to spell, as when a Year 2 class practised very competently words that had 'ere' 'air' 'ear' and 'are' letter patterns in them. At the end of a short input from the teacher pupils could explain when to use 'hare' and 'hair' and then almost all were successful when they were challenged to 'have a go' at spelling 'important' and 'different'. The school benefits from a number of adults who listen to children read. As a result of this, and the focused teaching of skills during the dedicated reading time, standards in reading are above average. The use of number lines and a range of teaching skills linked with the National Numeracy Strategy are

¹ 'Early Learning Goals' are the anticipated standards to be achieved by the end of the reception year as detailed in 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage'.

- having a positive impact on pupils' understanding of number, although not enough is done to help pupils acquire and use problem-solving skills.
5. In some subjects there is little evidence gathered from lessons, but judgments based on teachers' planning, a scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that pupils are making good progress. By the end of Year 2 their standards are higher than expected in art, DT and history, and this shows an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in geography, music, and physical education have been maintained and are in line with national expectations. The work seen in the current Year 4 classes shows how pupils have continued to make good progress since joining Key Stage 2. They work hard to fulfil their potential, and standards are above the expected level in all subjects except ICT, music and geography, where they are in line with national expectations. There have been improvements in history, DT and art.
 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their ability and prior achievements. Their progress is monitored effectively each term using the challenging but achievable targets detailed in their individual education plans. These are drawn up cooperatively by teachers and the co-ordinator, who is the headteacher. Plans are shared with the parents at termly reviews. Pupils achieve well because teachers and teaching assistants provide them with good support. As a result they are able to successfully complete tasks and become confident learners.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The school's aims include "helping the children develop high personal and moral values, showing respect and tolerance for other people...". These values are successfully promoted and, as a result, pupils have positive attitudes and good personal development. They are very happy to come to school, arriving prepared and ready to work hard at their lessons. This starts in the reception class, where children are content to leave their parents at the start of the day. Older pupils are pleased to be in school. In particular, the range of activities offered by the school in 'Golden Time', when pupils can select from a wide range of activities, has caught their enthusiasm. Pupils are proud of their work. For example, those who had been given a headteacher's award were keen to show their books to the entire school in an assembly. Overall, pupils show a great keenness for their school and what it has to offer them.
8. The behaviour of pupils in the school is generally good, an aspect noted and very much appreciated by parents. Pupils usually meet the school's high expectations. The resulting sensible behaviour in most lessons means that teachers do not have to spend too much time maintaining order, which is clearly beneficial to the quality of learning taking place. Even the youngest pupils in the school, in the reception class, behave well. Most pupils do their best and resist any temptation to misbehave, although, as at the time of the last inspection, there are just a few occasions when behaviour is immature and affects learning. For example, in a Year 4 PE lesson the enthusiastic approach of the majority contrasted with some pupils who exhibited silly attitudes, throwing balls wildly, shouting, kicking balls unnecessarily and squabbling. Conversely, another PE lesson, this time in Year 1, saw pupils contributing well to the lesson by volunteering to demonstrate their work.
9. Pupil behaviour around the school is good. For example, they filed into the hall for an assembly in a very quiet and orderly way, then waited patiently for it to begin. The playground is an unthreatening place, with pupils playing happily together in the space available. Neither parents nor pupils regard bullying as a problem, and incidents are unusual. Just before Christmas aggressive, bullying behaviour and bad language on

the school bus became an issue; parents report that this was dealt with well and it has not re-occurred. Incidents of bullying or serious teasing that occur are exceptional in the normal run of school life. Pupils report that everybody gets on with each other well. They respect each other's and the school's property. They look after their environment well and there is no litter. There have not been any pupil exclusions in the past year.

10. Relationships in the school are good. The adults and children work well together as a whole community. One of the advantages of being such a small school is that the teachers know their pupils individually and have good relationships with them. Pupils also have good relations with each other. Teachers value the work of all pupils and in turn the pupils are confident about asking for support and guidance when they need it. This has a positive effect on their attainment. Most of the time pupils understand the impact of their actions on others. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson there was a strong emphasis on polite behaviour, with pupils working in pairs and taking turns well. In another mathematics lesson, this time in Year 3, pupils worked well independently, but were prepared on occasion to help each other. In a reception class lesson one child was sitting in the home corner looking sad and another child, without prompting, went over and comforted her. However, in the same lesson a group of boys showed their immature social skills when they squabbled over who would put the last few pieces into place in a jigsaw. Generally, when working in pairs or in groups, pupils do cooperate in a good way, respecting each other's point of view. Traveller children are included well in activities by other children; this is rooted deeply in the fabric of the school, with all pupils seen as part of the overall school community. Pupils in different years know each other well and older pupils play with younger ones. There is a friendly atmosphere throughout the school.
11. When the school gives pupils opportunities to take initiative and personal responsibility, they respond favourably. The school council, established for nearly two years, has new members each term. Members of the current council have been in post for six weeks and, although they have not yet got into their stride, they look set to have a real impact on the way the school is run, as have those before them. Playground helpers from Year 4 showed maturity in helping reception children at lunchtime. Older pupils work pleasingly with younger ones during reading-time exchanges and in some 'Golden Time' activities. The school even has light monitors to ensure that energy saving is really carried out in practice. Pupils' maturity is also displayed in less formal ways, such as tidying away at the end of lessons. They are aware of their targets in mathematics and English and work towards them, taking pride in their work and encouraged by the way teachers value it. They are polite to each other and to adults. A particularly pleasant example of pupils taking initiative is the system whereby they are encouraged to nominate their classmates to receive 'golden awards' for kindness; even very young pupils were prepared to stand up in assembly and explain their reasons to the whole school, a quite impressive feat. Similarly, pupils volunteered to compose a prayer and say it to the whole school in assembly.
12. Pupils with special educational needs take part in the wide range of activities within the school. They form close constructive relationships with other pupils, and most are caring and tolerant of the needs of others. Staff provide good role models of care and consideration, and support staff promote individual confidence in the classroom situation. The teacher of pupils with special educational needs works for one day a week addressing the needs of individual pupils. The school receives behaviour support each half term from an outside agency linked to the school behaviour-support plan.

13. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average for a school of this type but has declined somewhat from the levels seen at the time of the last inspection. Indications are that it has improved during the current year. Unauthorised absences are very few in number and most pupils, but not all, arrive at school punctually.
14. Overall, pupils' good relationships, attitudes and behaviour make a positive contribution towards their attainment and progress. The school has improved the good standards being achieved at the time of the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the total of 28 lessons seen, almost two thirds were good or better. Thirteen were good and four were very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. This shows an overall improvement in teaching since the previous inspection and supports the parents' very positive opinions. The last inspection reported that teachers were not always successful in the management of pupils' behaviour. The inspection team is able to report that this weakness has been addressed. Although there are a small minority of pupils who present challenging behaviour, they are well managed by teachers, as is the support for the significant number of pupils who have special educational needs. Children of very recently arrived traveller families are fully integrated into lessons through the teachers' determined efforts.
16. Teaching in the reception class is always satisfactory and has some good features. The teacher recognises and understands the needs of these children. She works hard with the teaching assistants to provide an effective curriculum and a stimulating learning environment. The classroom and outside play areas provide a rich and diverse selection of equipment to promote every area of learning for this age group. The outdoor facilities for the children, noted as being unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection, have been improved dramatically and the teacher now plans to make sure that the enclosed outside area contributes worthwhile experiences to augment children's physical development. Although the teacher plans valuable learning opportunities for these young children, such as when they use high-quality learning resources to support the counting activity "Five Little Speckled Frogs", there are a number of occasions when they are not challenged sufficiently. There are also some missed opportunities to ensure that they listen attentively to the teacher and take turns to contribute to discussions.
17. Throughout Years 1 to 4 teaching is good. There are examples of high-quality lessons in Year 2 and 4 that are characterised by the combination of features the school would do well to promote even further. These are the:
 - a. practice of getting pupils started quickly on their tasks following a very purposeful introduction to the lesson;
 - b. sharing of learning objectives with pupils at the start of lessons and then reviewing with them what they have achieved at the end;
 - c. very clear, concise instructions given to pupils;
 - d. development of personal qualities such as independence and cooperation;
 - e. classroom management that ensures that pupils' enthusiasm is channelled effectively at all times;
 - f. very high expectations and challenge for those who have the most potential;
 - g. use of ICT and other strategies to stimulate pupils' interest;
 - h. opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their lessons.

