

INSPECTION REPORT

KEINTON MANDEVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Keinton Mandeville, Somerton

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123650

Headteacher: Mrs C Austin

Reporting inspector: Stuart Dobson
18074

Dates of inspection: 3 - 6 March 2003

Inspection number: 248481

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Chistles Lane
Keinton Mandeville
Somerton

Postcode: Somerset
TA11 6ES

Telephone number: 01458 223452

Fax number:

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Dennis Powell

Date of previous inspection: 24/11/97

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18074	Stuart Dobson	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication Technology Geography Foundation Stage English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13450	Jennifer Madden	Lay inspector	Equality issues	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16971	Roger Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31822	Anne Newman	Team inspector	English Art Music Religious education Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Full Circle division of Parkman
35 Trewartha Park
Weston-Super-Mare
North Somerset BS23 2RT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is smaller than average and although most pupils are taught in single age groups, there are two mixed age classes. There are 161 boys and girls attending the school from the local villages and a few from Somerton. Very few pupils come from economically disadvantaged homes. A below average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and most of these have general learning difficulties. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is low. When children join the school in the reception class, most have had some form of pre-school education and their attainment on entry is similar to the county average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which is making very rapid improvements and is well placed to improve further. Standards, as recorded in tests at the ages of seven and 11, fell considerably in 2001 and picked up slightly in 2002. The headteacher, fully supported by the staff, has made major changes to the school and has put procedures into place to halt and reverse this decline. The school and the pupils are now equipped to reach high standards. Teaching is good overall and often very good. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher. The school is currently giving good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils aged seven to 11 attain well in many aspects of the humanities¹, arts², science and physical education.
- The school provides a good range of learning opportunities which are enhanced by extra-curricular activities.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout Years 1 - 6 and is very good in some classes.
- The school is very well led and managers have a very accurate and thorough knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses.
- There is a very good strategic plan to guide school improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils have positive attitudes toward learning.

What could be improved

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Information and communication technology to raise standards to those achieved in other subjects.
- The role of the subject co-ordinators needs to be further developed so that they have a full and accurate view of their subjects and can contribute more effectively to the management of school improvement.
- Assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The quality of targets on individual education programmes for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement overall since the last inspection and there has been particularly rapid improvement in the last 18 months. A local authority review in October 2001

¹ History, geography and religious and cultural education.

² art and design, design technology, music.

indicated that there was 'much improvement needed' in most areas of school performance. Since then there have been major improvements to the educational provision, particularly the provision of a well-structured and progressive curriculum for six to 11 year olds. There have been major improvements to the ways in which the teachers plan the curriculum, in particular to meet the needs of the higher achieving pupils. There has been a tremendous improvement in the provision for ICT³. The role of the governors has been developed and clarified. There have been improvements to the outdoor area. The role of co-ordinators has begun to develop well. There has been some limited improvement in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage⁴. There is now a good school development plan which has steered the development of the school for the last two years.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A*	D	C	E
Mathematics	B	D	B	C
Science	A	E	C	D

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school results in English have fallen from well above average in 2000 to below average in 2001 and average in 2002. This apparent fall and rise were due to fluctuations in the cohort of pupils. There was a relatively large number of pupils with special educational needs [SEN] in both these cohorts. With each pupil accounting for about four per cent of the cohort, care needs to be exercised in evaluating these results. The grades for mathematics and science are similarly affected. Low achievement of the more able pupils has also been an issue in this school for some years. It has adversely affected school achievement and it has now been addressed. In many subjects, the more able pupils are now challenged to achieve the higher levels of which they are capable.

When compared with schools of a similar background, this school achieved well below average in English, below average in science and average in mathematics.

The current cohorts of Years 5 and 6 pupils are making good progress and are achieving good standards in most subjects by the age of 11. They reach above average levels in science, art, design and technology, geography, history and music. They reach good standards in some elements of physical education, most noticeably in swimming. They reach satisfactory standards in other subjects except for ICT where standards are below average.

³ Information and Communication Technology.

⁴ Education prior to children beginning the National Curriculum in Year 1. In this school, this is the reception class.

By the end of Year 2, pupils achieved average standards in reading, but below average in writing and well below average in mathematics in 2002. This was because too few pupils reached the higher Level 3. The school has addressed this. Achievement in all three areas has improved and the current Year 2 cohort of pupils is likely to achieve average standards in reading, mathematics and writing. The school has set appropriately challenging targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school and to their work. Most of the pupils try hard to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is generally good and it is very good in lessons where pupils are engaged in interesting and exciting activities. Behaviour is generally good in the playground when pupils are less closely supervised. Most pupils show respect for others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between the teachers and the pupils are generally good and most pupils get on well with each other. Some aspects of pupils' personal development are developed well but overall this is only satisfactory because there are limited opportunities for pupils to demonstrate initiative or take personal responsibility.
Attendance	This is very good, being well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Nearly 70 per cent of the teaching seen was good or better, with over a quarter being very good or excellent. Most of the remainder was satisfactory and only two lessons were unsatisfactory. (See table in section C). Most of the very good and better teaching is seen in the upper part of the school and the unsatisfactory lessons occur in the Foundation Stage where the organisation and management of independent learning activities are not good enough and children do not make enough progress. In almost all lessons teachers plan well and the activities are clearly linked to what the pupils should learn. Most teachers have appropriately high expectations of the pupils who learn well. This is a considerable improvement and pupils are now learning to work hard to reach their potential. English and mathematics are taught well and most often teaching is good in these lessons but just occasionally in Years 1 and 2, time is not best organised and some learning becomes fragmented.

Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. This is helping the most able pupils in particular to learn well and produce work of high quality. All the staff have been particularly closely focused on these two areas to halt and reverse the decline in standards. They have also been successfully focused on improving the teaching of science and the decline in standards has been reversed. The staff clearly focus on the needs of the pupils who are all catered for appropriately in lessons. Mostly pupils learn well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum overall throughout Years 1 to 6. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for these pupils is good overall because of the quality of support given by the learning support assistants and the classroom work which is well matched to support lower attaining pupils. Targets for improvement need to be more specific.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils with English as an additional language who need particular provision.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	All aspects of provision are good. The school is conscious of the need to support all aspects of the pupils' development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school offers good pastoral care and the staff know them well. The school is developing its assessment procedures but there is still further development needed in the assessment of science and the foundation subjects. ⁵

The school works very well with parents who give good support to the school and to their own children. These links are very supportive. The school has recently put a lot of work into making improvements to the curriculum in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is now suitably planned but there is a need to provide better access for children to a well-balanced range of self-directed learning opportunities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school very well and has helped the school to address many fundamental issues in the last two years. She has introduced a range of successful measures to ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve appropriately. She has also supported the other staff in developing their management roles. The management of the school is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Recently the governors have developed the skills and competencies to fulfil their role to a satisfactory standard and they are quickly becoming full partners in the management of the school. In the last year they have begun to seek clear evidence for their judgements about the quality of education provided by

⁵ Art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education, religious education.

	the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The evaluation of the school is highly accurate and perceptive. For example the whole school has realised that in the recent past, expectations have been too low, particularly for the more able pupils, and this has now been addressed.
The strategic use of resources	There is a very good school development plan which is ambitious in developing many areas of school provision. The headteacher is making very good use of the resources available to the school to support this development.

There is a satisfactory number of teaching staff. The additional classroom support assistants give very good support and make a major contribution to learning. The accommodation is well kept, attractive and of good quality. Resources, including those to support learning in ICT are satisfactory. There is now very effective leadership and all of the staff and governors share a strong commitment to improvement. The school has good procedures to seek best value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are happy. • Teaching is good. • School is well led and managed. • The level of homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities offered outside the school day.

The inspection team feels that the range of extra-curricular opportunities offered is better than those offered by many schools. The team concurs with the parents' positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Baseline assessment indicates that attainment on entry to school is similar to the county average. Many of the children have good speaking skills. In other areas of their learning, their skills on entry to the school are variable but overall are similar to those expected nationally. By the time they reach the end of the reception year, they are likely to have made satisfactory progress in communication and language but only in some aspects of literacy. They make too little progress in writing skill development. In other areas of learning they make satisfactory progress except that they do not sufficiently develop independent learning skills, as a result of the organisation of the reception classroom.
2. In 2002, the pupils at the age of seven, achieved results which were at or below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Principally this was due to there being too few pupils reaching the higher Level 3, although most achieved the nationally expected Level 2. A similar pattern pertained at age 11 with too few pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English and science. Results were better than this in mathematics.
3. The issue of too few pupils reaching higher levels has been addressed by the school and it is now very clear that pupils who are more able are supported in producing work of high quality. This is clear in English, mathematics and science, particularly in the upper part of the school from Year 4 to Year 6. The good quality of teaching now seen and the challenge for all pupils have accelerated their progress which is now good. However, the progress of the oldest pupils over the last four years has been satisfactory, as the challenge which is evident now has only been present for the last 12 months. This has been a high priority for the school. During the current year, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 means that school results this year are likely to be similar to the national average.
4. By the time pupils begin Year 1, most of them have the confidence to question and to explain their views and ideas. The teachers focus well on reading and more recently on writing and the pupils learn quickly between the ages of five and 11. By the age of seven, many of the pupils have made progress and reach average levels in reading. This is consolidated and extended in Years 3 to 6 and many are good readers by the time they leave the school at 11.
5. Progress is slower in writing and this has been a focus for development in the last year and continues to be so. Pupils generally construct sentences well but some of their writing lacks good spelling. Pupils make steady progress in writing when their efforts are clearly focused and there are examples of good writing in science, when they independently record their findings and in geography and history. After a decline in standards in 2001-2 there are clear indications of improvement.
6. In mathematics, teaching is mostly good and the standards which are now being achieved throughout the school are better than in 2001. There is generally rigorous teaching in mathematics, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and this is raising standards. Both reading and numeracy skills are developing well and these skills are used well in other subjects.

