

# INSPECTION REPORT

**POWERSTOCK CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOL**

Powerstock Bridport

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113812

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Jo Ashdown

Reporting inspector: Jennie Willcock-Bates  
1967

Dates of inspection: 1-2 April 2003

Inspection number: 247210

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Powerstock Bridport
Postcode:	DT6 3TB
Telephone number:	01308 485380
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Richard Satchell
Date of previous inspection:	3 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1967	Jennie Willcock-Bates	Registered inspector	English, Art and Design, Music, English as an Additional Language.	What sort of school is it? The schools results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11575	Catherine Fish	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 its parents?
11227	John Moles	Team Inspector	Science, Physical Education, History, Information and Communication Technology, Special Educational Needs	
18083	Judith Howell	Team Inspector	Mathematics, Design and Technology, Geography, the Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Powerstock is a very small Church of England Voluntary Aided primary school in the village of Powerstock in Dorset, with 38 pupils aged 4 to 11 years. Four pupils form the Reception Year, who entered school in September, initially part-time, joined a class containing pupils from Years 1 and 2. The pupils come from a range of backgrounds from the village and surrounding farms and villages. A few children travel to the school from the town of Bridport. Consequently, the school enjoys a varied social mix. While the area is picturesque and unemployment is rare, the main industry, agriculture is in decline. There are wide variations in income, which for some families is low. No pupils are entitled to free school meals. Attainment on entry is generally average. Nearly all pupils are white British heritage, one is of Hungarian decent, and one from Black African heritage. The pupil whose mother tongue is not English is fluently bi-lingual. There is a balance of boys and girls in each year group, but in Year 6 pupils are all girls. Relatively high numbers of pupils move in and out of the school. The number of pupils identified with special educational needs or having a statement is above average. They receive support for moderate learning difficulties. The school has suffered a period of turbulence, resulting in the resignation of the headteacher and chair of governors and changes to the governing body. Currently, an acting headteacher is managing the school.

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

This is an effective school that still has room to improve because several systems and procedures are new and not yet embedded in its work. Standards are above average and achievement is good, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is effective. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good, and provides a clear educational direction to the school's work. It is a happy school where pupils enjoy their work. Pupils care greatly for each other and behaviour and relationships are very good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards are high in science and above average in English and mathematics, and pupils' achievement is good.
- Pupils learn effectively because teaching is good overall and very good in Years 3 to 6.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very successful and helps pupils forge very good relationships with staff and each other.
- Pupils' are clear about the school's expectations and their behaviour is very good and they thoroughly enjoy their work and play.
- The good leadership of the acting headteacher has increased the rate of improvement and set the school in good stead for future development.

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

- Information and communication technology does not yet systematically support learning in each classroom.
- The roles of co-ordinators are not fully developed to include the systematic monitoring and evaluation of standards, teaching and learning.
- Pupils in the Reception and Years 1 and 2 do not have enough opportunities to develop their independence in learning, and the youngest pupils have limited opportunities for role play.

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

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

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in 1997. However, improvement slowed because of significant difficulties arising from the relationships between some of the parents, governors and the headteacher. Following the resignation of the headteacher and the chair of governors, an interim chair of governors and acting headteacher have established strong leadership. The school is back on track and improvement has been more rapid since September. Standards have either risen or

been maintained in all subjects. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established. Good improvement has been made in all key issues, although further work is required in the curriculum for children in the Reception Year and in information and communication technology. Teaching remains good and there is high proportion of very good teaching in Years 3 to 6.

## STANDARDS

There are significantly fewer than ten pupils in each year group. This makes statistical comparisons of pupils' performance in national tests with other schools unreliable. For this reason, tables of performance data are not included in this report. Overall, standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and the achievement of the majority of groups of pupils, including high-attaining pupils', those with special educational needs, boys and girls and the pupil who speaks English as an additional language is good. Test results are rising at a greater rate than other schools nationally. The school is exceeding the targets set in English and mathematics, and following careful analysis of results in September, more appropriately challenging targets have been set. Attainment on entry to school is broadly average. Children's achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of the Reception Year, pupils will reach the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. Achievement slows in some aspects of their personal, social, emotional and creative development because children are not given sufficient opportunities to make choices about their work and play. Children are prepared well for the next stages of their learning.

Standards of work seen in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are average. Pupils achieve well, and by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils achieve particularly well in literacy and numeracy, and apply their skills effectively in other subjects. Standards in science are one of the schools' strengths. By the end of Year 2, standards are already above average and achievement is good throughout the school. This means that by the end of Year 6, standards are high and pupils are making good gains in their knowledge and understanding of science and the skills required to undertake fair tests. In information and communication technology, standards are average, and pupils' achievement is good because they are rapidly learning new skills and competencies. Standards in art and design, design and technology, history and geography are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory, although pupils' mapping skills in geography are not as advanced as they should be. Pupils' work shows that standards and achievement have improved significantly since September and the school is well placed for further improvements.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils are interested in and enjoy lessons and activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: the pupils strive to meet the high expectations set, and no oppressive behaviour was observed.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils develop very strong relationships among themselves and with the adults in school.
Attendance	Satisfactory: unauthorised absence is rare and authorised absence is often due to holidays in term time

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and work and play happily together. They carry out responsibilities conscientiously but they are sometimes too reliant on their teachers in lessons.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, and pupils learn effectively. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons observed, good or better in eight out of ten lessons and very good or better in four out of ten lessons. Teaching is satisfactory with some strengths in the Reception and Year 1 and 2 class. It is very good in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology and art and design. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well and pupils practise their reading, writing and number regularly in other subjects. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching English and mathematics and this captures the pupils' interest and helps them work hard. Teaching is satisfactory in history and geography, although there are weaknesses in pupils' mapping and enquiry skills. It was not possible to make a judgement about teaching in music and physical education.

Teaching meets the needs of most pupils well, whatever, their level of attainment, special educational needs, acquisition of English, social background and gender. However, there are times when the needs of children in the Reception Year are not fully met because insufficient attention is given to their independence, creative and imaginative skills in play and opportunities to learn independently of the teacher. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach pupils of this age group. They use their knowledge to effectively plan interesting work to motivate pupils to work hard. Lesson planning is very good and particularly effective at planning work for individuals and groups of pupils of different ages and levels of attainment in each class. Teachers ask well timed and probing questions to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. They manage the pupils very well. Teaching assistants and the nursery nurse work effectively with the teachers. They support the pupils effectively, enabling them to be confident.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory: strengths in English, mathematics and science, but weaknesses in the development of historical and geographical skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: pupils benefit from work that is specifically planned for them. They are well supported in lessons and the small withdrawal group.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: support for reading and writing is beneficial and work is planned in all subjects to improve the pupil's understanding of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good: the provision for moral and social development is very good and it is good for spiritual and cultural development and based on a strong Christian ethos. The school is helping pupils to understand and appreciate the different cultural traditions in society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: the teachers know the pupils well, and child protection procedures are good. Pupils are happy and safe in the school.

The curriculum is broadly balanced. Information communication technology is effectively taught, and is increasingly being used to support learning in other subjects. Considering the small size of the school a good range of activities take place outside lessons. Pupils' academic and personal development is carefully monitored, and assessment is good. The systems for tracking achievement and setting targets are new, and are already providing helpful information for planning and boosting achievement. The school has good links with parents, and several are involved in helping with different activities.



### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory and improving: the acting headteacher provides good leadership and teachers are beginning to fulfil their roles effectively. This has a positive impact on standards and achievement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory: governors are beginning to work together effectively and play an active part in overseeing the performance of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory: the acting headteacher carefully monitors teaching, planning and pupils' work. These are not yet secure features of the roles of other co-ordinators.
The strategic use of resources	Good: the school is efficient and effective at using available resources to improve pupils' achievement and teaching and learning.

The school has a good number of experienced and well-trained staff. Resources are good, and particularly good in information and communication technology. The accommodation is of a good size, but local facilities have to be used because of the lack of a hall and a level playing field. The governors and teachers are continually seeking ways of promoting racial harmony, and fully include all groups of pupils in all its work. The school is efficient, and constantly seeks ways of getting best value out of its resources.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is very approachable and their children like going there.</li> <li>• The good teaching and the high expectations set for their children.</li> <li>• The good behaviour.</li> <li>• The good information they receive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very small number of parents are very unhappy with the current leadership and management.</li> </ul>

Inspectors fully endorse the positive comments made by parents. Pupils enjoy their lessons and their behaviour is very good. Inspectors found that leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good and she has been instrumental in managing the rapid improvements since September.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Overall, standards of work seen are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is good. This is mainly because teaching is good. In Years 3 to 6, teachers plan challenging work to meet the needs of all pupils, enabling them to make good gains in their learning. There have been changes in the school that have resulted in a rise of standards since the previous inspection. A new acting headteacher has focused her efforts on improving planning and teaching in literacy and numeracy by supporting the full implementation and successful adaptation of the national strategies. Over the last one and half terms, improvement has significantly accelerated and pupils' achievement has become more rapid. Effective systems are now in place to analyse and track pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science, although these are still at an early stage of development and it is too early to judge their full impact on standards. However, this helps the school set and re-adjust appropriately challenging targets based on a realistic judgement about pupils' current performances in tests and assessments.

2. Attainment on entry varies from year to year and is currently average. Some pupils' attainment is above average when they enter school and their achievement is rapid. While the attainment of others is below average, they are learning at a slower rate because they find it hard to sit and listen. Their achievement is satisfactory, although it sometimes slows because children have insufficient opportunities to make choices about their work and play. Children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for children at the end of the Reception Year in personal, social and emotionally development, in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical development, in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development.

3. Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is good and standards are above average. With very small numbers taking the tests, an analysis of results and comparisons with similar schools do not always paint a reliable picture of standards and achievement. The main reason for this is that each pupil's results represent a high percentage of the results in both Year 2 and Year 6. Some pupils had special educational needs that affected their performance in the tests. However, the school's results in English, mathematics and science are rising at a greater rate than all other schools. The school's own data shows that pupils' achievement has been good since September when records became more systematically analysed.

4. The teachers have worked successfully to improve teaching and learning in English. This has resulted in good achievement because pupils are effectively learning and applying the strategies they have been taught in reading and writing. The basic skills of literacy are taught well, particularly in writing, which has been the focus of recent development. Skilful questioning promotes speaking and listening effectively, and by Year 2, pupils listen attentively and talk confidently. Good achievement in Years 3 to 6 means that pupils successfully develop a broad range of vocabulary. Achievement in reading is good. Pupils are confident readers in Year 2, using the effective strategies they have been taught such as the sounds of letters to read unfamiliar words. By the end of year 6, good achievement enables pupils to read a broad range of texts with increasing confidence. They can find and make use of information from a range of sources such as the Internet, reference books and CD ROMs. School records show good achievement in writing since September 2002. In Year 2, pupils are developing good skills in imaginative writing. While their handwriting is generally neat, they

do not join their letters, which slows the development of their own personal styles in Years 3 to 6. Achievement accelerates in Years 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6, pupils use paragraphs, interesting language and good structure to their poems, accounts and stories. There are good examples of pupils practising their reading and writing skills in other subjects such as science and design and technology. Writing is not always as neat as it could be and this leads to careless mistakes in punctuation and spelling.

