

## INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY AND ST PETER'S CHURCH OF  
ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL**

Barrington and Ilton, near Ilminster

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123741

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Ferguson

Reporting inspector: Mr Douglas Hayward  
21234

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 248500

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barrington Base Water Street Barrington Ilminster Somerset
Postcode:	TA19 0JR
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Appropriate authority:	Governors
Name of chair of governors:	Cdr David Watson
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable – St Mary and St Peter’s First School was formed in September 1998 after the merger of Barrington CE VC First School and Ilton County First School

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Douglas Hayward 21234	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? Leadership and management
Helen Barter 9052	Lay inspector	Inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gail Robertson 24137	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics History Music Religious education	Staffing, accommodation and resources
John Griffiths 20097	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities? How well does the school care for its pupils? Monitoring pupils' academic performance

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary and St Peter's is a voluntary controlled Church of England first school for pupils aged four to nine years. It is extremely unusual because it occupies two sites, four miles apart. It is the only split site first school in Somerset. The school was formed in September 1998 from the merger of Barrington First School and Ilton County First School. The administrative base now is at Barrington, where there are three classes. There are two classes at the Ilton site. Parents can choose which site they would like their children to attend. Pupils at both bases say that, *'The school is on two separate bases, but we enjoy getting together and when we do it's just like one school'*. Because it is a merged school this is regarded as its first inspection.

Currently there are 72 pupils on roll. Almost all are white and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational need, is below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is also below average. In 2000 the school was awarded an achievement award by the Department for Education and Skills for pupils' high achievement in national tests. Children start in one of the two reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they are five. When they start school many children's attainment is as expected for their age.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

**St Mary and St Peter's is a very good school with many strengths. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is very well supported by hard working and talented teachers. The school is a happy, caring place. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are very good. The standard of teaching is very high and helps pupils to make progress. It gives pupils of all abilities an interesting and exciting education and provides very good value for money.**

#### What the school does well

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management. She has made positive changes, which ensure that the school continues to improve. A dedicated team of staff provide very good support in managing areas of responsibility.
- It provides a very high standard of teaching. Teachers work very well together and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They are very good at planning work that is interesting, varied and at the right level for pupils of different ages and abilities in their classes.
- Staff develop excellent relationships with pupils and are very effective in encouraging them to work hard and behave well. As a result pupils' behaviour is very good. They listen carefully in lessons, get on with their work quickly and quietly and are keen to succeed.
- It has an outstanding ethos and provides a very caring, supportive place in which pupils enjoy learning. Pupils say that, *'It helps us to grow up and we are proud of it'*. It plans excellent opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of the world around them and their ability to work well with others.
- It provides a wide range of interesting subjects for pupils to learn about. There are lots of interesting displays around the school, which show the range of work that pupils enjoy. This is **not** a school that concentrates only on high results in national tests in English and mathematics.
- It helps pupils of all abilities to make progress and achieve high standards.

#### What could be improved

- Information that is required in the governors' annual report about pupils' results in national tests.
- Arrangements for training staff in child protection procedures.

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

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

This is the first inspection since St Mary and St Peter's First School was established in September 1998. Therefore no judgement can be made on improvement. Parents say that it is a good school and always has been! The school is in a very strong position to improve in future.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A*	A	B	A
Writing	A*	A	A	A
Mathematics	A*	A	B	B

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

In the last three years, results for seven-year-olds in national tests have never been lower than above average and have often been well above average or very high. Results in writing are consistently in the top 25 per cent in the country. Last year, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3<sup>1</sup> was four times higher than the national average. In a small school like this, each pupil counts for about 8 per cent of the total marks. If there are one or two pupils who find learning difficult and who do not attain the expected Level 2, the school's results can be badly affected. St Mary and St Peter's school has done well to maintain high results in national tests since 1999. Pupils also go on to attain high results in tests when they are nine years of age. Although tests are not compulsory at the end of Year 4 most schools now use them. In last year's tests all pupils attained the expected Level 3 in reading, 63 per cent attained that level in writing and 81 per cent did so in mathematics. Even more creditable is that the proportion of pupils who attained Level 4 was 45 per cent in reading, 9 per cent in writing and 36 per cent in mathematics. Level 4 is the standard expected of pupils when they are 11 years of age. During the inspection pupils in the reception classes achieved well and are on course to meet national expectations. Standards for seven and nine-year-olds were above average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. They were as expected in all the other foundation subjects seen. A lack of time and opportunities to observe lessons meant that no judgements were made on standards in music and physical education. The school sets challenging targets for pupils to achieve and, because it tracks their progress so well, they invariably achieve them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like coming to school and are very positive about how good it is. They enjoy being part of a small school and feel that it has many advantages. They say, <i>'You know everyone and you are all treated the same. In lessons you can get help quickly if you need it'</i> .
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are polite, friendly and courteous to each other and to adults. They are very well behaved in lessons and around the school at lunchtimes and playtimes. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent, and strengths of the school. Staff plan many opportunities for pupils to work together and to look after each other, and they do so extremely well. There is obvious respect between pupils, and between pupils and adults. Teachers provide excellent role models.
Attendance	Good. Better than in most primary schools.