7. In science, there has been a good improvement in the last year. Compared to national averages, the performance of 11 year olds was below average in 2002. The quality of work which the pupils are now producing is above the average standard and they have a particularly good grasp of scientific enquiry and investigation. This is due to a more concerted effort to teach the curriculum fully and setting much more challenging work for the pupils.
8. Recent test results show that the performance of boys and girls is similar in English, mathematics and science and the inspectors found no significant differences in the performance or participation of boys and girls.
9. The pupils are currently achieving good standards by the age of 11. They reach good levels in science, art, design and technology, geography, history and music. They reach good standards in some elements of physical education, most noticeably in swimming. They reach satisfactory standards in other subjects, except for ICT. In this subject, a dearth of suitable hardware has impeded pupils' progress. However, for the last two terms, new equipment, better arrangements and a well-planned curriculum have meant that pupils are now making good and often very good progress but the oldest pupils have not yet caught up with the levels expected for their age. In Years 1 and 2 pupils reach satisfactory standards in all subjects except for music where standards are good, and ICT where they are below expectations.
10. Pupils with special educational needs who have learning difficulties make satisfactory progress though this is difficult to judge, as their targets are too vague. However they get good support and most are fully able to access the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good, as are their behaviour and relationships, whilst attendance continues to be very good.
12. Particular strengths in this area of school life are the good relationships between teachers and pupils and pupils' desire to do their best in lessons. The main area for development is pupils' developing their initiative and taking responsibility for day-to-day aspects of school life.
13. Pupils come happily to school in the morning and settle quickly to the school day. During lessons they work enthusiastically and confidently, listening carefully to their teachers and responding well when challenged. This was clearly demonstrated in a Year 1 handwriting lesson in the last session of the school day, immediately after physical education, when pupils settled quickly and worked very hard, successfully mastering new skills. Pupils with special educational needs are also fully engaged in well-planned and purposeful activities with the support of learning assistants.
14. Pupils' behaviour in and around school is good and parents are very pleased with it. The reinforcement of good behaviour by firm and calm handling in classrooms creates a positive working atmosphere. In the playground, whilst there were one or two small incidents during the inspection, pupils are generally well behaved and show consideration for other pupils. There was no evidence of bullying and pupils interviewed are clear that, when bullying does happen, if they contact a teacher it will very quickly be sorted out. There have been no exclusions in the past year.
15. Relationships are good between adults and pupils, and amongst pupils, and, if necessary, the school takes action to improve them. Teachers listen carefully and

respectfully to pupils and, as a result, pupils are confident in their work and willing to voice their opinions to the whole class. This was demonstrated well in a Years 4/5 physical education lesson where pupils made a positive contribution to each other's performance by acting as observers.

16. Pupils in Year 6 take on responsibilities, looking after younger pupils at break times, giving out milk etc. In the rest of the school pupils take on too few responsibilities for their own learning.
17. Attendance in the school is very good and above the national average whilst unauthorised absence is below the national average. Almost all pupils arrive on time and few parents take their children away during term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching is good, overall, throughout the school and in almost all lessons pupils learn well. There are however variations between classes. The teaching for pupils aged seven to 11 is mostly good, with nearly half being very good and occasionally excellent. These classes are very well managed, planning is very thorough and the teachers are knowledgeable in almost all of the subjects that they teach. For example, in one excellent geography lesson, the teacher rapidly checked pupils' existing knowledge and skills and linked teaching well to their own local knowledge, comparing Keinton Mandeville with Cheddar. She rapidly extended their map reading skills, developed their ability to compare and contrast settlements from the information available on maps and made realistic demands of their ability to record. The pupils learnt very rapidly and all of the class were fully engaged because the teacher had matched the recording sheets and her questions to the ability of the pupils.
19. The consistently good quality of teaching in this part of the school helps to ensure that the vast majority of pupils make good progress in their learning at all times. Recently there has been a very strong focus in the school on challenging all pupils but particularly those who can achieve higher levels. It is clear from work in lessons and in books that some of the pupils are now doing very well in their numeracy and literacy work, and in many of the foundation subjects, pupils are clearly learning well and with enjoyment.
20. In most English and mathematics lessons, the quality of teaching is good or better because these two subjects are led well by co-ordinators who have a clear understanding of how to raise standards through good teaching. There has been considerable training for the staff in teaching successful literacy and numeracy lessons and all teachers are guided well. The teachers are therefore developing real confidence and good knowledge and they are able to maintain a good pace to lessons, ask challenging questions of the pupils to guide their thinking and are able to offer support where it is needed. Pupils are kept busy and thinking for most of the lessons and they learn well. Writing and mental arithmetic have been a close focus for improvements in teaching and the results are visible in the improved standards which pupils achieve.
21. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. The teaching is sometimes very good, for example in a very well-planned science lesson. The teacher had prepared very well by taking digital photographs of plants in the school grounds and discussing the identification of them before taking pupils out to find out about plant habitats. Through this very good preparation and clear explanation, the pupils were supported

in learning well and precisely. Just occasionally teaching is satisfactory. The main weakness in these lessons is when the teacher talks too much and for too long, for example when pupils spend almost 40 minutes as a whole class on the carpet in English. In this situation, pupils' attention wanes. Teachers in these classes, like their counterparts in the upper part of the school, have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond to this by behaving well in all classes.

22. The teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage is mostly satisfactory but sometimes unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory when the whole class is being addressed and when the children are working in adult-supervised groups. In the main they learn satisfactorily and make sound progress in developing skills. However it is unsatisfactory when the children are permitted to work independently. Although the teacher's planning indicates what children should learn from these activities, this is sometimes not clearly relayed to the children. The activities provided are not managed sufficiently well, as children work in groups which are too large and resources are insufficient, for example when ten children were allowed to attempt construction with one box of building materials. The classroom is not organised sufficiently well to support children's independent learning. Most of the resources are housed in one end of the room which contains the art table, the very large role-play area, sand and water equipment and storage for most other materials. The natural 'wet' area of the classroom is not used at all by children as no activities are provided in this area. The main activity area is cramped and awkward. In part this is caused by the arrangement of cupboards in the room. There are few small, clearly defined work areas in the classroom and, when children are allowed a choice of activity, the quality of learning falls. This was seen when nine children crowded around one computer.
23. Overall, teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils and the subjects they teach. They celebrate pupils' successes, and wall displays are a clear celebration of the standards achieved. Teachers make good use of assessment activities in English and mathematics to inform their subsequent planning and, in some other subjects, there is clear evidence of work being matched to pupils' abilities. In some classes marking is very good and pupils are helped to progress. In other classes some of the comments are meaningless. The teachers manage pupils well. They are mostly very good role models of appropriate behaviour, showing high levels of consideration for pupils and adults alike. Most of the pupils follow this lead and are learning to become valuable members of the school society. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework.
24. The teachers are aware of the individual needs of their pupils and match work well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The quality of teaching is better than described at the time of the last inspection and there is a lot of evidence to show that it has improved greatly in the last year.

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

25. The planning of the curriculum for pupils in reception is satisfactory, learning targets are clear and most of the activities are meaningful. There has been some improvement in the provision for language and numeracy since the last inspection but there still remains room for improvement in the provision in some other areas. The provision for the development of children's literacy, particularly writing skills, remains a weakness, as does the management and organisation of the class for the development of children's independent learning skills and the reinforcement and

extension of their learning through well-structured, practical activity. Children are provided with a good range of mathematical activities and, as a result, work in this area is noticeably more successful than in literacy.