5. Standards in mathematics are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Achievement is good because teaching is successful. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and pupils are developing a secure knowledge of addition and subtraction, place value, shape, space and measurement. They have a sound grasp of mathematical language to describe their solutions to number problems. At times, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding and carry out their own personal investigations. Teaching is often very good in Years 3 to 6 and leads to good achievement. Most pupils in year 6 have a good grasp of number and algebra. They have quick recall when solving problems mentally. They are beginning to apply their knowledge and skills to checking their answers by using the inverse operation, for example in multiplication and division. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are successfully applying their knowledge of percentages to work related to sale reductions and are confidently converting pounds to euros when comparing the prices of reduced holidays in Europe.

6. Standards in science are one of the school's strengths. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average because concepts such as life cycles are taught well. They competently use a microscope linked to the computer to observe and explain the early stages of the development of the tadpole. This work provides a good foundation for further development, and achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils consolidate and extend their knowledge and understanding and by the end of Year 6 their attainment is above average. Pupils carry out sophisticated investigations into sound proofing using sound sensors linked to the computer to gather test data. They have a good understanding of what makes a test fair. They confidently analyse test data making sensible decisions to gather data in two forms to check their findings. When testing insulation using temperature sensors, pupils quickly came to the conclusion that if they want to compare findings in helpful ways each group must use the same criteria. Very good and sometimes excellent teaching in Years 3 to 6, extends and challenges pupils' understanding, enabling them to confidently try out new ideas and apply the skills they have learned.

7. The development of information and communication technology has been the focus of the school's recent improvement programme. Teachers are using their newly gained knowledge to extend the pupils' learning effectively. Standards have risen and are now in line with the standards expected for this age group at the end of Year 2 and 6. Pupils are learning new things rapidly and are achieving well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are competent using the key board and mouse to control the computer. They use computers for a range of purposes and can enter text, draw pictures to illustrate work and use peripherals such as a microscope in science. Achievement is good and pupils in Years 3 to 6 use computers with increasing competence. They create and analyse graphs of questionnaires, use sensors to measure sound and temperature and use control technology when analysing the angles of turns and shapes. Pupils in Year 6 use the Internet for research in history and geography.

8. Pupils attain average standards in art and design and design and technology at the end of Year 2 and 6. Pupils are achieving well and consolidating their skills at collage and paint in art. In design and technology, achievement has become more rapid since September and pupils' are thoughtfully evaluating their models and making alterations after rigorous testing. In history and geography, standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, pupils are beginning to understand that the actions of people in history may

be viewed differently by others and accounts of events may also be different. Following an analysis of his reign, they understand the impact that Henry VIII had on history. In geography throughout the school, pupils have a sound understanding of the key features of the locality following interviews with local people. They understand development in the wider world through studies of Ghana and India. However, their skills in mapping are not as advanced as they should be. It was not possible to judge standards in physical education because only one lesson was observed and music because no lessons took place during the short time of the inspection.

9. Standards are generally higher and results have improved since the previous inspection in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology. Improvement has been particularly marked since September 2002 when these subjects were made priorities for development. In art and design, design and technology, history and geography the satisfactory standards have been maintained. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as the other pupils because they are supported well when they are in Years 1 and 2 and very well, particularly in literacy, when they are in Years 3 to 6. High-attaining pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and more rapid in Years 3 to 6 because work is frequently planned to extend their learning.

10. Previously, while results and pupils' progress were recorded, there was limited analysis of why the results and assessments were as they were. Teachers were rarely involved in analysis and target setting. Since September, the acting headteacher and teachers have analysed results, comparing them with pupils' performance in assessments and non-statutory tests. The achievements of boys and girls are now carefully tracked particularly where there are so few in any one year group. Test papers are now examined to see what pupils get frequently wrong. Information is now used to set targets for individuals, and these are discussed with parents. Local and national data are used to set realistically challenging targets for year groups and teachers. Predictions are made about pupils' possible achievement and how it can be enhanced. The governors, teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistants have a better idea of what to do to raise standards and improve achievement. While this process is at an early stage of development, the school is well placed to make further improvements.

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

11. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, and reflects the improvement in provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has worked hard to establish a very positive ethos in which the pupils can learn.

12. The pupils enjoy coming to school, and are enthusiastic about being involved in all that the school offers. They come in willingly and settle quickly to the daily routine. They are friendly and welcoming. The pupils' attitudes to their lessons are very good overall and particularly in Years 3 to 6. These attitudes make a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning and achievement. The pupils are very interested and involved in their work. They thoroughly enjoy the tasks set and concentrate effectively, often for a long time. A good example of this was in a Year 4 information and communication technology lesson when the pupils' attention was keenly directed to assembling and entering instructions on the computer. Significant levels of concentration were reflected in the high levels of effort and keenness. In the Reception and Years 1 and 2 class, pupils worked very hard to control a bat and ball in physical education. The very young pupils happily concentrated and were delighted when they hit the ball more than five times. In lessons generally, the pupils share resources sensibly and co-operate effectively with each other and the staff. They listen very attentively to each other, showing good levels of respect for the ideas and values of others. The very

positive attitudes extend to other activities during and after school. For example, in an assembly, a group of pupils really enjoyed being involved in acting the story of Jesus healing the crippled woman. In addition, many pupils attend the good range of activities organised after school.

13. Behaviour is very good. The pupils are aware of the high expectations of behaviour set by the staff and strive to meet them. In lessons, behaviour is never less than good, and playtimes are seen as enjoyable and fun with everyone getting along with each other very well. There are a very few pupils who have difficulty controlling their behaviour. They are sensitively managed by the staff, and consequently their behaviour does not affect the learning of others. There have been no exclusions over the last year. No oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, racist or sexist comments, was observed, and the school and parents agree that bullying is rare. Very occasionally, a matter is brought to the attention of the school and is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Similarly, some pupils do not fully appreciate the effect that their actions may have on others, but when this is pointed out to them, they are suitably remorseful.

14. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The staff treat pupils with courtesy and respect. There is a very caring family atmosphere that helps to promote these very good relationships. The pupils mix very well together across the whole age range and there is a clear sense of the importance of including all pupils in work and play; no one is left out for any reason. Older pupils take care of younger pupils and there is genuine support shown to others in school. For example, they help when another child is hurt or unhappy. In one art lesson, pupils supported each other very well, sharing materials and helping to hold paper bands while they were being stapled.

15. The pupils' personal development is very good overall. The school works hard and generally successfully to help pupils be responsible and use their initiative. They willingly undertake school and classroom responsibilities, and fulfil them well. Older pupils always escort the youngest class back to their base after assembly or break time. While the school does not yet provide a formal forum to take pupils' views into account, such as a school council, it has recently undertaken a survey of their feelings about the school through a questionnaire. The results show that the pupils enjoy coming to school and being with their friends, although they would prefer less homework and no school uniform. The pupils sometimes show initiative. For example, in a science lesson they moved the science experiment that was dependant on accurate recording of changes in temperature out of the sun. The pupils in Year 6 organised a recent fund raising event for Red Nose Day. However, in lessons, the pupils are generally too reliant upon teacher direction and support.

16. Attendance is satisfactory. The level of unauthorised absence is very low. A significant amount of the authorised absence is due to parents taking their children on holiday during the school term. The pupils usually arrive at school on time, enabling the school day to start smoothly and promptly.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn effectively. Teaching has a significant impact on pupils' learning and achievement. It was satisfactory or better in all the lessons observed, good or better in eight out of ten lessons and very good or better in four out of ten lessons. The proportion of good and very good teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

18. Teaching is satisfactory with some strengths in the Reception Year and children learn appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to be confident and this helps them to acquire new skills

and work happily in the classrooms. There are strengths in the good-quality activities planned to help the children develop their language and literacy skills. As a result, pupils are learning letter sounds at a good rate and are willing to 'have a go' at reading and writing. Direct teaching is good and the teacher skilfully includes them in lessons in the mixed-age class. Work is successfully planned to capture their short concentration spans and this enables them to work hard and make gains in their learning. Sometimes too much is planned for them and adults intervene and help them too much. This means that important learning opportunities for children to develop their independence and use their imaginations are missed. This limits their personal, social and emotional and creative development.

19. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6. The needs of the different ages and levels of attainment in each class are met effectively. As a result, all the different groups of pupils achieve well as they progress through the school and their skills, knowledge and understanding are systematically developed in Years 3 to 6. However, there are weaknesses in pupils' skills in mapping in geographical and historical enquiry. In science, teaching is very good and one of the school's strengths. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology and art and design. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well in English and mathematics lessons and in other subjects. This enables pupils to practise their reading and writing regularly. For example, there are good examples of report writing in science, design and technology, history and geography. Pupils carefully measure and calculate in science and technology, successfully using their numeracy skills. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching English and mathematics and this captures the pupils' interest and helps them work hard. Teaching is satisfactory in history and geography. Too few lessons took place during the short time of the inspection to make a judgement about teaching in music and physical education.

20. Teaching meets the needs of most pupils well, whatever, their level of attainment, special educational needs, acquisition of English, social background and gender. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and their interest in the work they undertake. There are times when the needs of children in the Reception Year are not fully met because insufficient attention is given to their independence, creative and imaginative skills in play and learning independently of the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because there are a good number of teaching assistants in the classrooms to provide support, and teachers plan well for pupils to be supported. Pupils' individual education plans contain clear targets that are used to plan work to meet their needs. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also benefit from a very good programme of specific literacy support. The pupil whose mother tongue is not English receives effective support for written English, learns effectively and is fluently bi-lingual. Teachers work hard to provide challenge to keep gifted writers and mathematicians enthusiastic and motivated. At times, work is not planned to extend the learning of pupils, particularly high-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2.

21. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach pupils of this age group. They use their knowledge to effectively plan interesting work to motivate pupils to work hard. They have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There have been significant improvements to teachers' knowledge in information and communication technology and they are being trained to a good level. They are enthusiastic and using their newly gained knowledge sensibly to develop the areas they have been trained in. Pupils are learning well because of the new confidence of teachers. The greater use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning means that pupils are keen and confident to use it in their work. However, it is not yet systematically planned to support learning in other subjects and further development is required. Teachers are committed to improving and extending the provision.

22. Lesson planning has improved and is now very good. Teachers are particularly effective at planning work for individuals and groups of pupils of different ages and levels of attainment in each class. Because teachers are clear about the objectives of lessons, pupils have a good understanding of what they are learning. Pupils work hard intellectually, physically and creatively because work is carefully planned to challenge them. Skilful management of activities means that lessons successfully extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers work hard to motivate the pupils with interesting activities. A good example of this was in a mathematics lesson in Years 3 and 4 when the teacher challenged the children to multiplying two-digit numbers by doubling and by breaking them down into smaller workable units such as  $12 \times 14 = 14 \times 10 = 140 + \text{double } 10 = 160 + \text{double } 4 = 168$ . The pupils gradually began to understand the strategy and were very proud of their successes. When teaching is most successful, a broad range of methods are used that stimulate pupils' intellectual and creative effort. For example, in an English lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher presented the pupils with a range of information about a murder that fired the pupils' imaginations. They grappled with the conflicting evidence to get clues as to who the murderer was and were very reluctant to stop at the end of the lesson. In the Reception Year, the teacher skilfully used a tape recorder to record their ideas enabling them to be well prepared to take full part in the lesson about poems by Michael Rosen. However, sometimes pupils in Years 1 and 2 are too reliant on their teacher and are not as independent in their learning as they could be.