18. Teachers plan their lessons well and set clear objectives for developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Objectives and the structure of lessons are usually shared with pupils at the start and important new vocabulary is highlighted. Teachers enjoy productive relationships with their pupils. They encourage positive attitudes and expend considerable effort and energy in promoting good standards of behaviour. Their management of the pupils is good. They are careful to choose a wide cross-section of boys and girls of different abilities, and include pupils with special educational needs, during discussion times. Skilful questioning ensures that lessons are fully inclusive and wholly shared experiences. A great deal of time is put into promoting pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills in all lessons. Literacy is developed very effectively through the links that teachers introduce across many areas of the curriculum. Teachers also concentrate on helping pupils with their listening skills and this is productive. They do, however, miss some opportunities to highlight and plan for raising spiritual awareness.
19. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught very well, particularly in Years 2 and 4. All teachers have implemented the national strategies with worthwhile results. The structures of the sessions are often very productive. In the best, skills such as spelling are taught in a lively, meaningful way and then the new area of spelling work is practised in a variety of ways. Teachers are very committed to raising standards in reading and writing, and they look for every opportunity to promote these skills in the main part of literacy lessons. The work they do with groups of pupils, such as guiding readers through a text to scan for important information, is especially noteworthy.
20. In the best lessons, teachers recognise how pupils need to be actively involved in their learning. For example, Year 2 pupils were encouraged to talk to partners about the questions they would ask a fellow pupil when she acted the role of a princess in a story. Their ideas were then committed to their 'wipe clean' boards in very clear joined script before being posed to the 'princess'! Year 3 pupils investigated the movement of their arms and then constructed working models to depict how muscles stretch and relax. This enabled them to gain a high level of understanding about how the muscles in their arms work.
21. Teachers often make good use of ICT in their lessons. For example, the use of a data projector in a Year 2 geography lesson helped pupils recognise the main features of a Scottish island. In lessons in Years 1 and 3, pupils completed a number task on the computer to complement their mathematical understanding. Encouraging Year 4 pupils to practise spelling words with a computer program using the suffix introduced during the lesson ensured that they were highly motivated and fully involved in developing both literacy and computer skills.
22. Teachers place great emphasis on pupils' handwriting and the presentation of work in books. The recent focus on this aspect of pupils' learning has been particularly effective and the success is reflected in the outcomes of their work and the high quality of display around the school. It is evident that care is taken by teachers to value and present pupils' work attractively. There are some good examples of marking, but it does not always reflect a consistent approach.
23. In the less effective but still satisfactory lessons, introductions take too long and pupils find it difficult to listen for sustained periods of time. There are some missed opportunities for them to discuss or commit their ideas to writing by using 'wipe clean' boards. One specific area that teachers do not manage satisfactorily is the length of sessions. Timetables, on occasions, leave small time slots that become 'fillers' rather than productive teaching and learning opportunities. For example, a numeracy lesson ended ten minutes before lunch, leaving a gap that then had to be used.

24. Teachers and support staff work well together. This collaboration is a strong feature of lessons and ensures that all pupils make good progress, especially in the core subjects. Most lessons include group tasks that are adapted in difficulty for different ability groups and are appropriately demanding. Teaching assistants are usually well briefed by teachers and know how they can contribute to pupils' learning. This was especially noticeable in the way in which the support packages that complement the literacy strategy are used and the way in which teaching assistants are promoting commitment and good learning with groups of pupils with whom they work. Parent helpers visit school and also contribute successfully to pupils' learning. This is especially noticeable when teachers, parents, teaching assistants and helpers work together to provide 'Golden Time' activities. This weekly event is a valuable tool that supports behaviour management, forges links between teachers and helpers, and contributes very successfully to the efforts teachers make to provide stimulating experiences for their pupils.
25. Pupils take reading books home and teachers and parents make useful observations in 'home to school diaries'. This information helps teachers, parents and carers work together to support children with reading. It ensures that homework supports learning appropriately. Homework is also promoted through other areas of the curriculum and is given sufficient emphasis.
26. Teachers meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs by ensuring that they receive very good support in lessons and are provided with tasks that are well matched to their age and ability. Teaching assistants work very closely with teachers and contribute informally to the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress. These members of staff almost always provide the right amount of challenge alongside the care and security that some pupils require.

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

27. The curriculum offered to the reception class children is sound and covers all areas of learning. There have been improvements to the provision offered for the development of physical skills through the work undertaken in the outside play area. The classroom is bright, well organised and stimulating.
28. In Years 1 to 4, the school provides a good curriculum for pupils which is broad, balanced and relevant, and meets statutory requirements. Appropriate amounts of time are allocated for literacy and numeracy, and this time is well used to enable pupils' rate of progress to increase as they get older. The National Literacy Strategy is very effectively implemented and, together with good opportunities given in other subjects to enhance these skills, results in high standards throughout the school. The numeracy strategy is implemented well, resulting in above average standards in mathematics. All subjects have schemes of work which have been suitably adapted to meet the needs of the pupils, ensuring that they make continuous progress, building well on their prior learning. However, the timetable is not planned rigorously enough, as there are many short periods of time at the end of long lessons that are not effectively used. This time is often spent in doing impromptu activities with no real aim or planning to promote further learning. The school is socially inclusive, ensuring access and opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into groups in the classroom and do well.
29. There is good provision made for pupils' personal, social and health education where they are made aware of the dangers of drugs and the importance of healthy eating.

Sufficient emphasis is given to sex education. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has raised the profile of this part of the curriculum through the 'Healthy Schools Project.' The school has won a 'Health Promoting School Award' for its work in this area. This enhancement of the curriculum has a different focus each year and is delivered through other subjects, such as science and geography. The work culminates in a 'Healthy Schools Week', when a range of exciting activities is planned, involving many visitors from the local community.

30. Although there are no club activities after school hours, the curriculum is enriched by a range of visits to local places of interest and a variety of visitors to the school. For example, a wildlife expert told the pupils about the many animal and plant species that can be found in the local area, thus enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the local environment. The curriculum is also extended through 'Golden Time,' when pupils are offered many differing activities that require a wide range of skills, from needlework to pottery. Opportunities to visit a residential camp are presented to the oldest pupils. There are very good links with the local community that enhance curricular opportunities for pupils. The Parent Teacher Association, together with a local firm, donated money to build a playhouse for the pupils, while another business provided expertise to help pupils improve the playground facilities. Local farm owners provide openings for pupils to visit their land during their conservation work, thus enabling them to learn through direct experience. There are, however, only limited links with the wider community and no established links with schools in other parts of the country or the world.
31. Good liaison with partner schools ensures that when the pupils leave school they move smoothly and happily to the next stage of their school life. The local pyramid² of schools provides a good network of support for teachers. Pupils also join in annual competitive sporting events with these schools, such as a football tournament.
32. The provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good, and the school's positive caring ethos remains strong. It reflects the school's aims of helping pupils develop strong personal and moral values, showing respect and tolerance for other people and their way of life. These aims permeate all aspects of school life, and help to promote the good relationships, attitudes and personal development of the pupils and their very enthusiastic approach to school. Curriculum planning does not sufficiently identify opportunities for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, so some chances to develop this area further are missed.
33. The amount of time given to spiritual development is satisfactory. As at the last inspection, pupils are provided with some time for reflection in assemblies, and encouraged to lead prayers, which they do spontaneously. However, although all pupils say prayers, insufficient time is given for them to reflect on the issues that are raised in assemblies. There are a few times during the school day for pupils to marvel at the world around them, but they also learn to appreciate the spiritual nature of subjects such as art and music. Pupils learn to tolerate different points of view in circle-time discussions. During 'Achievement Award' assemblies they appreciate and applaud the efforts of others.
34. Opportunities for pupils' moral and social development have improved since the last report and are now very good. There is a strong moral code throughout the school, and pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Agreed rules are consistently implemented, and there is a comprehensive behaviour policy that is