26. Overall, the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good. It is broad, meets statutory requirements well and includes religious education, all subjects of the National Curriculum and a programme for personal, social, health and sex education. There is a good balance of curriculum time between subjects. As a result, by the end of Year 6 standards in several foundation subjects are good with pupils achieving well. The curriculum helps prepare them well for secondary school.
27. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have now been effectively and fully implemented. Planning in these areas now takes account of the learning needs of all pupils. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to support learning in subjects such as science, geography and history. This in turn improves standards in English, mathematics and ICT. With the development of the ICT suite there is also better provision for ICT, which is promoting effective learning in this subject and providing good opportunities for pupils to extend learning across the curriculum. Curriculum planning for most subjects has improved, with subject co-ordinators making good use of national guidance materials to formulate work programmes for all year groups. These contain good detail and generally build well on what pupils have learned previously. Curriculum provision in art, design and technology, geography, history and music is good. Opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and understanding in physical education are very good. A good range of visits to museums and other places of interest and visitors to the school further enhance the curriculum and enrich learning. An annual residential visit is available to pupils in Year 6. This supports work in various subjects, particularly physical education, and also enhances personal development.
28. Overall, good provision is made to ensure that pupils have equal access to the full range of learning opportunities. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants in lessons and, as a result, these pupils are able to participate fully in all activities. Higher attaining pupils are generally challenged well in lessons. Overall, satisfactory provision is made for pupils who have learning difficulties. This provision would be improved if the targets in pupils' Individual Educational Plans were more specific and measurable. Where required, opportunities are provided for pupils to receive additional help in literacy and numeracy.
29. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities considerably broadens the curriculum for pupils in Year 3 to 6. These activities provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop skills in the arts and sports. At present there are no such activities available for younger pupils. There are plans to improve this. Many pupils attend these activities, which are of good quality and which make an effective contribution to learning.
30. Although the school has no written policy relating to the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) in practice, its arrangements are good. The school effectively weaves the themes of 'growth' and 'harmful substances' within its health study programme, mostly within science. Visiting specialists, such as the school nurse make good contributions to these aspects. There are very good opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to stop and reflect on their feelings and to talk through issues, for example in religious education lessons and in some PSHE

- lessons. In PSHE lessons opportunities are given for whole-class discussions about moral issues and relationships. There is a strong emphasis in the curriculum on heightening pupils' awareness of their environment and of healthy lifestyles.
31. Links with the local community make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has close ties with the Anglican and non-conformist churches. Pupils visit the Anglican Church as part of their study of religious education. Pupils use the village and the immediate environment in geography when engaged in local studies. This usually includes visiting the local bakery. Strong links with the Carymoor Environmental Centre have enabled the school to develop its own environmental area which provides pupils with a rich resource for their studies in geography and science.
 32. The provision for pupils' personal development, including the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school promotes a sense of community and encourages pupils to work co-operatively. There are strengths in the way relationships are fostered and how pupils are taught to show respect for living things and the environment.
 33. Provision for spiritual development is good. The daily act of collective worship is influential in promoting spiritual development. There is a strong 'spiritual atmosphere' within whole-school assemblies, often provided by a visual focus, such as a candle, or music to aid reflection. In assemblies pupils are often encouraged to quietly reflect on their feelings and experiences. They have opportunities to engage in prayer. Their achievements are celebrated and they share the joy of things that are done well. Pupils also have opportunities to discover their capabilities, for instance when undergoing challenging activities, such as Year 6 pupils engaging in adventure activities whilst on the annual residential visit.
 34. Provision for moral development is good. All adults are good role models and encourage and expect very good behaviour. Pupils are taught the importance of caring for others and, through their efforts at collecting for charities and good causes, become aware of some important moral dilemmas in the world. In geography they learn about the environment and often discuss moral issues that impact on this and on humanity. Principles that distinguish right from wrong are actively promoted. These are reinforced by class rules and by setting examples of fairness, truthfulness and respect.
 35. Provision for social development is good. The school provides opportunities for pupils to work in groups, and they are expected to do so amicably and productively. Good opportunities are given for pupils to develop an understanding of their own roles as part of the school community. For instance, pupils in Year 6 take on a range of responsibilities in class and around the school, such as acting as milk monitors or looking after younger pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes. Older pupils meet pupils from other schools when they represent the school in friendly and competitive team game fixtures. The school actively encourages visitors to the school feel welcome and this makes a significant contribution to the warm atmosphere that pervades the school. Provision is further enhanced by the large number of extra-curricular activities which enable older pupils to mix and work with pupils from other classes.
 36. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about a range of beliefs and traditions and celebrate festivals from different major world religions. A strength of the school is its promotion of the arts. Throughout the school pupils are taught dance and the overall level of performance is high. In art pupils are taught about well-known artists and are introduced to their work.

Music makes an effective contribution to this area. Pupils have good opportunities to make and listen to music from a range of composers. Developing links with a school in Zambia help the school to promote pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural nature of society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school continues to take good care of its pupils all of whom are very well known to their class teachers and more generally across the school. There is good classroom management, very good relationships and very good support from learning support assistants. The main areas for development are the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning in the foundation subjects and planning for and encouragement of independent learning.
38. The school meets the individual needs of all pupils, including those with special needs, through the use of skilled classroom assistants and work which is matched by the class teacher to their needs and capabilities.
39. The school provides a safe environment for pupils. All staff are aware of their responsibilities for the health and safety of pupils and are vigilant, as is the caretaker, who is the school governor responsible with the head for health and safety. One member of staff is currently receiving training for risk assessment and necessary checks are undertaken prior to school visits. Child protection is being taken seriously; the responsible person is fully trained and keeps up to date with new initiatives passing the information on to all staff.
40. The promotion and monitoring of attendance in the school is good and attendance is high in comparison with national standards. Registers are completed in line with local guidelines and parents are contacted immediately should a pupil be absent without contact from the home. Parents are discouraged from taking holidays during term time and the school has generally succeeded in keeping absence levels to a minimum.
41. Procedures for the support and promotion of behaviour are very good. In classrooms, pupils are very well managed especially in those classes where there are potentially disruptive pupils. As a result pupils take a full part in lessons. In the playground, pupils are full of energy and make the most of the space available to them for games and football at lunchtimes. They are supervised well and there are very few accidents; the staff deal with any incidents that occur swiftly and effectively. The occurrence of serious bullying is very rare. Year 6 pupils are very aware of the personality clashes and jostling for position taking place in their classroom. The school has addressed this by introducing a programme for the promotion of social skills and by training the classroom assistant to carry on this initiative; this is seen to be successful.
42. The school provides satisfactory support for pupils' personal development. The reward system is individual to classrooms but the weekly and half-termly celebration assemblies acknowledge pupils' achievement inside and outside school. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities that develop self-confidence and social skills. These include music and drama productions, specialist coaching in a number of sports, including hockey, short tennis and rugby, and the residential visit undertaken by Year 6 pupils. Pupils are, however, encouraged through their targets to play together without arguing and to try to be aware of how others are feeling. In the lower part of the school there is a lack of opportunity for pupils to take initiative in for

example being responsible for planning and researching their own work and to become independent learners.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The school has a good partnership with parents. The parents' view is that this is a very good school; they are well-informed through very good annual reports. The school has good links with parents from the time their children enter school. Parents of reception age children are invited to induction meetings followed by drop in visits after school to talk to the teacher and to morning visits with their children during the summer term.
44. Annual reports are good, giving parents a clear picture of their children's personal development and academic progress as well as guidance on how they can help them improve their learning. Pupils add their comments on work they have enjoyed and where they found difficulties and parents are encouraged to comment on their children's progress. Parent/teacher consultations are held termly and are very well attended; additionally the headteacher and class teacher are available daily to talk informally to parents before and after school. There are regular newsletters, which whilst helpful could be more informative and less formal. This would encourage wider readership by parents. Class teachers give parents information on the curriculum content for the following term so that they can provide support for their children.
45. The school prospectus meets requirements but is in need of revision and bringing up to date, especially on curriculum matters. There is no mechanism for consulting parents on major issues or on their views on the school. A few parents feel that there are not enough out-of-school activities for the pupils but this only applies to the pupils age six to seven. Overall the school provides very well for out-of-school activities.
46. The school benefits from the large amounts of money raised by the Parent Staff Association that has, for example, enabled the school to set up a computer suite. The number of parents helping in the school has decreased since the last inspection as many parents now work. Some parents are able to support teachers in the Reception and Years 1 to 2 classes, help with visits and trips as well as talking to pupils about their areas of expertise. Parents are generally helpful with homework but this is inconsistent across families and the school is aware of the need to address this issue.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher gives very good leadership to the school. In less than two years she has developed a strong and committed team of teachers and other staff who have embraced necessary changes and have significantly improved the quality of education provided by the school. She has also given very good guidance to the governing body. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher who models very good classroom practice and is supportive of all the staff during a period of rapid change.
48. There is a clear sense of direction towards school improvement. At the time of the headteacher's appointment, the standards achieved by the pupils was of significant concern in English, mathematics science and ICT and there was inconsistent planning in a range of other subjects. The headteacher quickly identified the need for the staff throughout the school to offer more challenge to the higher achieving pupils.

This has been taken on by the staff and in each class the work is matched well to the needs of the pupils and there is some work of a very high standard, for example in geography.