23. Teachers ask well timed and probing questions, and intervene in pupils' learning just at the right time to help to correct misconceptions and extend their knowledge and understanding. This very good use of questioning makes pupils think and helps them to formulate their own questions as well as answer questions to help teachers to understand what they have learned. For example in Years 3 to 6 in science, teachers encourage lively debate to ensure that pupils are challenging the results of their investigations. Pupils are beginning to understand what they need to learn through opportunities to evaluate and assess their own learning. This is particularly successful in Years 3 to 6 because teachers discuss the criteria they will be using to mark and assess their work. Lessons are usually lively and time is used effectively, but sometimes the teachers' input takes too long and leaves limited time for pupils to undertake their practical work. Resources effectively support learning and in Years 3 and 4 the white board that interacts with the computer is enhancing lessons. This is having a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

24. Teachers manage the pupils very well. Their expectations of pupils' behaviour are high, and they expect to be listened to. Relationships are very good and teachers value the contributions pupils make. This means that lessons run smoothly and teachers can concentrate on teaching. In addition, interesting and at times innovative activities maintain pupils' interest and sustain the very good behaviour. Teachers carefully assess pupils' learning and know what they need to learn next. Homework is well organised and used effectively to support learning in lessons. Teaching continues to improve because teachers are increasingly evaluating their strengths and weaknesses through discussion and targets set with the acting headteacher. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6, enabling pupils to learn new things in a range of imaginative ways that capture their interest.

25. Teaching assistants and the nursery nurse work effectively with the teachers and fulfil a range of functions. They are very well respected by the pupils, who enjoy working with them. Very good relationships between the teaching assistants and the nursery nurse and pupils enable them to provide good support for the pupils. The support for pupils with special educational needs is sensitive and effective, enabling pupils to be independent and confident.

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

26. The quality of curricular and other learning opportunities is satisfactory with significant strengths and prepares the pupils well for the next stages of learning. This is because an appropriate statutory curriculum is in place that is broadly balanced and relevant to the needs of most pupils and includes provision for a daily act of collective worship. This is an improvement on the judgement made at the last inspection when information and communication technology did not meet requirements. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. In the previous inspection, it was said that there was some under-emphasis of aspects of design and technology, art and geography. Since then, there has been a good improvement in the provision for art and design and design and technology. However, in geography and history there is a weakness in the development of pupils' skills. There are clearly strengths in the curriculum, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

27. There has been a significant improvement in the planned curriculum for children in the reception year, which at the time of the last inspection was a key issue. It is now based on the six areas of learning in the Early Learning Goals. While some of the learning opportunities are exciting and engage the children's interest and promote achievement, other aspects such as opportunities to become independent learners and make choices for themselves are limited.

28. The strong emphasis on English, mathematics and science means that the learning needs of all pupils are met well. The curriculum is suitably modified to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and the provision is good. They are given as many opportunities as other pupils to be involved in all areas of the curriculum and benefit from appropriate targets carefully constructed in the individual education plans. The provision to enhance the reading and writing skills of the pupil whose mother tongue is not English is good. Provision for high-attaining pupils is satisfactory with suitable work planned to boost their attainment.

29. The curriculum is reasonably broad and the school benefits from some joint activities, including music and sports with other similar small schools. The curriculum is balanced because time allocations for most subjects are generally appropriate. In addition, the school sensibly operates a rolling programme of work to account for the different age range in each class. However, not enough time is spent on teaching the skills associated with history and geography to enable pupils to enhance their learning. The provision for literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers use effective strategies to teach English and mathematics in many subjects. The use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning is developing appropriately, but has yet to become firmly established in all classes.

30. Planning has improved and effective use is made of the nationally recommended schemes of work to successfully plan for the broad range of year groups in each class. The two-year rolling programme of study in Class 1 and four-year rolling programme in Classes 2 and 3 is carefully planned to cater for the mixed age classes and provides teachers with an overview of what they should be teaching and when. In Class 1, the teacher's detailed planning has been carefully adapted to take account of the small group of children in the Reception Year as well as those pupils in Years 1 and 2.

31. Considering the size of the school, there is a good range of extra-curricular activities outside lessons. The successful range of after-school activities are well attended and enjoyed by the pupils. These include sporting events such as football, netball athletics and handball. Pupils also have the opportunity to attend clubs for art, gardening and cookery. This



provision makes a successful contribution to pupils' personal development. Educational visits support pupils' social education well. In the last year, pupils have visited such places as Millfield, Street to watch the performance of Scrooge; Bridport Light Festival and the Sutton Bingham Water treatment plant as part of their geography studies.

32. All teaching and non-teaching staff work hard to make sure that all boys and girls have equal opportunities and full access to the curriculum. As a result, the provision for most groups of pupils is good and they are achieving well. The careful planning ensures that whatever the pupils' attainment, they are fully involved in all activities.

33. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. This area is provided for through science topics such 'Healthy Eating' and 'Living and Growing' and through the school's religious education programme. The ideas that underpin the curriculum are often emphasised in other lessons and reflected in the very good relationships in the school. Pupils have experienced a variety of visits and visitors to the school, which effectively supports their personal, social and health education. For instance, a visit to the school by the Life Education Van introduced the younger pupils to healthy eating, while the older pupils learnt about issues such as drugs, alcohol and their feelings. Older pupils have also visited 'Streetwise' in Bournemouth. A parent governor who is a nurse visits to support the younger pupils and talk about her job. Members from the St John's Ambulance Brigade have also visited to work with the pupils. The school has a suitable policy for sex education and has plans to adopt the new nationally recommended guidelines for drug and alcohol abuse.

34. Effective links with the community make a good contribution to pupils' learning through visits to support work in school and the involvement of members of the community who come into school to support teachers and pupils in their work. For example, pupils enjoyed visits to a local catering business and an organic farm to support their learning in science and design and technology. Good use is made of the local church and the immediate environment for studies in history and geography. Good relationships with the local schools group enhance the pupils' experiences and enable them to work with larger groups of pupils within their age group. For example, older pupils have taken part in a science project looking at food production in different parts of the world. This involved them working with pupils from other schools and teachers from the science department at the local comprehensive school. During their final year at school, the pupils have a number of opportunities to visit the secondary schools they will transfer to, meet the teachers and familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. This prepares them well for the next stages of learning.

35. Provision for pupils who have special educational need is good. Pupils benefit well from the high proportion of teaching assistants in the classrooms and from the special educational needs support assistant who, in addition to classroom support, also gives particular support for a group of pupils in a literacy withdrawal group. This particular group is highly effective in supporting pupils' personal, social and academic development in literacy and is run under the direct supervision of a class based special educational needs teacher on two days each week. The literacy hour is appropriately followed in these sessions and the individual support is at such a high level that the pupils are ensured a fully inclusive literacy programme. They make progress that is equal to that of the other pupils in their year groups. Good quality individual education and personal education plans are in place. Targets are clearly defined and the needs of pupils with particular needs are met very effectively. The provision meets, and exceeds, its statutory obligations.

36. Overall, the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and one of the school's strengths. This marks a good improvement since the previous inspection and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social education and to relationships within the school.

40. The provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect well on human experiences. For example, pupils discussed what it must have been like to be a physically disabled person in the time of Jesus, and commented on the extent to which attitudes have changed since that time. In science, pupils are encouraged to express wonder at the living world showing excitement as tadpoles gradually begin to develop into frogs. In art and literacy, pupils are given many opportunities to think creatively and use their imagination. They are excited by exploring the use of descriptive language as they seek to explain how a small creature may feel while travelling through a wood or garden. When carefully making a model of a small creature in clay pupils are encouraged to appreciate its vulnerability in the miniature environment they have created. The spiritual values the school promotes are underpinned by the Christian symbols such as the cross and candle in the school as well as the clear acknowledgement of the practices of other faiths and their calendars of worship. While pupils appreciate the importance of prayer in assembly, there are few opportunities for pupils to reflect quietly on daily local and national events.

41. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and founded in the strong system of school and class rules. These rules are consistently applied by staff and fully understood by pupils. Very good systems are in place for supporting pupils with behavioural difficulties and a high level of care and concern for the individual pervades school life. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and have a good understanding of the need for rules to promote an orderly community. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to listen carefully to and appreciate opinions other than their own. Pupils consider such moral issues as whether Henry VIII was a good king. They have planned opportunities to debate care for the environment and the moral issues facing people living in different parts of the world. They are taught about the part people such as Nelson Mandela or Florence Nightingale have played in changing people's attitudes and that people in Britain, such as Stephen Lawrence, have suffered from racism.

42. The promotion of pupils' social development is very good because staff successfully promote equal rights and responsibilities throughout the school. There is a strong sense of community and ownership, reflected in the way pupils are proud of their school. They enthusiastically seize the opportunities given to them to exercise personal responsibility. For example, older pupils sensibly escort younger pupils from the main school building to their classroom across the playground. Teachers plan very effective opportunities for pupils to work together in lessons. Good examples of this are found in science when discussing how to carry out a fair test, understanding that they must all agree on which variables they must change if results are to be comparable. Pupils share computers and other equipment safely and sensibly and when given the opportunity they learn to be independent.

43. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture is very good. They are developing an increasing awareness of other cultures through study of other religions in religious education lessons and cultures in geography. A very good range of books is available that not only give them an insight into stories and traditions in other cultures and faiths, but also into people who have had a significant impact on the lives of other people in different parts of the world. The school has been closely involved in a project with a village school in Ghana and has received and entertained representatives from that village and has been associated with a recent visit to Ghana by people from their own village. The teachers seize every opportunity to help pupils understand the richness and diversity of cultural traditions and combat racism in the village of Powerstock.

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

44. The school cares well for its pupils. Almost all parents state that their children are happy in school and feel safe within the school environment. The positive picture at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. The school works hard to create a calm, welcoming and caring environment for the pupils in which they can work and learn. This is a successful aspect of the provision. Consequently, the pupils are developing very good attitudes to their lessons, and to school life because of the purposeful ethos. The pupils are well known to all the staff and know that they are willing to help them.

45. The school takes good care of its pupils. Good attention is paid to their safety, health and welfare. All accidents are attended to quickly, and records are kept as necessary. An assessment of risks is undertaken, and clear guidelines are given for trips, such as the walk to the local church. Safety checks are made on apparatus, appliances and equipment as directed. Child protection is taken very seriously and procedures are good. The acting headteacher, the designated child protection officer, has had appropriate training and previous experience. The school now has a policy that is due to be ratified by the governors; the lack of this policy was a criticism in the last report. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day.