² The term 'Pyramid' is used to identify the partnership between schools and higher & further education establishments.

followed throughout the school. The pupils, who try very hard to gain maximum stars, value the reward system of giving golden stars towards 'Golden Time'. The implementation of 'Golden Time' for all pupils has had a very positive impact on their behaviour, and the inconsistencies highlighted in the last report are no longer evident. Pupils are given many good opportunities to cooperate during lessons, sharing expertise and helping each other to achieve. The family atmosphere in the school is promoted very well during 'Golden Time', when small groups of mixed-age pupils join together to enjoy a range of activities. The oldest pupils help the youngest at lunch times, and further opportunities to develop social skills are provided when the pupils in Years 3 and 4 attend a residential camp. Pupils make a positive contribution to the running of the school by volunteering to act as monitors in classrooms and around the school, or serving on the school council. Pupils generally respond positively to the high expectations of the staff, and learn from the good role models set by the adults in the school.

35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. They learn about their own culture in subjects such as history, art, music and English, and perpetuate local customs such as 'Shroving', when they give flowers to people in the village on Shrove Tuesday each year while reciting the appropriate rhyme. In religious education, pupils learn about other world faiths, and in geography they learn about other parts of the world. The school tries hard to promote pupils' understanding of multicultural issues, and this is successful in geography when pupils cook and eat Indian food and listen to Indian music. The school has some multicultural musical instruments that help to promote pupils' cultural understanding. There are few multicultural books in the very restricted library space to further their awareness, as they have been added to classroom book corners.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can feel safe and valued. Parents believe rightly that the school is effective in helping their children to become mature and responsible individuals. All staff make considerable efforts to address the welfare of individual pupils when they need it; both parents and pupils appreciate this contribution. Responsibility for child protection lies with an experienced teacher who ensures that local procedures are followed. Adults in the school are reminded of their child protection responsibilities.
37. There is good provision within the programme for personal and social education to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own safety. Support from all staff enables pupils to feel secure and valued and to concentrate on their learning, thus helping them to progress to the best of their ability. The governors, headteacher and staff are active in ensuring that health and safety procedures are in place and followed. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out. No unsafe practice was seen in lessons during the inspection.
38. All teachers are involved in the pastoral care of their pupils. Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils well and successfully meet their individual needs. They are effective in supporting them when they need it. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good, although, as might be expected in such a small school, it is largely informal.
39. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor attendance and encourage pupils to come to school regularly. There are systems in place to deal with problems with attendance as they emerge. The headteacher monitors the attendance registers, and

the educational welfare officer visits the school twice a term to provide support as necessary. Parents generally cooperate with the school by providing reasons for their children's absences.

40. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school places great emphasis on encouraging the positive rather than punishing the negative. There is a good formal system of awards, given out during an assembly, which cover both good work and behaviour, leading to the award of certificates. Perhaps even more motivational is the use of 'Golden Time' to encourage pupils. 'Golden Time' provides an opportunity to choose from a wide range of exciting activities for one session a week. The reward of being amongst the first to select, and thus secure, a favourite activity is a powerful motivator for most pupils. They expressed real enthusiasm for this provision and this was seen to influence their behaviour positively. It reinforces the general unspoken consensus throughout the school that there is a proper way to behave, and that pupils will conform to it. There are clear boundaries to acceptable behaviour, backed up by 'golden rules' that are rewritten annually with the pupils' participation. Clearly this approach works well in this close school community.
41. All staff, including teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors, are constantly reinforcing the school's expectations. The standards of behaviour achieved owe much to the staff's relationships with pupils and their personal effectiveness.
42. The school's annual report on progress, called the Annual Summary of Achievement, fulfils statutory requirements but does not always include enough information about each pupil's progress towards the anticipated standards in all subjects. Although there is a section on "parents/carers can help by", these usually contain very bland comments rather than specific targets for improvement. On the plus side, reports do contain information on pupils' reading ages, and for Year 4 the results of optional tests in English and mathematics are included. The section on pupils' personal and social development in the reports can also contain useful and perceptive comments. The school provides three opportunities a year for parents to talk to their children's teacher and to see their work. At the start of each term there is a letter to parents to brief them on what will be taught. The school emphasises its open-door policy and teachers are available to talk to parents as any issues arise.
43. The school cares well for pupils with special educational needs. The small groups enable teachers to know their pupils very well. Systems to monitor how well they are doing are firmly established. Targets are included on the individual education plans, but their quality is variable. The best are those that are specific and identify learning objectives clearly.
44. The school's high standards of support for pupils have been maintained since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Virtually all parents who expressed a view were very positive about all aspects of the school. Parents believe that their children like school, that the teaching is good and that their children work hard and make good progress. They endorse the standards of behaviour achieved and think the school helps children to become mature and responsible. They think the school is well led and managed. Parents see themselves as part of the school community and support it fully. Their views of the school are very good and it clearly enjoys their confidence.

46. The overall quality of information for parents is sound. The school works hard to maintain contact with its parents, many of whom live a considerable distance from it. The best feature is the school website (www.durweston.dorset.sch.uk), which is well designed, contains a lot of useful information, and gives a real flavour of the school and its strengths. By contrast, the prospectus is a basic, slightly dated document that meets legal requirements but does not give a true flavour of the school and its strengths. The annual governors' report to parents is very limited. It tells them little about the school. The school does, however, organise meetings for parents on specific topics such as the reading schemes and end-of-key-stage testing that help to inform them about the standards their children should be aiming for.
47. The contribution of parents to the school and their children's learning is good. Most parents help their children with homework. In this they are assisted by the home-school reading diaries, which provide a good medium for regular communication. A number of parents come into school to help in class, particularly in support of the range of 'Golden Time' activities. Others help with ICT or 'healthy eating week'. Individual parents come into school to support the curriculum by talking about their life, as a farmer, a paramedic, and a retired villager. The Parent-Teacher Association is active in organising social and fundraising events. Parents raise considerable amounts of money that enhance significantly the work and facilities of the school. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement, although it is hard to say what impact this has had. A strong relationship with parents is encouraged right from the start, with the reception teacher carrying out home visits before children join the school so that she can meet them in their own environment. Parents bringing their children into school in the morning are welcome to come into the classrooms to settle them.
48. The productive partnership with parents and their inclusion as part of the school community have been maintained since the last inspection. The development of the very good website, plus newsletters and curriculum information, has been effective. However, the quality of the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents has not kept pace with the general improvement expected of such documents in the last few years.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher provides informed, focused leadership that steers the continuous improvement of this school. She is clear about what needs to be done to raise standards and she very successfully shares her vision with staff and governors. Particular strengths include the evaluation of the school's performance and taking effective action. There is a detailed annual school self-review process that considers assessment data, performance management, school improvement planning and the views of staff and governors. Detailed records of training activities and lesson observations provide useful documentation to aid school development and performance management. The headteacher is very well supported by her charismatic senior teacher who is also the literacy co-ordinator. The endeavours of other members of staff in developing areas of the curriculum are productive, particularly in numeracy, science, ICT and history. The strengths of leadership and management of the school have ensured that, since the last inspection, standards at the end of Year 2 have risen in all aspects of English, mathematics, art, DT and history.
50. The use of the school's financial resources to support identified educational priorities is good. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is also good. The school is very committed to equality of opportunity. Pupils are valued

and respected, and the school actively promotes inclusion by responding very well to the individual needs of all of its pupils, as was shown during the inspection when a group of children from traveller families were welcomed and seamlessly assimilated into the school community.