49. Some parents commented that 'school seems to be all work' but this is not the opinion of most of the pupils. This has remained a happy school with a very positive and supportive working atmosphere. Within the last two years, the headteacher has led many changes, based on a thorough analysis of information including data on pupils' progress. Through this work, staff have been helped in setting realistic but demanding targets for pupils and this has contributed to the rise in standards. The curriculum has been rationalised and there is a good progression of skill development in most subjects throughout the school. These changes take time to have an effect but already there are signs of above average attainment in a range of foundation subjects.
50. The teaching staff are developing well in their roles as curriculum co-ordinators. However, this is a relatively new development and, although they are gaining an overview of the subjects, they do not yet sufficiently monitor the quality of teaching and learning and there is too little specific assessment in many subjects. However, the school has planned for monitoring and assessment in the next year. The teaching staff currently make a satisfactory contribution to management.
51. By their own admission the governing body did not operate sufficiently independently in the past and had too little knowledge of the true picture of the school. However, they too have embraced change readily and have been guided well. They are now very clearly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they independently monitor the quality of provision. There is very close liaison between the teachers and the governors.
52. Resources are used very well and financial management is very good. There is very clear management of the school budget to gain good value for money and best value is sought effectively. This is particularly clear in the recent development of the much needed provision for ICT. Two years ago the provision of hardware was poor with many of the machines useless. They have been replaced by a computer suite. There has been a very high level of training for the staff and as a result, the standards which pupils achieve are rising very rapidly. The headteacher and governors consider the improvement in pupils' performance when judging best value for money. Modern technology is used well for the management of the school finances, curriculum planning and preparation of work for the pupils. The school makes very good use of specific grants especially in the areas of continuing professional development of staff and to support pupils in reaching targets.
53. School development planning is very good and the audit of the school to set priorities is excellent. The managers have a very precise picture of what needs to be done and the school development plan informs everyone about the methods of improvement, the timescales and the costs.
54. The school is staffed well by committed teachers and very supportive classroom assistants. The school accommodation is good and is very well maintained. Resources overall are satisfactory. School administration is effectively and pleasantly carried out.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. The main areas for improvement listed below are already the subject of improvement planning on the part of the school. This is because the school is improving rapidly and already has a very clear understanding of its own needs.

1) Provision for children in the Foundation Stage needs to be improved especially for children's personal, social and emotional development and for the development of their writing skills.

- The classroom needs to be re-organised so that there are more structured opportunities for children to learn from practical activities.
- Access to resources and equipment needs to be improved for children.
- Independent learning opportunities need to be better organised.
- Children need to be clear about what they are supposed to be learning.
- Every opportunity needs to be taken to develop pupils' writing skills.

(Paragraphs 1, 22, 25, 56-59)

2) Follow the school catch up plan for ICT so that the good progress which is currently seen in this subject is maintained and pupils rapidly reach the standards of which they are capable. *(Paragraphs 9, 123-129)*

3) The role of the subject co-ordinators needs to be further developed. They need to:

- monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and through sampling pupils' learning by other means;
- need to lead the staff in the improvement of their areas of responsibility;
- gather more evidence so that they are able to contribute more fully to school development planning.

(Paragraphs 50, 110, 138, 149)

4) Assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics needs to be improved.

- The co-ordinators need to devise and manage systematic assessment of pupils' attainment in all subjects so that the school can evaluate pupils' progress.

(Paragraphs 37, 50, 98, 110, 138, 142, 149)

In addition to the above issues the following minor issue is also included for the governors' consideration and possible action:

Whilst overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, pupils do not make maximum progress because the learning targets on their Individual Education Programmes are not sufficiently precise and are not therefore achievable or measurable in the short term. These need to be improved.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	10	16	11	2	0	0
Percentage	3	25	40	27	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	161
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15
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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	7	12	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	5	7
	Girls	11	10	12
	Total	18	15	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (86)	79 (86)	100 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	10	12	10
	Total	16	19	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (86)	100 (95)	89 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	18	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	16	14	17
	Total	27	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (68)	84 (68)	97 (75)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	14
	Girls	16	16	18
	Total	28	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (81)	91 (70)	100 (78)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	156	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table 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)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	128

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	456,682
Total expenditure	453,047
Expenditure per pupil	2,603
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,178
Balance carried forward to next year	39,813

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	157
Number of questionnaires returned	89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	50	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	53	7	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	59	6	2	2
The teaching is good.	57	39	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	7	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	25	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	43	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	51	11	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	45	46	3	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	53	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	34	12	1	3

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

56. There has been some improvement since the last inspection in the provision for language and numeracy but improvement is still required in the provision for Foundation Stage pupils. This part of the school has been the subject of very close attention and support from management in the past year and the crucial area of curriculum planning is now satisfactory. However, the provision for the development of children's literacy, particularly writing skills, remains a weakness. Also, provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is unsatisfactory because the management and organisation of the class, independent learning skills and the reinforcement and extension of their learning through well structured, practical activity is not good enough.
57. When children join the reception class they have skills and knowledge which overall are as expected for their age but many, though not all, of them have the distinct advantage of speaking clearly and well and having a good understanding of spoken language. They make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning and are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals⁶ by the end of the year in all except the goals for making relationships, attitudes and those for writing and handwriting.
58. The children start the reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. They are grouped by previous achievement for much of their work and those who are having difficulties are identified and supported. The classroom support assistant works very well with these children. Children concentrate well in whole class and adult-directed sessions but the organisation of independent work is unsatisfactory and children make too little progress.
59. There is no dedicated outdoor area but outdoor learning is provided regularly. Inside the classroom, resources are just adequate but they are not organised appropriately for children of this age.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Most of the children are interested in the activities provided for them and express their interest through lively questions. Most are keen to learn and can be very mature in their approach to learning; for example trying alternative methods when one way of organising animals in a farm fails to please. When they have the opportunity to select tasks for themselves they do so from the range available and show good perseverance. However, with the exception of the role-play area, children are not often seen working co-operatively. This is because there is too little direction about what to do or indeed too few instructions to work as a group or in pairs.
61. By contrast, the role-play area has been set up well and is suitably resourced as a veterinary surgery. A visit to the 'Keinton Vets' involved the children in taking a number to wait their turn in the waiting room, giving clear instructions about what is wrong to the vet, discussing the diagnosis and helping with the pet. The children showed themselves very capable of organising their play, creating a story and taking parts. They worked together very well for a sustained period and even continued their play after the teacher had gathered the whole class for a short session.

⁶ Nationally agreed targets for the end of the Foundation Stage.

62. The current organisation of the room and the resources are not helpful in developing children's independent learning skills. Most of the resources are stored in cupboards and there is no immediate child access. The furnishings hamper the organisation of the room and most of the 'activity' materials are housed at one end, behind a barrier. Some of the storage containers are too heavy for the children to handle.
63. Children are taught to understand the difference between right and wrong and inappropriate behaviour is explained and corrected. In the main children are treated with respect but inappropriate group names such as 'imps' may cause children to feel labelled. Children are encouraged to show their feelings and the adults give the children the time they need to express themselves.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Children develop their communication skills satisfactorily. They communicate well, listening and speaking to a good level. They listen attentively to the teacher in whole-class situations and can be relied upon to ask questions and comment when they are invited to do so. They are regularly required to read and make satisfactory progress in the development of this skill, being taught the elements of reading regularly. In the main teaching is appropriate but sometimes elements of pronunciation are over-emphasised because the teacher follows a scheme of work verbatim rather than basing teaching on the needs of the children. This is seen for example when the teacher has the children using mirrors to look at the shape of their mouths when making the sound 'd' as in dog. This was a prescribed activity in a scheme of work but in this class, almost all of the children had no problems in recognising or pronouncing this sound. In one-to-one situations children show that they enjoy reading, working well with the classroom assistant when it is their turn to read. There is a book area in the classroom which contains a good selection of books. However, children do not find it a particularly inviting area and rarely choose to use it when they are given a free choice. Children who do use the area do not necessarily look at the books.
65. Writing skills are developing but too slowly. Some of the children have developed reasonably accurate letter formation skills and can select the right letter to represent particular sounds. The children are very clearly achieving at different levels in this area of their work but they are all given similar tasks to complete. Whilst some can attempt to write a few words as a description, others show little ability to form letters. Opportunities to support the good development of children's handwriting are missed both in whole-class and small group situations. For example children holding pencils wrongly whilst drawing 'pancake day' were not helped to improve their pencil grip. This is unfortunate as this was a good activity and the teacher had managed to gain the interest of the group.

Mathematical development

66. Children start reception class with average levels of mathematical ability and most will achieve the early learning goals. There is a good emphasis in the class on mathematical work and numeracy skills are taught regularly. Many of the class can show that they can already count to 20 and beyond accurately. Most can count from zero to 20 in twos. They recognise numerals when altering the calendar daily and use these accurately. Many can describe the number before and the number after without reference to a number square. They also have a good knowledge of shapes, being able to name squares, rectangles, circles and triangles.

67. The teacher provides a good range of mathematical activities. They use shapes to create collage and repeating patterns. They use numbers as a part of their role-play. In the sand tray they are asked to make, then draw full, half-full and empty containers. The teacher is making good use of national guidance to support planning. The questioning of the children is often good. This was seen when the teacher covered up some numbers on a number square then asked the children to anticipate the next number. The higher attaining children were able to do this by using patterns on the number square, demonstrating a good level of understanding. The staff make regular assessment of children's progress. Work in this area is noticeably more successful than in literacy.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world develops satisfactorily and most will reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Many of the children have a good general knowledge when they come to school and apply this well in a range of situations. The children's knowledge of the environment and habitats extends through a regular weekly walk which the children make, observing different aspects of the environment around the school. They search for signs of change and make some interesting deductions, for example on finding a bone on the playing field.
69. They grow plants and make regular observations of their growth and demise. All of the class have been involved in making shelters for animals, though all have used one type of construction material and therefore have not been able to use their imagination, skills or knowledge of materials fully in undertaking this task. This is due to children's unsatisfactory access to the materials and resources available.