46. The school has very good procedures for promoting good behaviour. The new policy has not yet been shared with parents, but the principles and procedures are already known by the pupils and in use. They result in the very good behaviour in and out of lessons. Similarly, there are very good procedures to tackle any form of harassment. The pupils are encouraged to take any concerns to a member of staff, where they are dealt with swiftly.

47. The school has satisfactory procedures to encourage good attendance. The main reason for absences is the taking of holidays during the school term. Because of the small number of pupils in school, the reason for any absence is generally quickly established and the reason identified correctly in the register. However, attendance is not yet analysed to identify any trends.

48. Although personal development is not formally monitored, discussions with staff during the inspection and the written reports to parents indicate that the teachers know pupils well both academically and personally. Their personal development is successfully fostered through the school's strong and positive ethos. The ethos effectively promotes a family atmosphere and very good relationships between all pupils across the whole age range. The school's personal, social and health education policy supports personal development well.

49. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and their academic progress are good. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. Since then, the school has successfully refined the systems. Particularly effective procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and achievement in English and mathematics. Pupils' levels of attainment are recorded regularly and this is helping teachers to set challenging targets for the future. Assessment procedures for children in the Reception Year are good and include on-going observations for each area of learning carried out by the class teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistant. The teacher has already introduced the nationally recommended profile record system and is using this to track the progress of individual children during their time in the reception year. This in turn means, that by the end of the year, the teacher will be sufficiently well informed to make an accurate assessment of each child's attainment.

50. In the intervening period between the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 the school routinely carries out reading, spelling and mathematics tests and uses these to analyse attainment levels and evidence of progress. In Year 4, the non-statutory tests in English and mathematics provide predictions about the levels pupils are expected to achieve in the

following year. This is used to set appropriately challenging targets for the end of Year 6. Careful analysis of the results of the national tests for Years 2 and 6 has led the school to identify weak areas and those that require emphasis. In science, end of unit assessment tasks are set and in all other subjects of the curriculum a sound range of procedures are carefully based on the assessment system of the national curricular guidelines and linked to teachers' weekly planning. During the last academic year, the acting headteacher has worked hard to define procedures, make them manageable, and integrate assessment within the curriculum plans.

51. The use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is good, and is developing effectively. The process has been improved since the previous inspection, and the evidence collected now provides a more precise insight into the development of each pupil. Consequently, teachers can plan activities that meet individual needs in literacy and numeracy. For example, to monitor the attainment and progress in writing, the pupils complete one piece of unaided work each term. Each child also has a portfolio into which pieces of work in literacy, numeracy, science, information and communication technology and religious education, annotated to show the level of attainment, are stored. Termly targets are set to boost pupils' attainment from this information. These are recorded in teachers' files, displayed in classrooms and discussed with parents. In science end of unit assessments are set and marked with the pupils.

52. A useful system for tracking pupils' achievement and support, the process of target setting across the school for reading, writing and mathematics has been introduced by the acting headteacher. Although this enables teachers to track pupils' all round achievement and to check whether they are on target, the system is still comparatively new and has yet to become fully effective and embedded in the whole-school assessment and recording procedures.

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

53. The school has established a good partnership with parents, and has the confidence of all groups in the community, which enhances the children's education. There are improvements in the partnership with its parents since the last inspection. Recent troubles that compromised the good links have been rectified and the parents' views about the school are good. A high proportion responded to the questionnaire before the inspection, expressing positive views. Parents particularly feel that the school is approachable, and that their children like attending. This was confirmed during the inspection. They are also very appreciative of the good teaching, the expectations set for their children and the quality of the information they receive. The inspection findings fully endorse these views. No major concerns were raised by the parents, although a very small number are not happy with the way the school works with parents and the leadership and management of the school. However, this was outweighed by the high proportion that is very happy with it. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the leadership of the acting headteacher is good, and has been significant in achieving the rapid improvements since September.

54. One reason the parents have confidence in the school is the very good quality of information they receive. Very helpful details of what the children will be learning each term is provided for parents. They are kept very well informed about their children's progress through high quality annual reports, supported by the results of both statutory and optional tests. Written information is effectively supported by well attended termly discussions. Parents particularly like the opportunity to discuss the targets set for their children with the teacher and the fact that they are given a copy of the targets. Other information, including fortnightly newsletters and a web site, is provided and found to be both informative and relevant. Informal meetings between parents and staff generally occur at the end of the day. Despite

her teaching commitment, the acting headteacher tries always to be available before school to talk to parents.

55. The school works hard to develop and maintain a good working relationship between home and school and in most cases it is very successful. The school enjoys the confidence of nearly all parents. Parents make a good contribution to the school and this has a positive impact on their children's learning. Most parents support their children's homework – an unusually high percentage of responses to the questionnaire indicated that the amount of homework is about right. All parents have signed the home to school agreement. The school makes good use of its parents' expertise, such as in music, cooking and drama. Of particular note is the fact that some parents have undertaken specific training to enable them to support the school, for example with swimming. The Powerstock School Association organises fund raising and social events that raise useful sums of money to support the school in its work.

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

56. Overall the leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. Consequently, there are developing strengths in the roles of co-ordinators that are beginning to have a positive impact on the standards, the quality of teaching and school improvement. The good management identified by the previous inspection was compromised by a turbulent period of time over the last year. Relationships became unstable, which compromised the work of the governing body and the headteacher. Improvement slowed and systems and policies were not put in place as required. Consequently, the governors were not as well informed as they should have been and were not able to fulfil their responsibilities to the full. Following the resignation of the headteacher and the chair of governors the current acting headteacher took over temporary charge of the school and an experienced interim chair of governors was appointed to re-establish working relationships. The infectious optimism and enthusiasm of the acting headteacher has enabled her to gain the confidence of the governing body, the vast majority of the parents, pupils, the small village community and the local education authority. The leadership now shows a clear educational direction and drive for school improvement and the school is back on track. The school is now well placed for the substantive headteacher to be appointed.

57. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good and she manages the school effectively. She provides strong and positive leadership and has initiated significant improvements since September 2002 in pulling the school together as a cohesive and developing unit. The leadership has a clear purpose and educational direction that is focused on raising standards and improving teaching and learning within a well organised outward-looking school. The strong emphasis on raising standards has led to the successful implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and significant developments in the curriculum and the use of information and communication technology. This is largely due to the support of the acting headteacher and the local authority. In addition, the governors, acting headteacher and staff are now working effectively together for the good of the pupils. They know what has to be done to improve because the leadership inspires a clear educational direction. All governors and teachers are now fully involved in decision making and increasingly involved in evaluation.

58. A strong sense of teamwork is emerging and the small teaching team has a determined commitment to succeed. This means that there is a strong and positive ethos and staff morale is increasing as teachers master new roles and responsibilities. The aims are clearly reflected in the life of the school, which is based on appropriate Christian beliefs and values. However, the aims are in need of updating under the substantive headteacher. All staff value the contributions pupils make, whatever their gender, social background, level of

attainment, and special educational needs. Achievement is celebrated and all groups of pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life.

59. The governing body now fulfils its statutory responsibilities and is beginning to account for the performance and improvement of the school. Their involvement in the work of the school has increased significantly since the appointments of the acting headteacher and a new chair to the governing body. Some governors are new and the governing body has been re-formed under a very experienced and effective interim chair of governors. The governing body meets regularly and has an appropriate structure that includes committees for staffing, finance, the environment, appeals and the curriculum. A helpful leaflet setting out the roles and powers of these committees has been produced. Governors are beginning to work together effectively and support school development more actively than they have been able to in the past. They are supportive and a pattern of regular visits is emerging that includes classroom observations, and looking at pupils' work. This means that through discussion with staff and reports from the acting headteacher the governors are beginning to know the school's strengths and weaknesses.

60. The management of special educational needs is effective. The teacher for special educational needs is effectively supported by the headteacher. In addition to her weekly teaching commitment of the pupils with special educational needs, she supervises the work of the special educational needs support assistant. Individual education plans are effectively managed and pupils' progress is carefully monitored. The needs of the pupil with a statement of special needs is successfully monitored and implemented. Pupils are successfully included in all aspects of school life.

61. The leadership and management of key staff are satisfactory. The small team carry a range of responsibilities and their roles have been re-defined to enable them to be more actively involved in school improvement. The appropriate emphasis has been on improving English, mathematics, science, design and technology and information and communication technology. Most co-ordinators are still establishing their roles in a coherent way. Some subjects such as history and physical education are appropriately jointly co-ordinated by the staff. While they have not been the focus of the school improvement plan, communication between staff has much improved thus enabling development to be appropriate.

62. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are satisfactory and improving effectively. The development of teaching has been good and the acting headteacher has a successful strategy for support and development of staff. Management is generally good and teachers are given valuable time to develop their skills as teachers and co-ordinators. The acting headteacher carefully monitors teaching, planning and pupils' work. She fulfils the role of mathematics co-ordinator very well, providing a very effective role model for other co-ordinators. The information is used to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils, teachers and the school as a whole. A good example of this was the discovery that the standard of writing was not as strong as it should be, and this led to an intensive evaluation and improvement to the way writing was taught throughout the school. Other co-ordinators have time set aside for them to carry out their duties and they are monitoring and evaluating some aspects of planning and pupils' work. They are not yet observing each other, but appropriate plans are in place for them to receive training and develop this aspect of their work. Information from evaluation successfully informs the school improvement and development plan. Consequently, governors and staff are now fully involved in decisions about improvement. The current plan is an effective tool for management and change.

63. The school has a good number of well-trained and experienced staff who meet the needs of the curriculum and work for the good of the pupils. The teachers' knowledge and understanding is well used and their individual skills effectively enhance the pupils'

achievements. The school uses the specialist skills of teachers' well to support the teaching and learning of such subjects as design and technology and music. Overall, staff development is well organised and appropriately balanced between priorities for school development and the personal, professional development of staff. Support staff are well briefed by teachers and they work well in each class, especially supporting pupils with special educational needs and the young four-year-old children. Those members of staff new to the school benefit from the good induction procedures. A useful feature of the school's arrangements is that supply teachers are provided with written guidance on school routines.

64. The quality and range of learning resources are good. Information and communication technology is very well resourced. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Resources include a very good range and quality of equipment such as, personal and laptop computers, a digital camera, tape and CD players, electronic sensors for sound and temperature, a white board that interacts with the computer and a well constructed website. These resources and the appointment of a technician to service them have had a considerable impact on teachers' confidence and the quality of pupils' learning. Physical education equipment for the younger children in the school has also improved since the previous inspection and the school is now able to offer these pupils a more satisfactory curriculum. The school has a good range of fiction and non-fiction books and tools and materials to support science, art and design, and design and technology.

65. The accommodation is good for the size of the school. While they have only a small assembly hall, which is just the right size for the number of pupils, they benefit from the use of the village community centre called the 'hut', which shares the same site and provides a large hall for physical education, games and dance. In addition, pupils benefit from weekly swimming lessons at the local pool. Classrooms are a good size for the numbers of pupils and appropriate for the curriculum. Attractive improvements to the building are well maintained. The facilities for the pupils in the Foundation Stage have improved since the previous inspection, but the area is not fenced and is open to the public footpath that goes through the centre of the school site. The school enjoys a beautiful site and a large play area.