51. Monitoring and assessment procedures for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are particularly effective in supporting the school's determination to raise standards. Leaders of these strategies monitor the progress of pupils in relation to set targets and take action where needed. Teaching and learning are monitored and financial support is provided for lesson observations and visits to other schools. This leads to targeted school improvement planning and has resulted in improvements in the teaching of basic skills, which is very good throughout the school. Opportunities to monitor lessons and share good practice in all other subjects are yet to be formulated and fully realised.
52. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties effectively. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties, although the annual report to parents requires more detail. The chair of governors is particularly well informed about all that is happening at the school. She provides very good support as well as giving the school a more objective view of what is happening and how things could be improved. The governors have begun to develop a programme of visits to support the school's self-review policy, although this is still in its infancy.
53. The finance committee monitors the school's budget closely, and procedures for day-to-day financial control are good. Specific grants are used for their intended purposes and the governors ensure that the principles of best value are applied well. The governors maintain a detailed financial plan that looks ahead and enables them to consider long-term funding proposals. Recent changes to the economic circumstances of this rural area have had an impact on the number of pupils attending the school. Governors have initiated a long-term plan that recognises the implications of this eventuality and they have made spending decisions with this in mind. The large budget reserves have been used effectively to maintain separate age-group classes until the end of this academic year. Their decision is judged as being prudent, as the small classes have meant that teachers can teach pupils very productively, enabling them to achieve above average standards in spite of the significant number with special educational needs. Funds have also been used to make significant improvements to the buildings. A new front entrance, enclosed walkway and office have been added recently, enhancing existing accommodation.
54. The lively atmosphere created within the school ensures that teachers are enthusiastic about their work; they are willing to take on new ideas and they provide very good role models for the pupils. There is a good balance of expertise covering most areas of the curriculum, although opportunities to share this expertise are underdeveloped. Support staff are valued as vital members of the team and there are good training opportunities available to them. They play a vital role in raising standards in literacy and numeracy, and they are encouraged to use their creativity and ingenuity in their work.
55. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is informed and acts in an advisory role for staff. The special educational needs governor keeps herself regularly updated. There is good liaison with outside agencies, and the school has good resources for special educational needs.

56. 'Performance Management' is fully in place and is used effectively to link staff performance to educational priorities. A strong feature is that objectives set for individual teachers reflect a shared responsibility for achieving success. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are satisfactory. New members of staff are mentored by a colleague, receive a staff handbook and are introduced to the school's behaviour policy, as this is believed to be a critical tool in furthering the school's success.
57. The school's administrative assistant provides valuable support for the headteacher and staff. She provides a welcoming atmosphere for parents and visitors, and has efficient procedures for organising and storing information securely. Information and communication technology is satisfactorily used for general administrative tasks. The school has established a very professional and informative web site.
58. The school's accommodation is of good quality. It makes good use of all the available space for teaching the curriculum. The very-well-presented displays throughout the school greatly enhance the learning environment. A splendid array of art and design work related to 'Golden Time' activities provides a welcoming entrance to the school. The buildings are well maintained and the school and its surroundings are kept very clean and tidy. The outdoor environment is particularly appealing. Links with the community are in evidence in the garden area and its willow sculptures, as well as in the 'safe surface' play area provided by the Parent Teacher Association and a local business.
59. Overall, the range and quality of learning resources are good. Library space and the use of the library are restricted at present because the area is being used as a fifth classroom. Pupils are encouraged to look after and tidy equipment, and they are given the opportunity through the Pupil Council to make some decisions regarding the use of resources.
60. The school provides good teaching; all pupils progress well, achieve high standards and are given good curricular opportunities. Taking account of the attainment of pupils on entry and the general social and financial factors, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to build on the school's successes the headteacher, staff and governors should:
 - (1) undertake a review of the use of time during the school day so that the best possible use is made of all available teaching time; (Paras: 23, 28, 83 & 90)
 - (2) develop monitoring procedures so that the characteristics of very good lessons are identified, shared and promoted in all areas of the curriculum and across all year groups. (Paras: 51, 98, 104, 109, 113, 118, 122,127 & 130)

The school may also wish to take account of the following issues:

- Make sure reports to parents explain more clearly how well their children are achieving in relation to national expectations in all areas of the curriculum. (Para: 42)
- Provide more-detailed information in the text of the Governors' Annual Report to parents. (Paras: 46, 48, & 52)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	13	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	15	46	39	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 three 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)	79
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	28

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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	8	11	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (89)	100 (83)	100 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (78)	100 (89)	100 (94)
	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	65	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	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	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	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)	5.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.2
Average class size	16

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	272,326
Total expenditure	244,041
Expenditure per pupil	2,596
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,553
Balance carried forward to next year	47,838

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	79
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	41	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	38	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	59	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	47	3	3	0
The teaching is good.	79	21	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	47	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	24	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	35	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	50	44	3	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	76	21	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	18	41	6	12

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

62. Children are admitted into the reception class on a part-time basis in the autumn term of the year in which they are five and they attend full-time from the beginning of the spring term. Approximately two thirds of the children have had some experience of pre-school provision and settle happily into school life. Children start school with a wide range of attainment and experiences in all areas of learning. The attainment of the current cohort ranges from well below to well above average, being about average overall. Although this suggests an improvement since the last inspection, it should not be considered to represent a consistent picture. Different groups of children have many and diverse needs.
63. Teaching in the reception class is always satisfactory across all the areas of learning. It has some good features in the way that the teacher provides quality resources and a stimulating environment, but planning for different ability groups is not always clear and there are missed chances to promote listening skills effectively. Planning also allows children to learn through making choices, initiating their own learning. The teaching assistant is directed effectively to support children's learning.
64. Most children behave well and enjoy school. Staff promote children's self-esteem through positive relationships. The school runs a parent and toddler group on their premises for one afternoon a week and this has a positive impact on the links between home and school. There is an effective system of induction, including home visits by the teacher, ensuring a smooth start with parent involvement. There is appropriate inclusion of all children through effective questioning at all levels. It is expected that the majority of children will have achieved the 'Early Learning Goals' in all areas when they leave the reception class to join Year 1.

Personal and social development

65. Satisfactory teaching in this area makes sure that children are happy to come to school and are able to follow daily routines such as putting their book bag away, finding their name card and putting their lunch box on the rack. Adults provide good role models for children, showing respect for one another when working together. Generally children play and work cooperatively together on a variety of activities; for example, taking turns to select items from a bag when exploring their sense of touch. They are learning to consider others in their role play. A clinic has been set up in part of the classroom and children act the part of a doctor or nurse helping a parent with a sick baby. There are, however, some examples of squabbling and a lack of social skills, indicating the efforts that have to be made by the teacher to enable children to reach the 'Early Learning Goal'. Children are gradually becoming aware of the school's 'golden rules', which promote good behaviour.
66. Resources are labelled and stored so that the children are able to make independent choices. At the end of lessons they work together to tidy the classroom. In PE, most children are able to change independently, receiving only occasional help from an adult.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children have a clear understanding of the importance of print. They enjoy sharing a 'Touch' book with the teacher, readily offering their own ideas about what is wet or prickly. Children know the difference between 'storybooks' and 'fact' books, learning the importance of a 'contents' page. When looking at a big book about 'The Body' most understood the purpose of the numbers that appeared on the contents page. The teacher uses questioning effectively, ensuring that all children are involved in discussions, although their listening skills need constant reinforcement. They are encouraged to bring something linked to the curriculum to talk about during productive 'show and tell' sessions. An understanding of phonics is developing and some more-able children spontaneously recognise phonic blends such as 'ch' in chest and 'er' at the end of a word. They use their knowledge of phonics when sorting labels to match parts of the body. During their role play in the clinic they make marks on paper when writing out a prescription for patients. Most children are able to write their names independently. The vast majority, if not all, children are on target to reach the standards expected in this area of learning.