Physical development

70. Children's physical development is satisfactory overall. The development of their whole-body movement is good. They have regular physical education lessons in the school hall. They get changed unaided and work well, showing that they can put imagination into their movements, working hard and following the teacher's instructions closely. They have clearly learnt that exercise is good for their body development and the teacher guides this well, ensuring that they cool down appropriately at the end of exercise.
71. Their finer hand movements develop, though some children remain awkward when using tools and equipment. This is seen clearly when some children hold pencils in a very difficult grip and are consequently constrained in their writing. There are too few opportunities in the classroom for the children to use writing implements independently. Although there is a writing box there is no dedicated area for independent writing and pupils rarely choose this activity because it is unattractive.

Creative development

72. There are opportunities for children to develop their creative skills. The best of these is in the role-play area where small groups of children can be seen making up and sustaining stories and activities. Similarly in the water play area; children have the opportunity to make a water world with plants and sea creatures arranging them in ways which are aesthetically pleasing and, for example, requesting help in weighting the plants so that they stay under water. There are too few materials readily available and this restricts children from finding solutions for themselves.

73. The children are given the opportunity to paint, draw and create collages. Appropriate materials are provided and the children clearly enjoy using pencils of different types to create effects. Whilst children develop their skills, they have limited opportunities to practise and extend them through self-initiated or independent activity.

ENGLISH

74. The results of the 2002 national tests for seven year old pupils when compared with all schools show that they attain standards which are in line with the national average in reading and below the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, pupils attain standards which are well below the national average in both reading and writing because too few pupils attained the higher Level 3 in their tests. By Year 6, attainment in English was in line with the national average in the 2002 tests when compared with all schools, but it was well below the national average when compared with similar schools, again because too few pupils attained the higher Level 5 in their tests. These results reflect a decline in performance since the last inspection. Work this year indicates that pupils are achieving standards which are in line with national expectations overall, though there is a high percentage of pupils who have special educational needs in Year 6. There is clear evidence that the school's focus upon improving pupils' performance in English has been effective, particularly in the upper part of the school, where good teaching supports and challenges pupils so that they are producing high quality work in all aspects of literacy. This indicates that good progress is being made in Years 3 to 6. Progress in Years 1 to 2 is satisfactory.
75. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to practise and develop their speaking and listening skills in lessons across the curriculum. In Years 1 to 2, the majority of pupils speak audibly and use a sound range of vocabulary. They recall and use subject-specific vocabulary accurately and use a growing range of verbs and adjectives in their responses to questions. Above average and most average attaining pupils grow in confidence in expressing their ideas; they offer appropriate explanations in their responses to questioning and enjoy discussing the plots and characters in their story books. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make informed contributions to class discussions and by Years 5 and 6 many offer extended and articulate responses. By Year 6, pupils are eager to become involved in class and group discussions and are prepared to talk about their work and their views to teachers and visitors. Listening skills are good throughout the school. The majority of pupils listen carefully to each other and to their teachers.
76. Standards of reading in Years 1 to 2 are satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 2, above average and many average attaining pupils attain good standards; they read fluently and with appropriate expression, using phonic, pictorial and contextual clues to help them tackle unfamiliar words. These pupils are articulate in discussing the characters in their story books, make sensible predictions of outcomes and recount stories accurately. Some average and most below average attaining pupils can read their texts accurately, though their reading is often hesitant and lacking in expression. They use a limited number of reading strategies to help them move through the text. Most pupils are aware of the function of an author and an illustrator, they know how to recognise the title page and can explain the purpose of an index. Most pupils know the differences between a work of fiction and a non-fiction book.
77. Reading standards improve in Years 3 to 6, especially among average and above average attaining pupils who make good progress. They read fluently and accurately, using a good range of expression and can recognise how authors use different literary

and stylistic devices to make their writing more interesting. These pupils are developing personal tastes for particular authors and genres of literature; they infer and deduce from their texts and make appropriate progress in skimming and scanning non-fiction texts. Less proficient readers can use an appropriate range of reading strategies to ensure accuracy, but some are hesitant readers and do not always inject expression into their reading. Comprehension skills are good overall and pupils have opportunities to use a variety of texts in subjects across the curriculum. By Year 6, pupils produce some good quality book reviews, for instance on 'The Secret Garden'. Parents are encouraged to become involved with their children's reading progress through the reading diary system; this is a positive means of sharing information and building up a meaningful home-school dialogue. At present, there is insufficient emphasis upon developing information seeking and research skills through the use of information technology, though this is being developed.

78. Over the last year, the school has accurately identified the need to improve standards in pupils' writing and the strategies it has adopted are beginning to bear fruit. In Years 1 to 2, pupils have suitable opportunities to develop their writing skills in most areas of the curriculum. Pupils can record their learning in complete sentences and many pupils become more confident in using imaginative adjectives in their descriptive writing. Pupils write in different styles for a range of purposes and audiences, for instance, they can write a simple set of instructions and produce accurate factual writing on snails. They make sound progress in writing extended stories, descriptions and poems and pupils have secure sequencing skills. They are aware of the importance of drafting and re-drafting their written work. Above average attaining pupils develop sound standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar and their work is suitably presented. However, a significant number of pupils have insecure standards of spelling, punctuation and presentation. Standards of handwriting vary considerably; letter formation, sizing and spacing sometimes present difficulties.
79. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. Pupils become skilled in selecting an appropriate style of writing to suit a particular audience and purpose. Pupils understand how to construct a piece of instructional writing and by Year 6 they write good quality play-scripts and dialogue in which they take care to develop well-rounded characters. Links with subjects such as history provide useful opportunities for pupils to write diaries and factual reports. Good emphasis upon word level and sentence work enables pupils to structure their writing logically and to develop and extend their vocabulary. Above average and many average attaining pupils produce good examples of creative writing, especially in Years 5 and 6. In a lesson observed in Year 5, a significant number of pupils produced powerfully expressed and imaginative extended descriptions of Theseus' battle with the Minotaur. Drafting books are used well to plan story lines and some Year 6 work on developing a different interpretation of the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' resulted in some very amusing and competent accounts written in the style of an American detective author. This work is well presented, spelling is generally accurate and vocabulary is well chosen. Pupils become increasingly confident in analysing poems such as 'The Highwayman' and 'Jabberwocky' and there are sound examples of persuasive writing, with good use of metaphors and similes. However, a minority of pupils, who have identified special educational needs, in Year 6 have more limited writing skills and some examples of written work are brief, with sparsely developed points. These pupils have variable standards of spelling, presentation and grammar.
80. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with suitably adapted tasks to help them overcome areas of specific difficulty, especially in Years 5 and 6. Individual

Education Plans set targets to address pupils' difficulties in literacy. However, the targets set are too broad and are not sufficiently specific or measurable to ensure that weaknesses are adequately tackled and that pupils make good progress in raising their standards. Above average ability pupils are provided with stimulating extension work to enable them to reach their full potential; the school's strategies to provide pupils with greater challenge are proving to be increasingly effective, especially in Years 5 to 6.

81. Pupils' response to literacy lessons is positive and enthusiastic, especially when their imagination is captured. They are eager to join in class and group discussions. The vast majority of pupils concentrate well and persevere to overcome their difficulties, especially when work is suitably challenging. Relationships between teachers and pupils are friendly and mutually respectful; pupils collaborate well and know that their contributions in the classroom are valued.
82. Teaching in English is good overall. Most lessons are thoughtfully planned and are delivered at a brisk pace. Pupils are made aware of learning objectives and, where a range of teaching strategies and activities are used, pupils sustain their concentration and their involvement in the lesson. Teachers question pupils to good purpose and their good subject knowledge is used effectively to reinforce and consolidate learning. Marking of pupils' work is particularly good in Years 5 to 6 where it is rigorous and thorough; pupils are made fully aware of what they need to do next in order to raise their standards of achievement. Initiatives to encourage pupils to evaluate their own performance and to identify ways in which they could improve their work are developing effectively and older pupils are learning to take greater responsibility for their own learning.
83. Resources are satisfactory in quality and quantity. Suitable materials have been purchased to deliver the literacy scheme of work and there is an adequate range of literature to represent the major genres of written English. Library resources are satisfactory overall and the school looks forward to the completion of its library extension in order to provide pupils with a greater range of fiction and non-fiction books.
84. The literacy co-ordinator has produced an appropriate policy and scheme of work. Governors are kept informed about standards achieved and progress made in this area of the curriculum. Monitoring procedures include some scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' written work, but there is inadequate provision for establishing rigorous, systematic and evaluative systems of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and for identifying the strengths and the weaknesses which need to be addressed. Assessments are appropriately focused upon the development of basic literacy skills across the school.

MATHEMATICS

85. The current groups of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are achieving average standards. During Years 1 and 2, pupils make overall satisfactory progress. In the lessons seen in these two year groups, learning was good. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are currently making good progress in lessons. The standard of attainment of the present Year 2 pupils has risen slightly when compared to standards last year and this year those pupils who are more able are equipped to reach the higher Level 3 in end of year tests. Overall standards in Year 6 are slightly below those of last year. This is due to variation in the nature of the two cohorts of pupils. This year's cohort contains a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. However, the higher

achieving pupils are equipped to reach the higher Level 5 in end of year tests. There is still room for improvement in standards, however, and the school is working hard to secure this through initiatives such as providing specific work programmes for identified groups of pupils. Pupils are benefiting from the school's effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and improved teaching. Pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics and enjoy lessons. They behave well. They apply themselves well to mathematical tasks, quickly settling to class and group activities after initial whole-class sessions.