66. The school is now effective and efficient at using its budget to raise standards and enhance the learning of all groups of pupils. Good use is made of strategic resources. Specific grants are well used to boost pupils' achievement and improve the quality of learning for all the pupils concerned. For example, the special educational needs grant is used effectively to provide additional assistant support and a specialist teacher. It is effectively targeted at the pupils' individual needs. The grant to support the work of the pupils whose first language is not English is successfully used to extend his English language skills. The fund for increasing teachers' confidence and skills in information and communication technology has been successfully used to promote the use of information and communication technology as a tool to support pupils' learning. Improvement has been significant since September and teachers' confidence and understanding has improved. This places the school in a good position for further improvement in this area. Financial planning is now carefully linked to school improvement.

67. The budget is managed effectively. Financial planning and budgetary controls are good. Systems are now in place to enable the governors' finance committee to be well informed about spending thus enabling future planning to be efficient. The current surplus is unavoidably due to limited spending prior to September, unexpected savings on some of the salaries, a financial 'cushion' for the effects of a falling role and the small size of the school, and sensibly cautious spending because of the appointment of the substantive headteacher for September 2003. Technology is used appropriately to monitor spending and to research information for teachers to use in lessons. Appropriate plans are in place for further developments in its use to analyse information from tests and assessments.

68. Systems for ensuring that the governors and acting headteacher get the best value from resources are satisfactory. The acting headteacher and staff analyse test results. However, this is new and test results were collected and monitored though no analysis about how individual pupils' results related to their achievement or teaching and learning took place. Currently, the acting headteacher uses national and local data to evaluate the pupils' performance, collects information from the schools' system of testing and assessment and makes predictions about future performance. Comparisons with similar schools are complex because of the significant variations year on year caused by the very small numbers of pupils in each year group. This system is in its infancy and sets the school in good stead for future development.

69. A more open approach to consultation with parents is developing and there are strengths in the way the school used a questionnaire for eliciting the pupils' ideas and concerns about the school. The governors are careful to seek best value when planning improvements to the building or when appointing staff. The acting headteacher has a significant teaching role, but the governors have successfully relieved her commitment by appointing part-time specialists. This means that the acting headteacher can be more actively involved in leadership and management.

70. Administrative procedures are good and are generally used to minimise bureaucracy. Administrative support is effective. However, it is part-time, which means that the acting headteacher has to undertake some tasks in the morning, in addition to her teaching role. The school is well organised to enable teachers to concentrate their efforts on the pupils, and the headteacher to manage the complex role of teacher and manager. The school is back on track and recovering from the troubles of the past. Improvement since September 2002 has been rapid. The quality of education is good and standards are above average. Behaviour is very good and the curriculum is satisfactory. Many systems and procedures have been revised and have to be rooted in the practice of the school. The cost of educating a pupil is high because of the small size of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money and is now on a good footing to continue to improve.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. To improve the effectiveness of the school further the governors, acting headteacher and staff should:

- (1) build on the developing work in information and communication technology evident in several subjects to systematically support learning in each classroom by:
  - i) implementing the appropriate plans for improvement;
  - ii) ensuring that planning indicates how information and communication technology could be used;
  - iii) improving the range of programs available to teachers and pupils;
  - iv) sharing the good practice already in place in the school.

Paragraphs: 21, 29,128

- (2) improve the roles of co-ordinators so that they include more systematic monitoring and evaluation of standards, teaching and learning by:
  - i) ensuring that teachers use the generous time provided for them by timetabling monitoring events such as classroom observation, analysis of pupils' work and lesson plans;
  - ii) agreeing how feedback from evaluation and analysis will be provided for individuals and the school as a whole;
  - iii) implementing the plans already in place.

Paragraphs: 61, 62, 91,118, 103, 123, 128

- (3) further improve the provision for pupils in the Reception and Years 1 and 2 by enhancing the opportunities planned to develop their independence in learning, and ensure that the youngest pupils have regular opportunities for role play by:
  - i) extending the strengths that are already established in teaching;
  - ii) ensuring that good quality opportunities are planned in all subjects, and particularly mathematics, for pupils to investigate, research and solve problems independently as well as with the support of the teacher;
  - iii) providing opportunities for pupils in the Reception Year
  - iv) to make choices about their learning;
  - v) providing regular opportunities for pupils to develop their personal and creative skills through role play.

Paragraphs: 2, 18, 22, 27, 71, 73, 75, 77, 83

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

- Revise the curriculum planning for history and geography to ensure that pupils' skills of enquiry in history and mapping in geography are systematically developed and improved as pupils move from year to year. (Paragraphs: 8,29, 114-118, 119-123)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

21

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

15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	9	3	0	0	0
Percentage	5	38	43	14	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 five percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	38
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	0*

FTE means full-time equivalent. \*No school meal service in the LEA may affect this number.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y1
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	10

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

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

Tables showing results of national tests and teachers' assessment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been omitted to protect pupils' identity because there are less than ten in each group.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
36	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10.5
Average class size	13

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002-2003
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	£
Total income	182,459
Total expenditure	168082
Expenditure per pupil	4450
Balance brought forward from previous year	54398
Balance carried forward to next year	68775

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
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	42
Number of questionnaires returned	28

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	46	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	58	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	50	4	0	1
The teaching is good.	68	29	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	42	3	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	32	7	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	29	0	11	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	42	6	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	50	7	0	0

### Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents were concerned that the current thrust for raising standards has lessened the personal development of the pupils.

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

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

72. The provision for children in the Reception Year in Class 1 is satisfactory. Children are admitted to school full-time in the September of the year in which they become five years old. They enter a class that has pupils from Years 1 and 2. Improvement in the key issue identified in the previous inspection has been good. The curriculum is now carefully and successfully planned to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals for five-year-olds. However, some aspects of the goals for personal, social, and emotional development and creative development are not covered appropriately. There are insufficient opportunities for role play, and for children to make their own choices about what activities to undertake and what materials and equipment to use for their work and play. This slows their achievement to satisfactory. Although the outdoor provision for the reception children has undergone some improvement since the last inspection, it is still lacking in facilities for the youngest children. The caring nature of the provision ensures that children settle happily into the school. Day-to-day routines are well established, enabling all children to feel secure and grow in confidence.

73. Attainment on entry varies from year to year because of the very small intake and is currently average. However, there are wide variations and some children's attainment is above average and their achievement is rapid. The attainment of others is below average, and they find it hard to sit and listen. Consequently they are learning at a slower rate than others. Overall, children's achievement is satisfactory. They are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for their personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy, their mathematical, creative and physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the reception year.

74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children learn appropriately. There are strengths in teaching, most notably in the good quality activities planned to facilitate the development of children's language and literacy. Direct teaching is good, and careful attention is paid to finding suitable activities for children in more formal lessons with the older pupils in the class. This helps children to learn effectively within the limits of their short attention spans. The teacher, the nursery nurse and classroom assistant work very effectively together to meet the needs of these young children. However, at times too much is planned for them and the adults intervene too much. Important learning opportunities are missed for children to develop their independence and use their imagination in play activities.

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

75. The children are happy and confident in school. This achievement is satisfactory, reflecting the sensitive teaching. Children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. They settle very quickly into school and into the routines of the class. Well organised routines help the children develop self-confidence and assurance and take care of their own needs. They are eager to explore new learning and make effective relationships with adults and other children. This is a strong feature of the class, and older pupils in Year 1 and 2 are careful to support and encourage the younger children. During whole-class sessions, the children sit quietly developing the skill to listen and consider the viewpoints of others. They are polite, and remember to use conventional phrases such as 'please' and 'excuse me' when making a request. Their behaviour in and out of the classroom is good and they are developing a suitable understanding of what is right and wrong. They attend to their personal hygiene appropriately and independently tackle jobs such as putting

on their own coats to go outside to play. The children enjoy learning and talk happily about what they are doing.

76. The teacher has created a calm, secure environment in which children are valued as individuals. The trusting relationships and care of all children is particularly good and encourages them to relate to others and recognise that each of them is valued. However, although teaching of relationships and interactions is of good quality, the children do not have enough opportunity to co-operate and interact with others without supervision. This limits their ability to choose activities for themselves and to initiate their own ideas through play.

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

77. Children's language and communication skills develop well and most talk freely about their experiences and the things that interest them. They listen attentively and speak clearly when offering their ideas in whole- class situations. A few children are fluent and demonstrate that they have a broad vocabulary. The most confident express their own ideas and feelings well, and willingly talk about their favourite parts of a story in books. They know that pictures carry meaning, and understand the concept of a word. The high-attaining children recognise familiar words in simple texts and use their knowledge of sounds well to help them read simple regular words. Children who find learning more difficult are at the stage of understanding how books work, for example by turning the pages and linking a narrative sequence with the pages of a book. Children confidently 'have a go' at writing and express themselves by making marks on paper. By the end of the Reception Year, the high-attaining children are already working within the early stages of the National Curriculum for pupils in Year 2. They are writing independently for an appropriate range of purposes. However, a few children are still at an early stage of writing and are randomly using letters to make the sounds they recognise when attempting their writing.

78. The quality of teaching is generally good. Imaginative efforts are made to provide active tasks and activities suited to the children's short concentration spans. The teacher rises effectively to the challenge of providing appropriately challenging tasks stories and rhymes for the four-year-olds that will still motivate and challenge pupils in Year 1 and 2. For example, in one lesson based on poems by Michael Rosen the teacher skilfully used a tape recorder with the youngest children to record their ideas in preparation for the shared writing of a class poem. As a result, they took a full part in the lesson and contributed ideas that showed a developing understanding of the pattern of words used by the poet. There are too few opportunities to carry out 'pretend' writing within play activities and children do not practise their writing skills regularly.

### **Mathematical development**

79. Children's achievement in their mathematical development is satisfactory. In numeracy, they have gained sufficient knowledge to count and add two numbers when solving problems that involve ten objects. Their use and understanding of everyday words, such as 'one more' and 'two more' when talking about numbers is appropriately developed. When working with water, they describe whether a container is full or empty and use language such as 'heavier than' and 'lighter than' to compare the weight of different objects. The children recognise and name a triangle, circle, square and rectangle and make pictures using the different shapes. The classroom is used well to display numbers and encourage children to develop their mathematical ideas through play situations. In their early work, the children are provided with a wide range of practical experiences, such as matching and counting games and puzzles.



80. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The teacher reinforces basic skills through practical activities that make learning fun and enable children to apply their developing knowledge. For example, the children used 'Boo Boo' a soft toy bear, to 'help' them put muddled numbers from zero to 20 in order. The work is well planned with clear learning intentions and resources are carefully prepared and organised. The nursery nurse provides good support by quickly helping children to establish mathematical ideas. She is well briefed and assists the teacher effectively in maintaining on-going assessments of individual's progress. Through the different activities provided, the children are constantly encouraged to discuss and develop their understanding of numbers. For example, when playing a dice game they were encouraged to count on from the first number they threw without going back to 1. The work is well developed throughout the year and most children record their numbers unaided, with reasonable accuracy.