Mathematical development

68. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children are developing appropriate numeracy skills. There are ample opportunities for sand and water play and these activities also contribute well to the development of mathematical language with words such as 'full' and 'empty'. Pupils are given opportunities to use the computer to develop their knowledge of number when counting to ten as well as using arrows to move 'up', 'down', 'right' and 'left'. Teachers' planning indicates how children have had experience in recognising the properties of shapes, both two- and three-dimensional, and know appropriate vocabulary such as 'square', 'circle' and 'corner'. The teacher effectively uses other opportunities to extend children's number skills, such as in a PE lesson when children use their own strategies to show what is longest and shortest. Further learning takes place back in the classroom when the number line is extended beyond 30. Children sing a range of number songs such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs' and 'Ten in the Bed' to consolidate their awareness of counting. Number games are used productively to support mathematical learning; for example, using a fishing game for ordering numbers one to ten.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Most children enter the class with some understanding and knowledge of the world around them. They develop the skills to use the computer confidently and can control the mouse, recognising some letters on the keyboard. Children are able to select the clothes to dress the teddy on screen, showing good mouse control, and they use a drawing program to make pictures and write 'letters to mummy'. They explore the possibilities of construction, using building blocks as well as malleable materials such as dough. They are encouraged to make observations, using a magnifying glass when looking at objects on an interest table. The class teacher's planned work relating to knowledge of the senses is rewarding. Children enjoy exploring the sense of touch when using a 'feely bag'. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area of development and children are expected to meet the 'Early Learning Goals' by the time they finish their reception year.

Physical development

70. Children's physical development is satisfactory. They are on course to reach the expected levels because teaching and learning in this area are secure. Children have access to a safe outdoor play area which is much improved since the previous

inspection. They are able to use a variety of equipment that includes bicycles, scooters, large construction equipment and balancing apparatus, and successfully acquire manipulative skills. The reception class makes regular use of the hall for PE. Children develop a variety of ways of travelling on different parts of their bodies. They learn to control their bodies by using climbing apparatus and recognise the importance of bending their knees on landing. Children in reception miss opportunities to learn how to move or handle any mats or benches in the hall as this is done for them. They have experience of using paintbrushes, scissors, glue sticks and pencils to develop their hand control profitably.

Creative development

71. The provision for and teaching of children's creative development are satisfactory. Opportunities are provided for children to use paint when creating portraits. They enjoy using crayons to make 'knobbly' rubbings when putting paper over construction bricks. A scrutiny of work and display shows examples of paper folding to make octopus shapes and printing circle shapes with paints. The role-play area provides a suitable environment in which to develop children's language skills and imaginative play. During the inspection there was no evidence of adult support during role play. The class benefits from taking part in lessons with a specialist music teacher who works with the children on a fortnightly basis. She provides opportunities for singing and using instruments. The class teacher also encourages children to use instruments; for example, to support the story of the 'Singing Pig'. There is a 'sound box' containing instruments and activities in the classroom which complements effectively the music provision. By the end of the reception year it is anticipated that most children will achieve the anticipated 'Early Learning Goals' in this area.

ENGLISH

72. Standards in English are above national expectations throughout Years 1 to 4. They are higher than anticipated in most aspects of the subject, including speaking, reading, writing, spelling and handwriting. Listening skills, however, are not so well established. They are underdeveloped when pupils enter Year 1, so teachers work hard to ensure that standards improve and by the end of Year 4 they are in line with national expectations. Handwriting, a recent focus for improvement, is well above the expected level and has a significant impact on the presentation of pupils' work.
73. Standards observed show improvements on those reported during the previous inspection in spite of the significant increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. Assessments carried out as children join the reception class indicate a wide range of ability. Overall attainment in communication, language and literacy on entry to Year 1 is about average, except in children's listening skills. Pupils make good progress and reach above average standards in reading, writing and spelling at the end of Year 2. These good standards are sustained and built on throughout Years 3 and 4. Higher attainers are challenged successfully and those with special educational needs are supported well. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
74. By the end of Year 2, the vast majority of pupils have a sound command of spoken English. This continues in Years 3 and 4. All pupils are encouraged to offer ideas and share experiences in a supportive atmosphere. They understand instructions and follow directions. Teachers value the contributions made by pupils in lessons and encourage them to offer their own ideas. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to talk to larger audiences and the confidence that they exhibit when they spontaneously compose and then say prayers is especially praiseworthy.

75. Staff work hard at extending pupils' vocabulary not only in English lessons but also within other areas of the curriculum. They highlight relevant new words at the start of lessons. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson some of the words used were new to the pupils and they were explained and described during the start of the session. The meanings of 'energy', 'couscous' and 'lentils' were made clear. These were then reinforced effectively by a teaching assistant using the recently introduced vocabulary.
76. The majority of pupils' standards in reading are above national expectations, with a significant number reaching higher levels. They use a range of reading strategies including whole word recognition, and word-building picture and context clues to read unfamiliar words and establish meaning. The pupils' use of phonic skills develops well in Years 1 and 2. This is being aided by the successful implementation and use of the nationally produced phonic scheme. The school has adopted a valuable programme for reading that sees all pupils taking part in reading-related activities straight after their break at lunch time. This dedicated time involves a variety of activities and tasks. Pupils read to the teacher, each other, helpers and parents and also have opportunities to complete book reviews, listen to story tapes and enjoy a variety of topic-related texts. They also take part in computer activities that supplement and extend their reading skills productively.
77. Pupils make good progress with their reading. Teachers ensure that they have positive attitudes. They talk enthusiastically about the story in their reading books. Higher attainers read fluently by the end of Year 2 and can name the title, author and illustrator of the books they are reading. They name their favourite authors and describe why they like them. By the end of Year 4, pupils explain the differences between fact and fiction, articulating their preferences. They can explain how to use the library. The books the pupils are reading give appropriate challenge and they are being encouraged to develop the skills necessary to become completely independent readers. Younger pupils respond well to the large versions of texts available to teachers in the form of 'Big Books', whether following whilst the teacher reads, or, if reading together, joining in as and when they feel confident. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read at home. There are some very rewarding comments in the home-school reading diaries.
78. The school provides a 'language rich' environment for the pupils. Classroom walls have very-well-presented word lists and vocabulary banks. Book corners have high-quality fiction and non-fiction texts and class-made books. Role-play areas with opportunities for reading and writing contribute significantly to the opportunities that younger pupils have to develop reading skills. The library and its use are presently restricted, as it is housed in the additional Year 4 class base and many of the school's books have been placed in class book areas. The school has a good supply of dictionaries and Bibles that pupils know how to use. The school holds a 'Book Week' each year and this provides additional opportunities to develop reading skills and to promote a love of books. Staff and pupils dress up as characters in storybooks, and visitors contribute to drama workshops for the pupils.
79. In writing, standards seen at the time of the inspection were above national expectations. Pupils make good progress in their writing and spelling from the average levels they are achieving on entry to Year 1. They are offered many valuable and interesting opportunities to practise their acquired literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Examples of pupils' work illustrate how teachers are developing each pupil's potential. For instance; when describing an icy landscape inspired by a book the class is reading, pupils in Year 4 write:

“The rock solid mountains are covered in freezing cold snow but not just any cold snow. It is as cold as ice cream which has just been taken out of the freezer after a thousand years.”

and

“If you were really quiet you would hear the icicles clinking against each other like friends touching glasses at someone’s birthday.”