86. During Year 1, the clear focus given to developing numeracy skills promotes pupils' counting skills and, by the end of Year 2, they are confident and proficient in working with numbers up to 100. They add and take away numbers making effective use of good recall of addition and subtraction facts. Higher and average attaining pupils in Year 2 have a good grasp of fraction equivalence; they can divide a whole circle into halves, quarters and eighths and they can accurately mark the halfway point along a line. Higher attaining pupils are able to order simple fractions. These same pupils can double quite large numbers and explain the strategies they use, some using addition when calculating and others using multiplication. Overall pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables is good. There is a good focus on the development of mathematical vocabulary and pupils use this correctly when discussing their work or explaining how they solve problems.
87. By the end of Year 6, higher and average attaining pupils have a good grasp of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and are confident working with high numbers in thousands. They have good recall of multiplication tables, which aids them in working quickly to solve problems. Lower attaining pupils show a satisfactory understanding of hundreds, tens and units and use this to solve simple multiplication and division problems using whole numbers. Higher and average attaining pupils have good knowledge of angles and rotation. For instance, average attaining pupils know that the angles of a triangle add up to 180 degrees. They apply this knowledge when solving a range of geometrical problems. Higher attaining pupils can give clear definitions of obtuse and acute angles and they can measure and draw angles accurately.
88. The quality of teaching is good across the school. Teachers' mathematical knowledge is good, ensuring that basic numeracy skills are taught well. Weekly planning documents clearly identify the things that are to be learnt, including key vocabulary and the necessary resources needed to aid learning. In lesson plans, teachers make distinctions between the differing learning needs of pupils and modify or give them different work accordingly, so that all make progress. Those with learning difficulties make good progress as a result of effective support from teachers and the support staff. Higher attaining pupils are now being set appropriately challenging work and this is enabling them to attain at appropriate levels.
89. Where teaching is most effective, pupils are encouraged to discuss their work, using a range of mathematical vocabulary to explain the strategies they use to solve problems. Most teachers make good use of assessment throughout lessons, but particularly towards the end of each lesson, to check on pupils' understanding. Work is regularly marked. The curriculum covers the required elements and provides pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Numeracy skills are promoted well in other subjects. When studying mapping in geography, for instance, older pupils apply their knowledge of scale, co-ordinates and direction. Throughout the school pupils collect data and use computer programs to generate simple graphs. In design and technology, Year 5 and Year 6

pupils carefully draw plans to scale and pupils in Years 3 and 4 measure things accurately when engaging in the making process. In science pupils measure things in a range of contexts, for example measuring temperature changes, time, weight and length.

90. Management of the subject is good. An effective action plan is supporting the drive to raise standards. A wide range of assessment information is collected and is used well to monitor the progress of all groups of pupils, to identify those requiring additional support and to aid the setting of targets for improved standards.

SCIENCE

91. By the time that the pupils reach the age of seven they have an average knowledge of science and at the age of 11, they have above average knowledge and understanding of many aspects of science and have developed a good understanding of scientific processes. This is a very good level of achievement for these pupils because in the school generally in the years to 2001, standards in science were falling. Science has improved considerably in the last year because of improvements to teaching and the curriculum and, in particular, through meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils more effectively. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and there is little difference in the attainment levels of boys and girls.
92. The improvement in standards has been brought about through clearly focused teaching and a clear emphasis on investigation and experiment. In one of the lessons seen, the pupils in Year 6 clearly had a very good understanding of how to set up an experiment and investigate accurately when investigating changes which occur when mixing materials.
93. The pupils in Year 6 have very good recall of much of their earlier science work. More importantly, when questioned, they are able to apply their existing knowledge to new situations, for example when asked about the forces at work in a range of situations, such as car jacks and falling leaves.
94. The quality of teaching ranges from good to very good and, as a consequence, pupils learn very well and consistently. In a very good Year 1 science lesson on the environment, pupils were taught to identify plants from digital images of the school grounds. They were then able to seek these examples in the grounds and were able to focus well on features of the habitats of these plants. This very good teaching brought science to life for the pupils. In Year 5, pupils were beginning a study of the solar system. The teacher demonstrated very clearly, by means of models, the relative sizes of the sun, Earth and moon, to the great surprise of the pupils. Through very good questioning, the teacher required the pupils to use their existing knowledge of planetary movement and earth movement to complete the lesson. Through this work she was able to assess the pupils' existing knowledge and gear subsequent teaching to the pupils' needs.
95. In Year 6, very good teaching again prevails. The pupils have been working on mixing materials. In this class, the higher achieving pupils were given a different set of tasks, in their case mixing materials to create gases. At the end of the lesson, all of the information from the various class experiments was shared and pupils learnt from each other.
96. The pupils throughout the school have covered a wide range of topics and have a good level of practical engagement through a well-planned curriculum. The youngest

pupils have covered a range of topics including the body, homes, senses, sources of light and properties of materials. They have recorded their findings through a mixture of worksheets, images and individually written records. Progress is less easy to see in Year 2 as the pupils appear to record less but they have completed some accurate experimental work on forces, testing distances travelled by moving vehicles. Because of mixed age classes, pupils in Year 3 and 4 work on the same topics such as 'Keeping Warm' but the work is clearly much more demanding of the older pupils who have created and undertaken testing procedures.

97. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have undertaken a comprehensive range of science work and have conducted experiments and drawn conclusions. They have, for example, created linear graphs to show what happens to the heart rate during exercise and can clearly state why this happens. They have used information and communication technology very well to support their learning.
98. Science has improved considerably in the recent past; the co-ordinator is making positive changes to the provision and overall, pupils are making good progress. One immediate need, which the school has rightly planned for, is the introduction of systematic assessment of pupils' attainment so that the curriculum can be even better matched to their needs.
99. Overall there is a very good range of work with sufficient match of the work to the pupils' needs to ensure that they all make good progress.

ART AND DESIGN

100. By the ends of Years 2 and 6, attainment is above national expectations. The good progress which pupils make owes much to the systematic development of skills and techniques as they move through the school.
101. Pupils reach above average standards because of the experiences they are given and the focus on creativity and skill development. In Years 1 and 2, pupils explore the range of colours that can be created by mixing paint and they investigate the different textures and effects that they can achieve through using other media, such as pastels and chalk. In Year 1, pupils display sound skills in exploring patterns and shape in their printed pictures of houses. Having listened to Ravel's 'Daybreak', they create pictures of the images that are evoked using a range of different media. Their 'Billy Goats Gruff' collage encouraged useful links between art and literacy and pupils show imagination in using materials of different textures, such as corrugated paper to produce representations of houses. In Year 2, pupils develop their skills in their mark making topic. They use charcoal, pencil, wax crayons, pastels and chalk to produce human and cat faces with skilfully executed eyes, noses and mouths. They observe well. Many pupils show a good sense of scale, shape and perspective and their acute observation of texture enabled them to reproduce the cat's fur using a variety of pencil and paint shading techniques. There are some very good examples of the use of chalk to create the tone and texture of the cats' faces and pupils' work shows a clear understanding of variations of tone. In their paintings in the style of Kandinsky, Year 2 pupils developed good control of paints and developed subtle tones to create squared designs and overlapping effects. In both classes they learn to choose their materials and equipment independently.
102. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught well and have a good curriculum which helps them to build successfully on the techniques developed in previous years and learn to develop a further range of skills. Many pupils achieve higher levels than would be expected for

their age. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have good opportunities to study the works of artists such as Constable, Hockney, Monet and Turner in their focus on water and rivers. They examine the techniques used by these artists and are encouraged to reflect upon and to respond emotionally to these works of art; this effectively heightens pupils' awareness and perceptions and gives them the confidence to share their views, preferences and ideas in discussions. In Year 5, pupils successfully develop their observational and sketching skills and show a good understanding of perspective. They have produced some very good pencil sketches of pandas and tigers and they explore the use of curved shapes in their studies of snails and of Celtic designs. Year 5 pupils broaden their experiences and techniques through batik work and there are some evocative and well-observed studies of animals such as frogs and dolphins on display. The art of non-European cultures is well represented by skilful models of the ancient Egyptian gods and by representations of tomb-paintings and designs based upon hieroglyphs.