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

81. Children have a good level of general knowledge when they start school. They show curiosity in their surroundings and are eager to explore, investigate and ask questions. The teacher builds effectively on their knowledge, helping them to learn more about the world. Achievement is satisfactory. The activities are well planned to enable children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. Discussion helps children to be observant and describe what they see. In science, they achieve well recognising that the light from a torch will shine through some objects but not others. They use their senses to explore and describe what happened such as, 'I smelt talcum powder' 'I tasted banana'. They are developing a wider knowledge of maps as they follow the route of the paths on sketches made of the school grounds. The children are gaining an increasing understanding of the past when they join with older pupils to watch a video about the work of Florence Nightingale. They explore and use their skills to make models using a suitable range of construction toys and materials and use a range of simple tools and techniques competently to cut, shape and join materials. Children are provided with a variety of experiences in cooking that teach them how to use tools safely. They thoroughly enjoyed preparing fruit for a fruit salad. Most children have an increasing understanding of technology and they are provided with regular opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills. For example, they have successfully used a paint program to draw pictures and create patterns. Children's awareness of cultural differences is appropriately enhanced through stories and special events such as the celebration of festivals. A strong sense of their own religious customs is well promoted.

### **Physical development**

82. Children's achievement is generally satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory and there are strengths in the physical education lessons. This means that children participate fully in lessons with the children in Years 1 and 2. When they run they are able to control their bodies as they twist and turn. They respond quickly to instructions and work happily with the older pupils in the class. They work very hard to control an unwieldy bat and successfully manage to hit a ball with some degree of accuracy. In one lesson, one of the youngest children was delighted when he managed to hit the ball five times.

83. When given an opportunity they move the wheeled toys around the outside play area in a sensible and controlled manner. However, this is not an aspect of the curriculum that is planned for in any detail. The limitations of the outdoor area also mean that activities cannot be used freely by the children throughout the day.

### **Creative development**

84. Very few creative activities for the reception children took place during the short time of the inspection. Examples of children's work showed that they draw and paint using pencil and a good range of colours. They know how to mix colours and enjoy making patterns and prints. They make interesting models from boxes and have achieved well in weaving with a variety of materials outdoors, using the fence and benches. Photographs show the children have been provided with suitable musical experiences. For example, a double bass player visited and the children had the opportunity to listen to him playing twelve bar blues and then join in, using percussion instruments. Teaching is generally satisfactory and achievement is sound. However, there are times when there is too much direction from the teacher. The children have too few opportunities to explore a range of different media for themselves. There was little evidence of imaginative role-play for the reception children apart from when they were involved in hospital play with the support of a helping parent. They thoroughly enjoyed this and took great pleasure in bandaging one another, giving injections and using the stethoscope.

## **ENGLISH**

85. Overall, standards of attainment in English are above average, and the pupils' achievement is good. From an average start, pupils attain above average standards in the work seen by the time they leave the school in Year 6. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well. High-attaining pupils are appropriately challenged to help them read and write skilfully. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English are well supported and produce work that is close to the levels expected nationally for their ages. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection and the National Literacy Strategy is used successfully to provide a framework for teaching and learning.

86. There are too few pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 to make a reliable analysis of national tests results or comparisons with similar schools. Because of the very small numbers in each group, variations in attainment each year do not paint a reliable picture about standards in the school. School records over the last year show good improvement and that individuals, including high-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, are achieving well as they move from year to year, especially in writing. One of the main reasons for this is good teaching, firmly based on effective knowledge and understanding of how to successfully teach basic literacy skills.

87. Standards in speaking and listening are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement is good. One of the reasons for this is that teachers are skilful at questioning pupils. They elicit extended answers when requiring pupils to explain their knowledge and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to engage in discussions about their work. In Years 1 and 2, pupils listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. They talk about their ideas. For example, in a poetry lesson, pupils were keen to discuss their ideas for a poem about the senses and used a broad vocabulary in their imaginative responses. From Year 3 to year 6, pupils make good gains in the range of vocabulary they use when they talk. By the end of Year 6, pupils are articulate and refer to what each other has said when discussing what they have learned. In one lesson in the Year 5 and 6 class, pupils used a good range of interesting vocabulary to explain who they thought had committed a murder. They listen attentively to each other, appreciating the views and ideas put forward.

88. Across the school as a whole, achievement in reading is good. Pupils attain average standards in Year 2, and they are becoming confident readers. They are developing effective strategies to read unknown words because the teacher is systematically teaching them the sounds letters make on their own and when blended with other letters. For example, they sound out the letters of words and most recognise the different sounds of words they

recognise within words. A high-attaining pupil is already reading the text to seek clues to words and phrases, and a pupil who speaks English as an additional language has achieved well to correct himself confidently as he reads. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and with good expression. Teaching is good and pupils read an increasing range of authors and state their preferences of genre. They discuss the books they read with each other, referring to the text to explain the impact that some of the characters have on the plot. Some pupils are reading the 'Fellowship of the Ring' by JR Tolkein and are fascinated by plots and sub-plots and how the characters and plot develop. Pupils seek information from a range of written sources such as reference books, the Internet and CD-ROMs. The library is small but pupils select books to assimilate information as part of their research.

89. Standards are above average in writing. Teaching is good overall, and often very good in Years 3 to 6. Writing has significantly improved since the start of the school year. Achievement is good because a strong and appropriate emphasis is placed on writing in each class. The effective range of opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects enables them to apply the skills they have learned. For example, they write labels for diagrams, write instructions and reports of events as well as poems and increasingly interesting stories. By the end of Year 2, pupils' writing is average. They achieve well in developing well structured imaginative writing. Most pupils are developing a good range of interesting vocabulary and can make words rhyme in their poems. Spelling is good because they are systematically taught strategies for spelling. Some use punctuation to good effect, for example in a child's poem 'I hate carrots!' exclamation marks were used to emphasise the author's feelings about vegetables. This is not consistently successful with other pupils in the year group. Their handwriting is generally neat. They do not join their letters, which slows the development of their personal styles in Years 3 to 6.

90. Achievement accelerates in Years 3 to 6 and pupils are making good gains in their use of paragraphs, interesting language and the structure of their imaginative writing. This is because teaching is consistently good and often innovative. By the end of Year 6, pupils are using interesting phrases such as 'The screaming was getting louder..' and 'I always dreamed of being able to see...' at the start of their stories to capture the readers' interest. Writing is joined, but not always as neat as it could be and careless presentation leads to unnecessary mistakes in punctuation and spelling.

91. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teaching helps pupils to learn effectively and attain above average standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. There are particular strengths in the ways teachers use their knowledge of the Literacy Strategy to plan and adapt challenging work that motivates the pupils in small mixed-age classes to work very hard. Teachers are skilful at asking questions to extend the pupils' ideas and help them to think imaginatively. At the beginning of lessons, teachers help pupils to understand what is expected of them by discussing what they are going to learn. One of the strengths in teaching in English is that teachers discuss the criteria they will use to mark and assess the pupils' work. Pupils feel this helps them to know what they must do to achieve. Expectations are generally high. In a poetry lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils' vocabulary was skilfully extended by the teacher, enabling them to make connections between objects and animals because the teacher helped them to think divergently and use phrases such as 'Fox coat amber like the colour of the sunset'. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, where pupils analysed evidence from different sources about a murder, the teacher very skilfully urged the pupils to think through the evidence for clues. The pupils became excited and highly motivated about what they were discovering. There was great delight in the class when they discussed their findings, and they enjoyed each others' successes. They did not want to stop for the lunchtime. The very few shortcomings in teaching in English are characterised by too much direction from the teacher and introductions to lessons that take too long, leaving shorter time for pupils to research and write.

92. Leadership in English is satisfactory, and the knowledgeable co-ordinator is effectively supported by the acting headteacher. The co-ordinator's role has recently been re-established and does not yet include the systematic evaluation and monitoring of teaching and learning. Planning is monitored appropriately. Information and communication technology and drama are used appropriately to support pupils' learning in English. There are good examples of pupils using word-processing skills to draft and re-draft their writing and practise their spelling. However, this is not a consistent feature in each class. Assessment is thorough and teachers are now beginning to track and analyse pupils' work systematically. The accommodation is satisfactory, and although the library is small, it is supplemented by a broad range of books in classroom book collections. The acting headteacher has evaluated teaching in English. The information was added to the analysis of pupils' work and national test papers and resulted in the school prioritising the need to improve pupils' writing. This has been successful and the school is well placed for further improvements.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. Standards are above average overall and pupils' achievement is generally good. By the end of Year 2 standards are average and pupils make good gain in all areas of mathematics, in particular number, and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average. This is similar to the results of the national tests in 2002. Results for pupils in Year 2 were average and above average for pupils in Year 6. There are very small numbers in each year group and comparisons with national statistics and the results of other schools are not altogether helpful. The work seen shows that all groups of pupils achieve well as they move through the school. Over the last four years, results have climbed steadily to become above average for the first time in 2002. However, with the number of pupils taking the tests being so very small there can be considerable variations from year to year. The school has made significant progress since the last inspection in raising standards in mathematics. This is mainly due to the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the high priority given to the development of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported effectively in all lessons. Consequently their achievement is good. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls.

94. By the end of Year 2, pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the basics of addition and subtraction. They are developing a good understanding of basic multiplication facts for two, five, and ten and are gaining confidence in their knowledge of how to round numbers less than 100 to the nearest ten. Most pupils understand the place value of each digit in tens and units and write in the missing numbers on a number line in order to show for example that 185 comes before 186 and 187 comes after. They have a secure knowledge of shape, space and measurement. Previous work shows that they used standard measuring equipment to find out the length and height of a variety of objects and recognise that a square has right angles at each corner. They tell the time accurately using half-past and quarter-to the hour, and estimate in minutes and seconds how long it will take to complete a task. By Year 2 most pupils have a sufficiently secure understanding of mathematical vocabulary to attack word problems with reasonable confidence.

95. Achievement is good and by the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good knowledge of number largely because teaching is very good. They have a quick mental recall of all four operations; addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and apply this knowledge successfully to work out problems such as those involving money. One of the reasons for this is the very effective emphasis placed on applying and using mathematics in Classes 2 and 3. Most pupils have a secure understanding of fractions and decimals. This enables

them to work confidently and accurately when converting fractions to percentages and decimals. They use written methods effectively to show their workings. Analysis of pupils' work showed that pupils make good progress. From Year 3 to Year 6 pupils make significant gains in their knowledge and understanding of shape. As a result, by Year 6, they understand the various forms of triangles such as isosceles, scalene and equilateral and calculate the perimeters of simple and compound shapes. The higher-attaining pupils are beginning to recognise where the position of a shape will be after two translations. They interpret data from charts, and transfer the data onto block and line graphs.

96. Pupils in Year 5 are starting to solve word problems involving money, but in general find their work in mathematics challenging, particularly when they have to explain how they arrived at the answer. In Class 2, very good teaching ensures that pupils develop their own strategies for solving problems and use them to work out answers. They have a secure knowledge of the use of addition and doubling numbers. They are beginning to understand that they can check number work by using the inverse of the operation, such as checking division answers by using multiplication. All pupils are learning to use mathematical vocabulary and are beginning to understand what key terms mean.