80. Year 2 pupils are helped to gain the correct sequence of story writing through specific teaching of the setting, characters, events and ending, such as when they developed their descriptions of the main characters in a folk story from Bengal. Pupils write simple sentences and statements with improving use of capital letters, full stops, question marks and speech marks. They use adjectives and try to write words such as ‘interesting’. Examples of pupils’ writing include story writing, report writing, invitations, poems, lists, recipes and letters illustrating a wide coverage of the subject. There is a commitment to using ICT. Teachers use their skills during lessons to motivate the class, and pupils have opportunities to develop their computer skills to communicate ideas.
81. The quality of teaching is mainly good, with some very good features. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy well to teach all aspects of English. Very good teaching occurs when there is a snappy introductory session, independent, practical activities to support learning and an identified final part to the lesson to sum up what has been learnt. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond very well. There is good use of praise and oral feedback to pupils about what they have learned, what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve. Written feedback is usually appropriate to the contents of the pupils’ work, although marking is not consistent throughout the school.
82. Some lesson introductions do take too long for pupils who struggle to listen for extended periods. They are inclined to get a little restless because they do not have the ability to listen attentively for a long time. Teachers miss some opportunities to get pupils directly involved during the introductions by clarifying their thoughts aloud in pairs and getting them immersed in practical activities quickly. More-effective lessons give pupils opportunities to gather ideas together by talking with the teacher or their friends. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils are encouraged to jot down ideas on their ‘wipe clean’ boards and then discuss them with a partner, as they can scan texts looking for important headlines about animals.
83. Also there are some occasions when lessons fall short of their allocated session times and teachers resort to the use of ‘time-fillers’.
84. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported effectively. They achieve well. The school very successfully ensures that all pupils are fully included. Teaching assistants are usually well prepared for lessons and support both higher attainers and those who require additional help. They also play a vital role in supporting pupils who receive help during additional literacy strategy group work.
85. The school invites theatre groups to visit. Authors visit as well. All these additional facets support the curriculum effectively and contribute productively to pupils’ personal development. Teachers take care to incorporate texts from a variety of cultures into the lessons.
86. The literacy co-ordinator provides very good leadership for the subject and is a particularly effective role model for others to follow. She has undertaken some

monitoring of lessons. These have been useful in securing the development of good practice. She is also successful in sharing the information gathered from training sessions and this had a positive impact on the quality of lessons. The assessment strategies for the subject are very productive in that they target the next steps for pupils' learning. The co-ordinator's enthusiasm for the subject ensures that governors are given information about English, and the recently-introduced phonic scheme has been explained to them.

MATHEMATICS

87. The standards of attainment of pupils aged seven have improved since the last report and are now above those expected nationally. The above average standards seen at the time of the last report in Years 3 and 4 have been maintained. The school is achieving more-consistently good standards because of improvements led by implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Good teaching and the small class sizes, which enable the teacher to give every pupil the attention he or she requires, also have a positive impact on standards. In relation to their prior attainment most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. This is because teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, and support assistants work effectively with those pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Needs. A talented pupil achieves well as a result of the individual programme of work that is set for him. This provides appropriate challenge and helps him to widen his mathematical skills. During the inspection there were no discernible differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
88. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a confident approach to working with numbers. For example, they rapidly learn how to add and subtract numbers to ten and beyond, and to recognise odd and even numbers. The higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 recognise that multiplication is repeated addition. This is a direct consequence of teachers' skills in helping them to recognise patterns in number. Higher-attaining pupils work at a faster rate with larger numbers. There is an emphasis on the acquisition of number skills but less emphasis on applying these skills in a variety of different situations because of the stress on sums in consumable books. All pupils enjoy the quick-fire mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of each lesson because teachers help them to feel secure and willing to participate. As pupils get older some opportunities are given to ensure that, as their number skills develop, the higher-attaining pupils apply them by solving problems, calculating with money and measuring everyday objects around the school. They begin to record their results in a variety of ways, including simple diagrams and charts, which ensures that they develop all the skills specified in the National Curriculum. Year 2 pupils used information and communication technology well to estimate distances when programming the 'Roamer'.
89. In Years 3 and 4 most pupils are becoming very secure in a range of number operations, using whole numbers, simple fractions and decimals. They are encouraged to look for patterns in their number work to facilitate their mental calculations. Pupils with different abilities are encouraged to use these skills to solve a variety of problems, although lower-attaining pupils find this very difficult. Most pupils have a secure understanding of the characteristics of shapes. However, in Year 4 there were missed opportunities for the more-able pupils to use this knowledge when finding areas of irregular shapes. Throughout the school all pupils have reasonable opportunities to organise mathematical information onto charts, graphs and diagrams, especially in special projects such as 'Ourselves'. Computers are generally used well to support the subject, but in one lesson observed the

program did little to enhance either mathematical or information and communication technology skills.

90. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good across the school, and teachers value pupils' contributions. This encourages most pupils to be confident, prepared to challenge themselves and to work conscientiously, either independently or in small groups. In this way the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral and social development. However, there are a few pupils who find listening and concentrating for long periods difficult, and then lose interest, which has a negative impact on their learning. There are some occasions when lessons do not fill session times, and teachers are left with small pockets of time which are not as productive as they could be. The strengths of good teaching include secure subject knowledge, high expectations of all groups of pupils, as teachers know their pupils well, and sharing and evaluating the learning that is happening with pupils. Tasks and activities are adjusted to ensure that all pupils face achievable challenges, and good questioning encourages them to think independently. However, in some whole-class sessions the most-able pupils are insufficiently challenged as the questioning is usually directed at the middle ability range. The quality of teachers' marking in books is inconsistent. Too often errors are noted without explanation, and there are too few comments that develop pupils' mathematical ideas
91. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. However, as she is a part-time teacher, there have been no recent opportunities for her to observe teaching. Lessons are well planned in accordance with the numeracy strategy. The good assessment procedures seen at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The progress made by pupils is tracked against projected goals, so a close eye is kept on the standards that they achieve. Additional suitable resources have also been bought to support the subject. The school has sustained the strengths identified in the previous report, and the quality of teaching is more consistently good throughout the school.

SCIENCE

92. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2002 showed standards to be well above both the national average and that for similar schools; indeed they were in the top five per cent nationally. Standards seen during the inspection were above average throughout Years 1 to 4. Since the previous inspection, standards have been maintained, even though the number of pupils with special educational needs has increased significantly. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs.
93. When they find out about how their bodies work in Year 1, pupils can talk knowledgeably about the food they need to keep fit and healthy. In Year 2, pupils can already name the major organs in the body. Year 3 pupils can name parts of a skeleton and, when learning about teeth, Year 4 pupils describe their different shapes, and where they are situated in the jaw and can say what they are called. Girls and boys achieve similar standards.
94. Teaching is good, with some quality features. Lessons are productive because teachers use the newly introduced scheme of work to ensure that pupils build effectively on what they already know and can do. This scheme also provides many opportunities for pupils to be challenged to high levels of knowledge, as illustrated above. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources well to support pupils' learning. In the most successful lessons, pupils are well managed and organised so that they are fully engaged in a range of interesting and stimulating

activities; for example, watching the different functions of teeth when eating an apple. Pupils are assessed at the end of each unit of work. These assessments provide teachers with valuable information about what pupils can and cannot do, and ensure that higher-attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged.

95. Pupils learn, and use the correct vocabulary associated with each of the topics they study. They observe closely, plan and carry out simple experiments under the guidance of their teachers, and evaluate their findings. There are, however, some missed opportunities for them to develop their enquiry skills because teachers do not always identify specific learning objectives for this aspect of science in their lesson plans. This happened when an opportunity to make a prediction before starting an investigation was not introduced to Year 4 pupils. Pupils record their work in pictures, tables and text. The presentation of much of their recorded work is of a high standard and above that expected for pupils of this age.
96. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work in lessons. Most pupils have a secure understanding of the knowledge, concepts and vocabulary they have been taught. They carry out investigations with enthusiasm and enjoy the practical nature of the subject. They make good use of their ICT skills when exploring CD-ROMs that give them information about their bodies. The whole-school involvement in the 'Healthy Schools' initiative and the work that takes place during the 'Healthy Schools Week' contribute significantly to pupils' personal and social development as well as their scientific knowledge. Through work with conservationists, pupils learn about plants and animals in their immediate environment, and the conditions they need to grow well.
97. The school has environmental areas within its grounds. These include a pond and wild area, and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning in science. Pupils conduct 'mini-beast hunts' and spend time in the recently developed garden areas, which are both recreational and educational. Walks into the areas around the school, taken as a chosen 'Golden Time' activity, are undertaken with great enthusiasm. They very successfully promote pupils' observational skills.
98. Science is well led by a very committed co-ordinator, and satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has overseen the introduction of a whole-school scheme of work and the school has rightly noted the need to integrate a greater focus on the teaching of investigative skills. It has also identified correctly the need to monitor the subject more closely to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning improves further. Resources for science are good. Effective use is made of visiting specialists, and local and national initiatives are incorporated effectively to promote pupils' understanding in science.