103. Year 6 pupils display a good sense of colour and composition in their watercolours of pots of flowers. Their watercolours of trees at different seasons of the year are subtle and sensitive; they show that pupils have a good sense of form and that they are prepared to experiment with a variety of brush strokes to achieve the desired effect. In looking at patterns in the natural world, Year 6 pupils examine the work of William Morris and produce some dramatic and interesting shapes which reflect his vision. Painting in the style of Botticelli has ensured that pupils have used their ICT skills to good purpose in producing computer images of his "Venus". During the inspection, Year 6 pupils produced some very striking collage designs in black and white as part of their study of bodies in action. Many pupils achieved interesting shadow and movement effects in their juxtapositions of moving figures and demonstrated their flair in their choice of the different backgrounds against which their figures could be displayed to best effect.
104. Pupils enjoy their work in art; they work purposefully and take pride in the quality of the work that they produce. They work together amicably and collaboratively, supporting each other's learning effectively. Pupils talk about their work confidently and many are involved effectively in evaluation of their own work and that of other pupils so that they can make improvements. They use resources sensibly and are keen to experiment with different techniques to vary the effect they achieve.
105. Teaching in art is good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' effort and of the quality of work that they produce. Interesting tasks and a good level of challenge ensure that pupils concentrate well in lessons, remain on task and develop essential skills. Good focus is placed upon the strategies and techniques used by other artists. Skilful questioning, good planning and the imaginative use of resources support learning effectively. Key skills are reinforced and important thinking, speaking and listening skills are being developed.
106. The subject is led well. Resources are of good quality and are adequate in quantity. They are easily accessible to teachers and pupils. The school places a great deal of emphasis upon the art curriculum to encourage pupils of all abilities to experience success.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. By the time pupils reach Year 6, standards are above average and are better than they were at the last inspection. Pupils by the end of Year 2 are achieving satisfactory standards. The pupils are secure in their knowledge of the key processes of

planning, making and evaluating. Teaching throughout the school is good and sometimes very good and this contributes to the good progress made from Year 1 to Year 6. The range of resources is satisfactory. These are in good condition and they support the provision of good quality learning experiences for pupils.

108. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were planning, designing and making a coat to represent the 'coat of many colours' worn by Joseph. Pupils were working well together in small groups. They were at the making stage having previously designed their coats. They displayed satisfactory skills cutting, fixing, shaping and decorating. These pupils use scissors carefully, cutting accurately to a line. They stitch fabric neatly and display good safety awareness as they work. In this lesson a good level of adult support, including parental help, made a positive contribution to good learning. An attractive classroom display shows that, in Year 1, pupils have planned and made a moving picture incorporating a simple mechanism. Pupils have effectively used simple joining techniques and sliding mechanisms to cause a character within the picture to move when a lever is activated.
109. In a very well taught lesson, Year 5 pupils were engaged in designing and making a torch to be used for a particular purpose. This was a very well resourced lesson in which pupils were examining a lot of different commercially produced torches made for a wide range of purposes. They determined for whom and for what purpose each had been made. Learning in this lesson was very good. Receiving very good support from a very knowledgeable teacher, the pupils were gaining a good understanding of the products' basic features. Year 3 and 4 pupils have investigated properties of a range of fabrics in order to determine their suitability for use in the manufacture of clothing. They studied how the articles were designed and produced commercially and evaluated their suitability for the purpose for which they had been produced. In Year 5 pupils designed, drew plans to scale and made good quality moving toys which incorporated a cam into the moving mechanism. In Year 6 pupils have designed and made slippers after having first investigated the designing and making of commercially produced slippers. A strong feature of the work throughout the school is the emphasis placed on evaluation. Pupils evaluate their designs and the things they make and consider ways in which they might be improved.
110. The recently appointed co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and provides effective advice and support to colleagues. She monitors teachers' planning and pupils' completed work and this gives her some understanding of the quality of provision and standards. However, there are no opportunities for her to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and no formal assessments are made of pupils' attainment. This limits her knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. However, the school is aware of this and development of both these areas is provided for in a good subject action plan.

GEOGRAPHY

111. Only one lesson was seen and therefore it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching overall. The one lesson seen in Year 5 was excellent. This was because the teacher had made a very good judgement about what the pupils could already do, checked this rapidly and then moved on with the lesson. She had provided very good learning materials for pupils, matched to their capabilities. By choosing geographical areas within the knowledge of the pupils (their own village and nearby Cheddar) the teacher could build on their knowledge and managed to get the pupils to make some excellent comparisons of the two areas by using evidence which they could find on

the maps she provided. The pupils' map investigation skills developed rapidly in this lesson.

112. Pupils make a good start to their learning in Years 1 and 2 and by the time they are seven years old they have above average skills in mapping, drawing and using maps of the local area. By the age of 11, pupils' geography skills have developed well and are above those expected for this age. Their mapping skills build systematically throughout the school and there is a lot of evidence of this in pupils' workbooks. One noticeable feature of the work is that in most topics studied, pupils are asked to locate the subject or area on a map of the world and, as they get older, locate areas of study on a larger scale maps. This is seen for example in Year 2 where pupils have located postcards on a world map. By constantly revisiting the world map and using it, most of the older pupils are very familiar with the continents, the countries and cities of Europe and many parts and features of the British Isles.
113. The pupils in Year 3 make very good use of maps whilst studying the locality and have annotated the local area maps well showing a good knowledge of major features. The pupils are suitably challenged by the work which the teacher sets them. For example whilst the pupils who find work difficult were asked to draw and label to demonstrate their knowledge, the higher achieving pupils were asked to write about their ideas and were thus able to give much more, reasoned information.
114. Another positive feature of the way in which the subject is taught is that most of the learning is applied to life situations and therefore is perceived by the pupils to have a purpose. This can be seen in a Years 3/4 study of climate where knowledge of climate types is used to make decisions about suitable places for holidays.
115. By the time the pupils reach Year 5 they study the relationships between natural and man-made features of the environment, for example doing work on the cleaning of rivers as part of their study of water. They keep quite complex water diaries. They study settlements and their names and use census information to relate size of population to the appearance of a settlement on a map.
116. Pupils in Year 6 have completed some very interesting independent work on mountains. This they worked in groups, supplementing their class based work with homework. The work made a very good contribution to their personal development as the groups were compelled to work together to give a group presentation. The pupils enjoyed the work and remembered it very well. In the example of work seen, the pupils made very good use of glossaries to explain their work and made good use of the Internet to gather information. They also linked their learning very well to human needs, for example making an information pack on 'Being Prepared for Mountains'.
117. When viewed overall, the geography provision is very good. Skills and knowledge build systematically in a way which is meaningful to the pupils. It makes a very good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Geography has improved considerably since the last inspection.

HISTORY

118. At the age of seven pupils attain satisfactory standards; this is slightly lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. By the age of 11, pupils attain good standards maintaining the level they were at the last inspection.

119. The work completed by Year 2 pupils demonstrates most of the skills and understanding expected for their age. These pupils enjoy the subject and appreciate that important historical events can be sequenced chronologically. They have some knowledge of sources used to reveal past events. For example, when studying the heroic exploits of Grace Darling they build an awareness of the importance of some of these sources, such as old newspaper articles, for informing us about important events in past times. Year 1 pupils learn that objects, such as toys, carry different sorts of evidence of age and change. They develop their understanding of the passage of time through their work on the similarities and differences between conditions now and those in the past. For example, they study how people lived in Victorian times by studying a range of interesting objects used during the Victorian era. They try to puzzle out what they were used for and what we use today to perform the same function. They compare life as experienced by children in Victorian times with their own experiences. By studying at first hand objects from the past, history comes to life for the pupils and they respond very positively, enjoying lessons and learning well.
120. This good progress in all pupils' learning continues throughout the junior classes. Pupils are taught a range of research skills. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 maintain strong interest and develop good enquiry skills across a variety of well-planned topics and periods in history. As a result, Year 5 and 6 pupils have good knowledge and understanding, which they communicate effectively in a range of ways. For example, Year 5 pupils write character sketches of Henry VIII, bringing history to life by interpreting it in their own words and illustrations. All pupils work with commitment and pride and achieve a good standard of presentation. Pupils use a variety of methods of enquiry and sources of information, including the Internet, to deepen their understanding. For example, when studying the Egyptians, pupils in Year 5 visit the British Museum Website to enhance their learning. They use their literacy skills to express this understanding in varied and effective ways, and from different perspectives.
121. There is a good curriculum. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop a sense of the passage of time by learning about life in Roman times, in particular about the impact the Roman invasion of Britain has had over the centuries. They also study Victorian times comparing aspects of life then with their own lives today. They study the contributions made by a range of historical figures and consider the impact they still have on our lives today. For example, they know something of the contribution made in the field of engineering by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Year 5 pupils study the Ancient Egyptians and are introduced to a time line to help them order events. Year 6 pupils study more modern times by considering how Britain has changed since 1948. These pupils work in small groups researching a chosen topic and following their own lines of enquiry. Areas covered include fashion, music and the arts, inventions and transport. Pupils gather their own information and data devising and administering questionnaires and conducting interviews. These pupils are developing good skills in independent enquiry.
122. Teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers use resources well to motivate pupils and arouse their interest. They support the learning process well by challenging pupils' thinking with a range of carefully framed questions. By addressing these, pupils are beginning to build up a good historical picture of everyday life in a range of eras.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