97. The quality of teaching is good overall and has a positive impact on pupils' learning in mathematics. There are significant strengths to teaching in Years 3 to 6, which boosts attainment and achievement. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are planned thoroughly and cater not only for the mixed-age groups within the classes, but also for the different levels of ability within the class. The teachers and teaching assistants address the needs of individuals well. The work provides a high level of challenge for all pupils. A very good example of this was when pupils in Class 3 tried to solve problems involving money in real life situations. The expectation was that pupils should calculate the cost of a holiday from a range of information and convert the money from pounds to euros. Towards the end of the lesson, the teacher set a final challenge by announcing 'The travel agents have reduced the holiday by 10 per cent, now work out the cost'. The pupils groaned but set about the task with confidence and an eagerness to achieve the task. Similarly, the pupils in Class 2 were challenged by their teacher to find halves and doubles of large numbers by breaking them down into workable units. They were quick and accurate and confidently applied their knowledge of multiplication to the task. By using their whiteboards to write answers to the questions they were able to show the methods they used to make their calculations, as for instance  $9 \times 7 = 10 \times 7 = 70 - 7 = 63$ . This is not a consistent feature in Years 1 and 2. Although the questioning is precise, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to carry out their own personal investigations.

98. The teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. They are encouraging, supportive and manage the pupils very well, so lessons are productive and the atmosphere is one of enjoyment and hard work. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics, show interest and are very willing to tackle number problems and explain their methods to others. All teachers are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy and they apply it effectively. The mental calculation sessions provide a stimulating start to lessons. The very good teaching and learning in Classes 2 and 3 is characterised by the confident use of their very good knowledge and understanding of mathematics to set interesting and challenging activities. Increasingly, they encourage pupils to solve problems in their own way and stress the need for pupils to talk about how they arrived at a particular answer. By valuing the contributions of pupils and using them as examples to discuss with the whole class, pupils learn from each other and develop confidence to tackle new work successfully. Teachers build on from previous learning effectively and maintain a brisk pace, moving from one activity to the next in a well organised way. Pupils practise their numeracy skills effectively in other subjects such as science, art and design, and design and technology. However, information

and communication technology is used effectively in Class 2 to support pupils' learning in mathematics, more so than in the rest of the school.

99. The acting headteacher as co-ordinator leads mathematics extremely well. She clearly understands what is required to maintain the steadily rising standards, and has undertaken a great deal of work to achieve this. This has successfully raised the profile of mathematics throughout the school, particularly in the area of problem solving. The good assessment procedures and analysis of data enables teachers to plan and focus on areas that need attention. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, marking rarely includes helpful comments to show pupils how to improve. However, the recent introduction of providing every pupil with individual targets to aim for is improving pupils' understanding of the school's expectations. Above all, the high status now given to mathematics means that pupils enjoy the subject and are very willing to learn.

## **SCIENCE**

100. Overall standards in science are above average and pupils' achievement is good. The standards attained and teaching in science are significant strengths of the school. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average because teachers make good use of investigations to secure pupils' understanding of the scientific concepts being taught. This accelerates their achievement. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and all pupils including those pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue and those with special educational need achieve well and make good progress over their time in school. This judgement matches the test results for Year 6 in 2002, which were well above average. However, with very few pupils in each year group comparisons with national data and similar schools are not helpful. Results can vary significantly from year to year because of the small numbers involved, but results in science are rising.

101. By the end of Year 2, pupils can describe in detail how both humans and animals change as they grow up. They explain clearly the life cycle of a frog and understand that a female frog produces the spawn that starts the life cycle again. They competently use a microscope linked to a computer to explain the early stages of development of a tadpole, using live samples carefully retained in a dish of water. Pupils effectively carried out an investigation into the distance different sounds travel. They carefully recorded the results in a scattergram, demonstrating an increasing understanding of how to interpret results of tests. They are knowledgeable about materials that are waterproof and which of these will make a useful waterproof covering for different purposes.

102. Achievement is good and pupils in Years 3 to 6 consistently build upon the skills and knowledge they have learned because teaching is very good. By the end of Year 6, pupils carry out sophisticated investigations. For example, they tested sound proofing using sound sensors linked to a computer to gather test data. They have a good understanding of how to set up a fair test choose to gather data in two forms, as a scattergram and as a line graph, reasoning that the two provide different forms of data for different types of analysis. The pupils give detailed explanations of what the data is showing and willingly repeat tests when data is conflicting. They use their knowledge of electrical circuits well when constructing small electrically controlled vehicles in design and technology. The school grounds are used well to make studies of the interdependent nature of plants and animals. Pupils know how to use temperature sensors when investigating the insulating properties of materials. Skilful teaching helps them to use their knowledge effectively, for example recognising that not only does each group have to conduct a fair test but that all groups must use the same criteria if the results within the class are to be compared and confirmed.

103. Teaching is good overall. Pupils learn effectively in Years 1 and 2 because concepts such as life cycles are explained well, pupils are taught in small groups and good use is made of teaching assistants to work with small numbers of pupils to ensure understanding. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6. Consequently, pupils learn very effectively because teachers set investigations where pupils can draw on their previous knowledge to set up and carry out tests selecting the resources they consider are most appropriate to the experiment. Pupils' understanding of fair testing is highly developed because teachers attempt to catch the pupils out, by making available items that will introduce variations to the test results that will mean the tests are not fair. For example, one teacher cleverly included containers of the same size but of different thickness, in an investigation into the insulating properties of materials. The pupils rightly spotted this, and were careful to use only containers of the same thickness, demonstrating their very good knowledge and understanding of how to construct a fair test. In Years 3 to 6, teachers further use very skilful questioning to ensure pupils have understood what they are doing and encourage lively debate to ensure that pupils are challenging their own results and those of their peers. As a result of the very good relationships that exist and the exciting activities set, pupils are very keen to undertake science investigations. This means that pupils work like scientists, applying considerable thought to their work and learning very effectively as a result.

104. The curriculum is broad and covers all the programmes of study well ensuring a balanced programme of work for the different year groups. Learning in mathematics is used well to enable analysis of scientific results. The use of information and communication technology to support work in science is developing and, where used, demonstrates a good contribution to learning. Through the study of living things and wondering about the world around them, pupils' spiritual development is good; their concern for the world and their ability to work together makes a very good contribution to moral and social development. The acknowledgement of the contributions made to science by other cultures is less well developed. Assessment procedures are good and enable teachers to build sequentially on understanding gained in each programme of study as the pupils move through the school. The co-ordination of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has recently attended a course on the use of information and communication technology in science, which has had a significant impact on the pupils' use of computer programs to aid learning. Resources are good and mean teachers can provide a good selection for investigative work. The school grounds are a good resource for the study of living things and are used well.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

105. No lessons in art and design were taught in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection. However, an analysis of pupils' work indicates that standards are in line with the levels expected nationally. Achievement is satisfactory and teaching is also satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards of work covered are also broadly average. The satisfactory standards identified by the previous inspection have been maintained and improvement is also satisfactory. Art and design has not been a focus for development, although class teachers and the specialist part-time teacher work effectively together to teach the four-year rolling programmes of study, ensuring that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met.

106. By the end of Year 2, pupils make steady gains in drawing and demonstrate good observational skills, for example drawing what they see using a view finder. They weave paper carefully and select materials for collage using different types of paper. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory across Years 3 to 6. They demonstrate increasing skills in printing to create an exciting collage of children playing. This was based on rubbings of moving figures created by pupils. They can select materials for Easter hats and use increasing skill and understanding to join different materials and use their designs to good effect in solving problems of which materials are best for different purposes. Pupils achieve

well in their imaginative responses using paint and a range of different materials. They can draw moving figures and experiment using different ways of showing movement through printing and drawing. They are beginning to evaluate and modify their designs and think carefully about the quality of the finished work. Teaching is good and there are strengths in the way pupils use materials in a collage. A good example of this is found in the portraits of people from the Tudor period of history, which shows effectively that designs were well researched and ideas about texture were explored.

107. Teaching is good and work is very carefully planned. Pupils know what is expected of them because teachers skilfully share the objectives of lessons and the criteria that will be used to evaluate their work. Pupils are beginning to use the criteria to evaluate what they have done, but they do not have enough time to comment on each other's work or suggest ways it can be modified and improved. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to provide interesting activities, and planning shows that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed effectively throughout the programme of study. Pupils enjoy art and are motivated because teachers encourage and challenge them to think. They work hard and extend their learning about different techniques and skills because they are encouraged and supported effectively.

108. The art curriculum covers all elements required by the National Curriculum. However, the current four-year rolling programme means that there are long gaps between when the times when some skills and knowledge are taught. This is under review. Subject leadership is satisfactory and teachers share ideas to ensure that pupils' develop their skills and knowledge appropriately. Pupils' achievements are appropriately assessed and teachers use the information to plan the next stages of learning. A good range of resources and materials are used to good effect. Information and communication technology is increasingly used to support pupils' learning. There are good examples where pupils use art programs to supplement their ideas and the digital camera is used skilfully as a means to record events that will be used later or to help pupils study the human form. A more systematic approach to the work of a range of artists to build on what is already in place would further enhance the curriculum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

109. Pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Since September 2002, pupils' achievement has been more rapid. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection when it was said that the solid work undertaken in Key Stage 1 was insufficiently built on in Key Stage 2. Although it was only possible to see one design and technology lesson in Class 3, the planning, photographs, pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicate that teaching is at least good with some very good features. Most pupils, including all those with special educational needs, are developing their skills in making things well. The high-attaining pupils are also given challenging work, and they achieve well.

110. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils make structures using tools and combine components in a different ways. Pupils have designed and made puppets from felt and Christmas pictures with moving parts. They prepared and made 'Technicolor Dream Coats' for Joseph, using a computer program to make repeating patterns printed out onto transfers and ironed onto fabric. They tried out the play equipment at the 'Marquis of Lorne' and, using the information they had collected, designed their own piece of playground equipment.

111. By the end of Year 6, pupils work effectively to gather information about a project and generate a good number of ideas. Their vehicles, made from wood and card, demonstrate a good attention to detail, and a clear link to the purpose of their project. Pupils' thoughtful evaluations of their models and rigorous testing enabled them to make alterations to the designs to ensure they moved freely. Their carefully annotated designs are good and their



step-by-step diagrams show how they have experimented with different ideas before starting their models. Pupils show good progression in their skills as they fit electric motors to their models. They make good use of literacy and numeracy skills as they write about their models and use measurements accurately in their designs.

112. These standards represent good achievement for all groups of pupils. They make a good start in Class 2 by improving their basic cutting and joining techniques as they design and make a toy with moving parts. Their moving toys show a good understanding of cam mechanisms and how they can be used and incorporated in their models to make them move in different ways. Pupils evaluated their work once it was completed and identified the changes they would make. For example, one pupil wrote, 'I would have improved the handle on the cam mechanism'. Pupils in Class 3 successfully build on their earlier work, and their vehicles demonstrate how much they have learned about joining different materials and making working models that can be controlled by a motor. Pupils with special educational needs do well in design and technology and produce work of good quality. The higher-attaining pupils are well catered for and as a result their work shows a range of high-quality skills in the associated design and making process.