ART AND DESIGN

99. There were very few opportunities to observe art lessons during the inspection because of timetable arrangements. However, from the abundant evidence provided by the school, standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are judged to be above national expectations. This shows an improvement since the last inspection.
100. A scrutiny of portfolios and displays indicates that work is of a high standard, with a wide range of media being used. Pupils effectively use paint, crayons, tissue paper and fabrics such as felt. There is evidence of painting on hessian, and the development of printing skills is clearly seen. Younger pupils use viewfinders in their observational drawings, making comparisons with photographs. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop skills enabling them to make Greek urns from 'papier mâché' and they

use ICT effectively, using a 'bird's eye view' of the village as a starting point for a mixed-media collage.

101. In the one lesson seen, teaching was good, and gave support to and encouragement for the development of skills. The teacher helped the pupils develop techniques relating to stencilling, building on previous knowledge. Pupils were able to practise brush techniques and organised the layout of their pattern before using fabric paints on calico. Good-quality learning was apparent as pupils responded to advice from the teacher as she interacted with them, helping to improve the outcomes of their careful work. Pupils were determined about their work and concentrated well. Those with special educational needs were slower to settle and tended to rush their work but were fully included in the activity and ultimately their results were good.
102. The weekly 'Golden Time' activities make a significant contribution to the art curriculum as well as extending pupils' learning in this subject. Pupils are anxious to choose and take part in workshops with clay, textiles and other assorted paints, papers and colourful media. They work enthusiastically and cooperatively during these times.
103. Pupils' artwork is valued and their achievements are celebrated around the school. Good cross-curricular links are forged with other subjects; for example, in mathematics when measuring the distance between 'spooky artefacts' in a window scene made from a variety of materials, and in science when making silhouettes. Pupils have been involved in a project centred on aboriginal art. This promoted their knowledge of working with clay to create three-dimensional masks and also raised their understanding of art from a different culture. An awareness of other cultures is also raised through an art display focusing on Indian culture. Pupils have had experience of working with artists in the community and this makes a very worthwhile contribution to their art experiences and the standards they achieve.
104. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The school uses the national guidelines, ensuring progression in the development of skills. There is some evidence of the use of sketchbooks to support and track learning. The co-ordinator provides support for other members of staff in their planning. The school has identified and planned for a review of the subject in the autumn term. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning and there is no formal assessment. The quality of resources is good and link well with other areas of the curriculum. For example, Renoir's still-life painting of fruit is used to support and inspire healthy eating.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons dedicated to the teaching of DT. However, an analysis of pupils' previous work, displays and discussion with the co-ordinator demonstrate that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are higher than those expected and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
106. A portfolio of work illustrates how the school has developed a format to generate designs based on criteria, methods and evaluation which can be either written or oral. A pupil in Year 2 writes, as part of his evaluation, "I would like to change the wheels and axles because the wheels are wobbly". An older pupil says, "I did not like the sleeves of my tee-shirt because the dots did not come out", following some work on tie-dyeing.

107. Although lessons for DT were not included on the timetable, there were impressive examples of pupils using their DT skills during 'Golden Time'. Pupils were observed measuring, sawing and drilling wood to make model boats. Other groups designed hats and 'friendship bracelets', illustrating well their ability to make choices about which materials to use and skills to employ. They also evaluated their work with their friends, offering supportive ideas and suggestions on how to make improvements to the initial designs.
108. Teachers show that they value pupils' work by creating good displays celebrating their achievements. Pupils' cultural awareness is raised through a DT display focusing on skills needed to make an Indian curry. Teachers show high expectation of pupils through their use of artists' work as starting points for projects. Louise Nevelson's sculpture was used effectively when pupils were challenged to design a photo frame using three-dimensional collage techniques and cutting and joining skills.
109. The co-ordinator, who is a part-time member of staff, provides some support for colleagues, but procedures for monitoring and evaluating standards in teaching and learning have not been developed sufficiently. There is no formal system for the assessment of skills, and therefore tracking of progress made and planning for the next steps in learning are underdeveloped. Resources are good and centrally stored for easy access.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Pupils' standards of attainment by the age of seven have been maintained since the time of the last report, and are in line with national expectations. The attainment of pupils in Year 4 is generally as expected for their age. There is a good emphasis on the development of geographical skills throughout the school. Pupils develop their skills well as they become older. For example, pupils in Year 1 explore their local environment and draw simple maps of the route they took, positioning in correct places the main buildings that they pass. Pupils in Year 2 use simple co-ordinates to locate position in conjunction with their work in mathematics. These early mapping skills are progressively developed, so that by the time pupils get to Year 4 they confidently use keys and interpret symbols well. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs do the same tasks as their peers and make similar progress.
111. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching in Years 2 and 4. Teachers have sound subject expertise and set interesting activities for the pupils. This ensures that pupils concentrate well and want to learn. In the most successful lessons pupils were given very good opportunities to develop their literacy skills alongside geographical skills. In Year 2, pupils were encouraged to use persuasive writing in a holiday brochure, to tell people why they should choose a Scottish island for their holiday. This activity showed that pupils had a good understanding of life on the island. In Year 4, pupils were given a planning problem to solve, where they had to make choices about which facilities to provide, with limited points available. This encouraged them to really think about the priorities needed within the new settlement. Pupils were very aware of the human needs, but some lower-attaining pupils were unable to separate their own preferences from the needs of people in an Indian village. For example, some pupils thought a cinema was a priority rather than a school. However, the discussions that arose from this activity were of a high quality, thus enhancing pupils' speaking, listening and reasoning skills.
112. Many opportunities are provided within lessons for the development of pupils' social skills through partner and group work, where they work cooperatively, supporting each

other's learning. Resources are well organised, but there is an overemphasis in some classes on the use of duplicated worksheets that often only require pupils to colour in. On these occasions there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills.

113. The subject is planned over a two-year cycle, and time is blocked with history. However, the scheme of work ensures that there is sufficient coverage of topics to ensure that skills are developed continuously. The chosen topics conform with the needs of the pyramid of schools to ensure that all pupils of the same age have the same learning opportunities. This results in a smooth transfer to the middle school. The co-ordinator for the subject is also history co-ordinator, and has spent her time supporting history rather than geography. The impact of her work on raising standards in this area of the curriculum is limited as she has had no opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. She is, however, planning to examine pupils' work to monitor standards. Assessment procedures are new and not yet used to inform curriculum planning. Geographical skills are further developed when pupils attend a residential camp.

HISTORY

114. The school's long-term planning for curriculum coverage meant that history was not taught at the time of the inspection. However, a wealth of information was gathered from teachers' planning, looking at examples of pupils' work, photographs and discussions with pupils and staff.
115. This evidence indicates that standards are above national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 4. They have improved since the time of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learnt about famous people from the past such as Florence Nightingale, whose life story they can retell in the books they write for themselves. Year 1 pupils can already make comparisons between 'then' and 'now' as they contrast the present day Durweston with the village in the past. They make good use of first-hand evidence provided by photographs and interpret well the information they find. They also make comparisons between present-day homes and what they were like in the past. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 display high levels of understanding when they interpret the information provided by a local resident who visited the school to be interviewed about his childhood and what the school was like in days gone by.
116. As no lessons were observed it is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching in this subject. However, planning and outcomes of work in pupils' books suggest that the progress made by all pupils is good because teachers have good knowledge of the development of historical skills. In Year 2, pupils produce detailed descriptions of various types of boats and ships, and how they altered over the years. Year 1 pupils take part in visits to the locality to observe and record changes over time in relation to the chestnut trees. They watch and gather information from videos to find out more about toys in the past. Year 3 pupils take part in a role-play exercise with a drama group which helps them to acquire greater awareness and understanding of the life and times of Roman Britain. Literacy skills are used well to support this subject as pupils express their opinions and write their reports. For example, in Year 4 a pupil created a news report of an event in the Second World War and wrote:

'The warning siren started at 1pm and people ran to their Anderson shelter. The terrifying sound of bombs hitting earth terrified

many people. Blonde, 12 year old ----- , a shopkeeper from London told us it was terrifying when we spoke to her earlier.'