123. In her audit of the school on arrival in September 2001, the headteacher alerted the governing body to the very poor facilities in the school for the teaching of this subject. At the time there were said to be mainly old machines of which only a few were working. The class teachers were not closely involved in the teaching of the subject, small groups were withdrawn on a none-too-frequent basis for skills-based lessons. This area was deemed a very high priority for development because the standard of pupils' work was well below that expected for their age.
124. Less than one year ago a computer suite was installed in the school and better classroom machines were provided. The staff, who had had some training in ICT but who lacked confidence or familiarity with the Somerset learning package, were quickly involved in extensive professional development work and they have made great gains in confidence and teaching ability. The quality of teaching and learning is now good in all classes seen.
125. Because of all the above changes and improvements, pupils are now making good and sometimes very good progress in their learning but they had a lot of ground to make up and only the Year 1 pupils are working at an appropriate level in all aspects of the subject. However, the older pupils are catching up rapidly with where they ought to be. At the present time, the standard achieved by seven and 11 year olds remains lower than it should be.
126. The teachers are making very good use of the ICT suite. They are finding the display screen particularly useful for instructing the whole group and for demonstrating the use of particular software. In one lesson, the pupils in Year 3 were able to find images and text from different sources and put them together to make a research article. They employed their reading skills well to create simple articles from complex text. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were expected to log on to the computer for themselves and to open a program. They were also able to manipulate text and images within text boxes, and to change the size and shape and colour of their images.
127. In both of these lessons the teacher gave very clear instructions and demonstrated the work very well. In the Year 1 lesson, some of the instructions had to be repeated during the lesson as a rather long series of instructions had been given at the beginning and some of these young pupils had forgotten. However, the atmosphere in both lessons was very positive and pupils persevered, getting assistance from their friends in most cases.
128. The curriculum which is provided for this year and the planned provision for next year will help ensure that pupils catch up with the level expected for their age. The co-ordinator has planned a very good 'catch up' programme for each cohort of pupils. The Year 1 pupils have completed work on signs and their meaning using graphics and words together. Most of the pupils have already developed good mouse control skills and clearly understand how to use 'Windows' to gain access to information and programs. In Year 2 pupils have used ICT well to support their mathematics, recording gathered data and creating graphs. This sort of work is currently also being developed in Years 3 and 4, though the content shows more sophistication, with pupils gathering data from CD-ROM sources. The work of the Year 5 and 6 pupils shows that the standard of their work is rising rapidly and they are creating branching databases to organise their information. They have used these well to support their work in science.

129. The main weakness in the subject is the use of ICT to control events. There has been some effort to do this and the youngest pupils make good use of electronic devices such as tape and CD players and remote controls. However, there is currently limited provision of, for example, programmable floor robots which would help pupils to gain a knowledge of programming.

MUSIC

130. Standards in music are in line with national expectations at age seven and above national expectations at age 11. Many pupils make good progress through the extra-curricular provision which enables them to develop their instrumental and performance skills.
131. Pupils sing with good expression and clarity during assemblies and weekly hymn practices, and a number of them become members of the school choir to enable them to extend their activities. They participate in Music Days; for example younger pupils have visited Wells Cathedral recently in company with children from other schools. All pupils participate in school concerts, Christingle and Christmas productions and other performances.
132. In Year 2, all pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder; they can read simple notation and can play a tune across four bars. They listen to instructions very carefully and are making sound progress in developing their fingering techniques. Pupils are beginning to use subject vocabulary accurately and in the correct context. By the end of Year 2, pupils can sing tunefully in two parts and have good pitch and a sound sense of rhythm and tempo.
133. The introduction of a new music scheme of work has been effective; pupils can change pitch successfully and can show how crescendo and diminuendo are portrayed in notation. They have a secure understanding of how to link the notational symbols of 'Hairy Scary Rooms' with the sounds recorded on a CD and most can link the sounds with the illustrations provided. In their performance, pupils have a sound sense of pitch and rhythm when they sing "In the Hairy Scary Castle" to the tune of 'John Brown's body'; they sing this with enjoyment and enthusiasm.
134. In Years 3 to 6, pupils successfully and progressively develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. They have a large repertoire of songs and hymns which they sing with enthusiasm and pleasure. By Year 6, pupils make good oral contributions to discussions and can express views about their musical preferences. They explore descriptive sounds and rhythmic patterns and have a good understanding of notation. During their experiments with tuned and untuned instruments, they successfully collaborate in pairs and groups to compose music on a variety of themes and they can record their compositions appropriately. By Year 6, pupils make good progress in writing lyrics to accompany their compositions and they appraise their performances critically. Pupils also make good progress in their dance activities, moving imaginatively and rhythmically to the wide variety of music they hear.
135. Pupils have positive attitudes to performance and composition and are prepared to talk about their ideas to teachers and visitors. Where pupils take up the opportunities to perform on instruments such as the piano or recorders, they make good progress. The school has a good reputation for its musical productions, such as 'The Pepys Story' and this is much appreciated by the local community.
136. Teaching in music is good overall. Lessons have a brisk pace; the tasks set are challenging and teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and involvement. Teachers are confident in their delivery of the music curriculum and most have good subject knowledge, using imaginative situations, often linked to other subjects, to add interest to lessons.

137. Resources are adequate to deliver the curriculum. A variety of instruments provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their musical skills and interests and to experiment with different combinations of sounds.
138. The specialist music co-ordinator has given music a high profile in the school; she is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and actively engaged in promoting music throughout the school. A new and comprehensive scheme of work is in place and teachers ensure that the skills and concepts are progressively developed. Assessment in music is conducted informally at present and there are few formal systems to enable the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. Only two indoor lessons and a swimming lesson were observed being taught. As a result there is limited evidence to support secure judgements being made about pupils' standards and progress, teaching, or improvement since the last inspection. However, it is evident from observation of a swimming lesson that junior pupils achieve high standards in this area. Observation of a dance lesson involving Years 4 and 5 pupils revealed standards in dance to be high.
140. From the evidence seen, pupils in Year 2 make satisfactory progress and display movement skills at an expected level. These pupils use their movement skills in small sequences and co-operate well when working together in pairs, mirroring each other's performance. In a very good dance lesson involving Year 4 and 5 the teacher began the lesson with an interesting and effective warm-up activity, progressed to well-planned activities that helped pupils develop and refine dance skills and ended with a good cool down session. These pupils were encouraged to demonstrate control and poise and start and finish their dance sequences with style. In this lesson, the very good links made with the work pupils were covering in their study of Ancient Greek Myths and Legends, provided a real context for the dance work and inspired pupils. Following a very good demonstration by the teacher, pupils were eager to perform and improve. By the end of the lesson, pupils worked very well together to implement what they had learned about sequences, formations and steps in devising their own dance routines to appropriate music. The overall standard of performance was high.
141. Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils receive very good quality swimming instruction resulting in their achieving very high standards.
142. Curriculum provision in physical education is very good with pupils enjoying a wide range of opportunities to participate in physical activity. The school enjoys good facilities, having a well-equipped and sizeable hall, and good hard surfaced and grassed playing areas. A good range of equipment is available for use in lessons and this is in good condition. An extensive programme of extra-curricular provision for seven to 11 year olds provides very good enhancement to the curriculum for these pupils. This makes a good contribution to the pace of learning in physical education. Currently there is nothing to enhance the curriculum in this way for infants. Older pupils also have opportunities to participate in competitive team games, representing the school in competition with neighbouring schools. There are no formal assessment and recording procedures to enable teachers to monitor individual pupils' progress.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. During the inspection, few lessons were observed. However, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and by talking to teachers and pupils, there is evidence that standards in religious education are similar to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the ages of seven and 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning about the beliefs and practices of the Christian faith and of the major world religions.
144. In Year 2, pupils understand the main celebrations of the Christian calendar, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest. They have a secure knowledge of the most significant events in the life of Jesus and can understand the moral of the parable of the house that is built upon sand. In Year 2, pupils have sound opportunities to reflect upon the importance of friends, family and the community in their lives and they are encouraged to discuss the rules and choices which they meet in their everyday experience. They have a secure sense of the need for friendship and of making amends after disagreements; they recognise that sharing and caring for others are important. Having been introduced to the basic principles of Islam, pupils can relate the concept of self-discipline to the Muslim observations of Ramadan.
145. By Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the main teachings of Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. They are aware of the major symbols of these religions and know about the religious texts associated with them. They have opportunities to reflect upon and to discuss the mysteries and questions thrown up by their own experiences and those of others and they recognise the barriers that are sometimes erected by differences in belief and practice. In Years 5-6, pupils visit the local parish church and talk to the churchwardens about their roles and duties. They also consider the leadership qualities and the moral and spiritual importance of special people, such as King David, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Bernardo and Mother Theresa. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils engaged in an interesting and insightful discussion about the lessons that could be learned from the life of Mother Theresa, recognising that her kindness and love for others was balanced by her bravery and determination. Pupils listen carefully to each other's views and are prepared to develop a dialogue in the classroom.
146. Pupils make sound progress in religious education. Links with subjects such as history, geography, literacy, art and music enhance their understanding and promote their skills of enquiry and reflection. They respond well to opportunities to investigate beliefs different from their own.
147. The quality of teaching in religious education is good overall. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage pupils to make contributions to class discussions and to explore their own views and feelings. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and seek to encourage them to relate moral and spiritual messages to their own lives. They provide pupils with appropriate challenges and listen to pupils' views with respect.
148. Resources for religious education are satisfactory but there are too few opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship other than churches. Teachers have access to artefacts linked to a variety of faiths but there are inadequate resources for the study of special books and writings.
149. The headteacher has provided a scheme of work to meet the needs of the locally agreed syllabus and to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning.

Assessment in religious education is conducted informally at present and the co-ordinator has limited opportunities to monitor progress in the subject across the school. There is no levelled and annotated portfolio of pupils' work to ensure that all teachers are aware of common expectations.