113. The quality of teaching and learning and the progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 are good. The use of a specialist teacher in this subject is clearly beneficial and strongly supports pupils' learning. The analysis of work indicates that the pupils are given an increasing range of experiences in designing and making that build effectively on their previous learning. Planning gives good attention to the development of pupils' skills. The teacher's secure knowledge of what is required to plan and make working models ensures that pupils learn to use tools effectively and safely and their structures stand a good chance of success. Careful attention is given to teaching pupils the techniques required to complete their models accurately. A good example of this was seen in a lesson with the older pupils when they were making the cladding for their model vehicles. The pupils were successfully challenged to make a cladding that precisely fitted their vehicles. This involved pupils in measuring, making their own net and template and cutting accurately to ensure that the cladding fitted their models. The pupils were enthusiastic about their work and most managed to persist with the task, although a few needed extra support to complete the activity. Pupils' work indicates that the teaching places a strong emphasis on both the design and evaluating process.

114. Design and technology is effectively co-ordinated. A broad range of learning opportunities is suitably planned through the two and four-year rolling programmes to ensure pupils' receive learning experiences on a regular basis. There is a good range of tools and materials to interest and challenge the pupils. There are however, few examples of older pupils using information and communication technology in their design and technology work. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and moral development by providing opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively and develop the ability to make a reasoned evaluation of their own work.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

115. Although no lessons in geography were observed during the inspection, standards of work are broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is generally satisfactory. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching, although planning, pupils' work and informal discussions with pupils and teachers, indicate that teaching is satisfactory. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining a secure knowledge and understanding in the subject. However, there are some weaknesses in the development of pupils' geographical mapping skills. The standards identified by the previous inspection have been maintained.

116. By the time pupils are at the end of Year 2, they have a sound understanding of their own locality. Pupils' work indicates that the teacher successfully uses the school grounds and classroom to extend pupils' geographical understanding of their immediate environment. By drawing simple maps and plans, the pupils show an increasing awareness of where physical and human features are located. Pupils identify different places in the world as a result of the travels of 'Benji Bear'. They develop a reasonable understanding of the concept of travel to other places by making a bear passport and deciding whether it will be needed for each place that the bear visits. Achievement is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2, pupils compare their own locality with the Isle of Struay. Through their study of the island, pupils begin to recognise that the environment in their own locality is different to other places. They identify some of the main differences and similarities between Struay and Powerstock, such as forms of transport and the jobs people do. Pupils draw a simple map of Struay, construct a three-dimensional model and mark in places mentioned in the story of 'Katie Morag and The Two Grandmothers', such as the bay, post office and the farm. However, there was little evidence of pupils using a variety of maps as a basis of undertaking a range of tasks to support the development of their geographical enquiry and mapping skills.

117. Work shows that teachers in Classes 2 and 3 have a sound grasp of the subject and help pupils to achieve a suitable knowledge and understanding of geography through, for example, a local study of Powerstock and the theme of water. However, standards could be higher if greater emphasis was given to the systematic development of pupils' geographical skills. In their study of Powerstock, pupils in Class 3 carried out a survey of the views of people on how the place was changing. They looked at the land use and identified the main features on a map of the local area. They identify the advantages and disadvantages of living in Powerstock and compare it to villages nearby. Good links are made with numeracy and information and communication technology as pupils' interpret graphs of the number of people per household in the villages to work out the population trends. They are developing a suitable understanding of the wider world through the opportunity to undertake a study of an Indian village and link up with a village in Ghana. They know where the main continents and oceans are on a map of the world and the main cities, rivers and mountain ranges on a map of the British Isles. However, there is little evidence of pupils using four-figure or six-figure grid references to locate places on maps.

118. Pupils in Class 2 and 3 have carried out an in-depth study on water and its uses. There were good links with science when they had the opportunity to visit 'Sutton Bingham' a water treatment plant and discover what makes water dirty and how it is cleaned. While there, they experienced the 'delight' of making sewage soup to see just what goes into the sewers. They quickly found out what is meant by 'usable water', and the comparative importance of a plentiful supply of water. Through this study, pupils learned about the work of aid agencies in water provision in less-economically-developed countries and also learned how too much water such as floods, can cause just as many problems.

119. The school makes appropriate use of the nationally recommended guidelines to support teachers' planning. The subject is jointly co-ordinated by the teachers, which is satisfactory because the small staff have several key areas of responsibility. The two-year rolling programme for teaching geography in Class 1 and four-year rolling programme in Classes 2 and 3 is suitably planned. However, the time between studies means that the full range of pupils' skills in using different kinds of maps and geographical resources is not as secure as it should be. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and resources are now good. The school makes good use of visits in and around their own locality to extend the pupils' geographical knowledge. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and moral development, through the opportunity for pupils to consider worldwide issues relating to environmental change and how it affects the lives of

people. Pupils' cultural development is appropriately promoted through the study of countries in different parts of the world and the activities of people who live there.

## **HISTORY**

120. During the course of the inspection it was only possible to observe one history lesson. From looking at pupils' work, standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those for whom English is not their mother tongue and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The standards identified by the previous inspection have been maintained.

121. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the difference between toys that they own and those played with by children one hundred years ago. They confidently describe the different materials used and begin to relate different clothing to different times, for example full length bathing costumes to Victorian times, space suits to modern times. They are developing knowledge about famous figures such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. They sensibly discussed how these two women would have travelled to the Crimea realising that some forms of transport currently in use, were not available then. Pupils know facts about the Great Fire of London and are beginning to understand the value of first-hand accounts such as that of Samuel Pepys.

122. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of life at the time of the Ancient Greeks and the Tudors. They are beginning to understand that people may behave in different ways depending on circumstances and that their actions may be viewed and recorded differently by historians. For example, pupils wrote their own individual analysis of Henry VIII as a king and made comparisons of their opinions. These analytical skills are an area for further development.

123. From examining teachers' plans, it is judged that an appropriate range of historical subjects are covered and individual lessons are well planned to ensure pupils gain a sound knowledge of what is being taught. Learning of historical facts by pupils is satisfactory. However insufficient emphasis is placed on the skills of historical enquiry and interpretation. Pupils are not systematically taught to select and organise historical information from a wide variety of resources and then communicate clearly what they understand about the period of history or historical figure being studied.

124. The curriculum is satisfactory and there are adequate resources to support the topics being covered. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has not been in the post for long and has not yet had time to have a significant impact on the subject. The subject contributes satisfactorily to moral and cultural education through the study of different historical figures and socially thorough the study of different periods of time. Resources are satisfactory. The use of information and communication technology is still limited but the use of the Internet is developing as teachers gain confidence in this area.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. At the end of Year 6 and Year 2, standards are in line with the levels expected nationally. This represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection and is the result of improved information and communication technology resources, the teachers' own knowledge of the subject and the good leadership and management of the co-ordinator. Teachers are using their newly gained knowledge sensibly to develop areas in which they have been trained. This means all pupils, including those for whom English is not their mother tongue and with special educational needs, are gaining a thorough knowledge in these areas and all pupils are achieving well compared to their previous knowledge.

126. By the end of Year 2, pupils become more competent in the use of the keyboard and mouse. They confidently enter text, draw pictures to illustrate work they are doing in class and begin to use peripherals to aid their work in science. For example, pupils using an art package to draw pictures in the style of Lowry showing smoking factory chimneys and match-stick figures walking in the street. In science, they thoroughly enjoyed using a microscope attached to the computer to examine frog spawn and tadpoles on the monitor screen.

127. Achievement is good and, by the end of Year 6, pupils carefully use a computer analysis to produce graphs of questionnaires completed on the computer, to show what they particularly like or dislike about school. They skilfully use sensors to measure sound and temperature in science. They competently use control technology to explore the relationship between angles of turn and two-dimensional shapes in mathematics. These older pupils are using the Internet as a tool for research in subjects such as geography and history.

128. Teaching is good overall. It is now at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. Pupils learn well as a result of increased confidence among the staff and the practical use of information and communication technology to support learning in some specific areas of the curriculum. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The greater use of information and communication technology as a tool to support learning in a practical way means that pupils understand what they are using the technology for. Consequently, they are keen and confident in its use, behave sensibly when using information and communication technology and so learn well as a result. Working independently, in pairs and other small groups and comparing results of their work contributes very well to pupils' social development.

129. The use of information and communication technology has improved considerably. This is the result of an immense amount of training, better provision of a good number of good-quality resources, the provision of an information and communication technology technician and overall the very good leadership and management of the co-ordinator. The employment of a part-time technician means that equipment is well maintained and rarely out of use. This has significantly increased teachers' confidence because when they plan to use computers or other information and communication technology equipment in their teaching, it is ready for use and reliable. In addition, the technician provides support both in the classroom to teachers and pupils, and by individual in-service specifically targeted support for teachers. The recent purchase of a white board that is linked to a computer has greatly increased the capacity of the co-ordinator to teach pupils information and communication technology skills. The school provides a very effective website that is frequently updated by the technician. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers have sensibly used information and communication technology where they feel most confident and the school is now well placed to use the subject to support and enhance learning in other subjects across the curriculum and this is now the area for development.

## **MUSIC**

130. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards, teaching and learning in music because in the short time available during the inspection, music was not taught. Consequently, it is not possible to judge improvement since the previous inspection. The subject is taught by a specialist music teacher from the local authority, and pupils enjoy their lessons. The music curriculum is broad and balanced covering all the elements required by the National Curriculum. A good range of instruments are available to the pupils, and learning opportunities are enhanced by visitors, such as a drummer. Music is used to support assemblies and pupils listen to a good range of music, including music from different cultures

around the world. Assessment has recently been introduced and is satisfactory. Information and communication technology is not used to support the pupils' learning in music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. During the short time of the inspection it was only possible to observe one physical education lesson. It is therefore not possible to make a judgement about teaching, progress or standards in the subject.

132. From looking at teachers' plans and other school documents provision for the subject is satisfactory and includes satisfactory assessment arrangements. The school has limited facilities for physical activity and the site is sloping and restricted in size and shape. This means that it is difficult to teach games like football and hockey and while netball is taught the pitch is sloping and has a dip that makes entertaining visiting teams difficult. However, the school makes good use of the large hall in the village 'Hut', situated on part of the school site, for gymnastics and handball. The school has so successfully trained their handball team that they are currently the National Champions. Good use is made of a field some distance away for athletics and cricket during the summer. The school has sensibly identified the best times of the year to use local facilities and has arranged its scheme of work around the seasons so that gymnastics and dance are taught mainly in the autumn, swimming in the spring and athletics and cricket in the summer. Adventurous activities are developed through a visit to a local training centre where rock climbing and orienteering is taught. Gymnastic equipment is satisfactory and there is now a satisfactory range of small apparatus for use by the younger children and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Although the school is often unable to field a full team, they still take part in competitive sports against other schools in the locality and this adds much to pupils' enjoyment of physical education.