This work was then reproduced very effectively as a newspaper item on the computer, developing the use of font size and style to add even more impact and ensuring that pupils' ICT skills are practised usefully.

117. Photographs of pupils in Years 3 and 4 taking part in visits to interesting places, such as a medieval moated manor house, show their enthusiasm and commitment. When talking to a group of pupils it was obvious how visits to interesting features of the locality motivated them. These extra activities make a significant contribution to the curriculum. They develop pupils' awareness of their own culture and help them to acquire knowledge of social issues of the past. Pupils are made even more aware about how first-hand information about events in the past can be gathered when they take part in an archaeology survey with a visiting expert. The school's determination to give pupils additional opportunities is emphasised by the number of extra-curricular events that are organised. Pupils and teachers are also beginning to make use of the Internet to access additional information about historical events.
118. History is well led by a committed co-ordinator. The improvement since the last inspection has been good. The subject has benefited from the introduction of the government-produced scheme of work. The use of these units of work has had beneficial impact on the curriculum coverage. The co-ordinator is currently gathering and building up collections of resources to provide good support material for the topics the school is following. She is also planning to develop assessment strategies within the units of work, having rightly identified this as the way forward for the subject alongside the need to monitor teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the time of the last report and are in line with national expectations at Year 2 and as expected in Year 4. The youngest pupils soon learn to use the mouse to click and drag icons around the screen, and become very aware of the sources of information around them. They also learn to accurately program a 'Roamer' to arrive at a given spot. By the age of seven, pupils use CD-ROMs to successfully access information about the skeleton and internal organs of the body to support their work in science. They effectively use the arrow keys to move from page to page. By Year 4, pupils use a variety of skills including 'cut and paste' and 'find and replace' to edit their writing, and are improving their keyboard skills. Skills are continually reinforced throughout the school through other subjects, giving pupils good opportunities to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs have the same learning opportunities as their peers and make good progress.
120. Although standards do not appear to have risen since the last inspection, there have been good improvements within aspects of the subject. The quantity of computers has grown since the last report, and these are all connected to the Internet, enabling pupils to use them as a source of reference. There is sufficient up-to-date software to support all subjects. The number of machines in classes enables all pupils to have a reasonable amount of time to practise and develop their skills. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject, and her action plan shows clearly that she is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Teaching staff have all been trained, and confidence and expertise have improved, although they are still variable. This is evident in the way some teachers use up-to-date technology very effectively to present their lessons. The scheme of work gives good structured guidelines to help

teachers with their planning, and ensures that all the elements of the subject are covered.

121. The quality of teaching has improved since the last report and is now good. Teachers use every opportunity to enhance pupils' skills through all subjects of the curriculum. For example, word-processing skills are promoted well through literacy, when pupils type in the written work, choosing a variety of colours and fonts to give a pleasing effect. Teachers use interesting activities that are well planned to enhance skills and motivate the pupils to learn. In Year 4, pupils produce a branching database very successfully, which they used to identify different organs of the body. While producing the questions much discussion took place to enable pupils to pose questions that had the answer 'Yes' or 'No'. Thus this activity promoted pupils' reasoning, speaking and listening skills well, alongside their personal and social skills. In Year 2, pupils effectively program the Roamer 'disguised' as a sheep to travel from a muddy bog to the bath for a wash. This was a good link with the class story and the work being done on direction in geography. Teachers use different methods to present their lessons, depending on their personal expertise. One teacher very effectively used a power-point presentation in a geography lesson. This captured the pupils' interest well as they were very involved in making suggestions for the text to accompany the pictures. The pupils generally show very good attitudes to their work and become thoroughly involved in the task. These positive attitudes ensure that pupils learn and achieve well.
122. The strong leadership of the subject has had a positive impact. Although there have been no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching, she has started to monitor standards through a portfolio of pupils' work, which is carefully annotated and levelled. Assessment procedures are new, but they are already being used to track pupils' progress. The school digital camera is used widely to record all kinds of school events, as well as being used by the pupils to promote their work in lessons. Younger pupils use listening centres confidently to listen to stories, enhancing their enjoyment of books before they have mastered the skills to read them. The school benefits from the services of a technician who visits the school monthly to trouble-shoot any problems.

MUSIC

123. During the inspection the organisation of the timetable meant that no lessons were observed, but evidence gathered from a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator indicates that standards achieved at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are at least satisfactory. This maintains the standards noted during the last inspection.
124. Discussion with pupils established that they enjoy music lessons, especially those that involve playing instruments. They know how to hold and play a wide variety of tuned and untuned instruments. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are able to create their own system for recording their compositions. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand notation and note value, and compose and play their compositions. They create their own tunes to accompany familiar rhymes such as 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. Year 4 pupils describe how they enjoy writing and playing their own ostinato, (a repeated pattern), using notes 'e' and 'a' to represent the sounds of raindrops.
125. Pupils sing with enthusiasm in assembly and are keen to participate. During the inspection the whole school sang a two-part welcome song and the quality was lively and tuneful. The school joins with a cluster of local schools for concerts during the

year. At Christmas there is a school performance, much appreciated by parents, that includes a wide variety of carols and songs accompanied by a range of instruments.

126. Music is taught throughout the school by a specialist teacher. She also provides planning for teachers, so that follow-up activities are linked to the lessons she teaches. The Dorset Music Service also provides workshops for the pupils on a regular basis; for example, a visit from a trio who played electronic music. The pupils spoke enthusiastically about the 'Rock Music' and recalled using music to suggest moods such as 'happy' and 'dreamy'. Some Year 4 pupils, mainly girls, learn to play the descant recorder during lunchtime, but parents do not take advantage of the opportunities on offer for pupils to learn to play an instrument.
127. The school uses nationally-produced guidelines to ensure continuity in the teaching of music skills. There is a satisfactory range of musical instruments that are kept centrally. These include some multiethnic instruments such as African drums and rain sticks. The school has a small range of CDs which are predominately western, and there is a lack of music to support other cultures. At the time of the inspection the part-time co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning and therefore her impact on the raising of standards is underdeveloped.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, one developing games skills and the other gymnastic skills, so judgements cannot be made on standards in dance. In the lessons observed, standards were as expected for the age. This was the case at the time of the last report. All the elements of the curriculum are covered, and pupils in Year 4 go swimming. Standards in swimming appear to be higher than expected, as over half the pupils have already achieved the standard expected by the end of Year 6. In Year 1, pupils are acquiring an awareness of themselves and the space around them. They move with increasing control around the floor and on apparatus. They are beginning to develop sequences of movements using long and short shapes. In Year 4, pupils are developing their throwing and catching skills, and the higher-attaining pupils are beginning to dodge effectively. They play small-group games cooperatively, with due attention to the rules.
129. In the two lessons seen teaching was satisfactory overall. Teachers have high expectations and continuously develop pupils' skills through a series of well-planned activities that became increasingly difficult. Teachers encourage pupils to show their movements, which they do willingly. However, little time is given to analysing what makes movements more successful than others so that pupils are aware of how to improve. Good opportunities are provided for the development of pupils' social and moral skills, as they are encouraged to cooperate in small groups and learn to wait patiently for their turn. However, in the gymnastics lesson there was too much time taken in queuing, which meant that pupils were inactive for too long. There are missed opportunities for pupils to further develop their personal skills, as apparatus is set out for the lesson so that pupils have no opportunities to learn how to move equipment safely.
130. The co-ordinator for the subject is a temporary teacher who has had no opportunities to have any impact on the subject. The scheme of work ensures reasonable coverage of the subject, but no monitoring has been done of teaching and learning. Resources are satisfactory. Some pupils benefit from being in the school teams when competing in the annual swimming gala and the local schools' football tournament. There are no formal assessment procedures, but teachers do continuously assess pupils' progress in lessons. The overall co-ordination of the

subject is underdeveloped as opportunities to evaluate standards and promote areas for improvement are not identified sufficiently well.