<sup>1</sup> Levels – by the end of Year 2 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Those who attain Level 3 are, therefore, attaining above nationally expected levels.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

During the inspection 32 lessons were observed. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In fact, the vast majority of lessons were at least good and over half were very good and occasionally excellent. This high quality teaching has a major impact on pupils' attitudes to their work and to their progress. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and are extremely good at allowing time for them to discuss and express their ideas. They really listen carefully to them and respect their opinions. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to work together, solving problems and carrying out investigations. They have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set work that is challenging, yet at just the right level for them to succeed. Pupils say, *'Teachers are kind. If you're stuck you wouldn't sit there thinking 'What shall I do?' You ask for help and they will get you on the right track without telling you the answer'.*

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Displays of pupils' work around the school show the wide range of subjects they learn about. Pupils say, <i>'Work is just right. If we do lots of work we get harder things to do. It tests you as it gets harder'</i> . There are very good links between subjects, and information and communication technology is playing an increasingly important part in helping pupils to learn. There is a very good range of activities for pupils who are gifted and talented, and additional activities outside lessons for all pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school takes very careful account of pupils who need extra help as well as those who show particular talents. Their work is well planned and the school keeps careful track of the progress they make. Support staff provide valuable help in classes and small groups.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school makes sure that the very few pupils reach good standards in their written and spoken English.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. There are regular occasions when pupils' fascination with learning is obvious and they sit in open-mouthed silence in lessons, hardly able to believe what they see. This is a strength of the school's work. The school helps to develop high levels of tolerance, understanding and respect. Everyone's talents are valued. They say modestly, <i>'It's a bright and colourful school. Seeing my work on the walls makes me feel proud – but not overproud!'</i> The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Pupils like, trust and admire the adults who work with them. They say that supervisors look after them well at lunchtime. All adults speak respectfully to pupils. No staff have had recent training in child protection procedures. The school has very good systems for assessing how well pupils are progressing.

Parents know that they are fortunate that their children attend this school. They are very proud of it and are confident to approach it whenever necessary. They especially like the fact that the school listens to what they have to say and acts quickly to solve any problems they have.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has managed the difficult task of combining two schools very successfully and has a clear idea of how the school can improve still further. Pupils like and respect her. They say, <i>'She says hello to everyone each morning. She never stays in her office. She's always teaching!'</i> Subject co-ordinators work very effectively to monitor standards and enjoy the responsibility they are given.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and proud of the school. They are well informed, but often rely very heavily on the headteacher for information. They do not publish all the information that is required in their annual report and the prospectus.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. It is not complacent about how well pupils have done in the past in national tests and is always looking for ways to improve.
The strategic use of resources	The school spends its small budget very wisely to provide an interesting and varied education. It does especially well considering that it is based on two sites and receives significantly less money than two separate schools of the same size as the Ilton and Barrington bases.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Before the inspection 24 parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector and 49 parents (69%) returned their questionnaires.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents say that their children like school, are well behaved and make good progress.</li> <li>They say that teaching is good and helps their children to achieve their best.</li> <li>They say the school is well led and managed and they are kept well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>They say the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents disagree with the amount of homework the school sets.</li> <li>One or two parents say that the school does not work closely with them.</li> </ul>

The team agrees with parents' positive comments. The school has already agreed a homework policy so that provision is the same in both bases. Pupils say that homework is regularly marked and closely linked to their work in school. In the opinion of the team the school works very closely with parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Children enter school at the beginning of the year in which they are five years of age. Assessments, which have been carried out in the past to compare the attainment of children entering St Mary and St Peter's with that of other children in Somerset, show that there is a very wide range of ability. Generally, many pupils enter with attainment expected at that age, but a significant number have lower than expected attainment in one or more areas, for example reading and writing skills.
2. Children settle quickly into the reception classes in both bases. Reception aged children at Barrington work with Year 1 pupils in the morning and in a separate age group each afternoon. At Ilton, reception children are in the same class as six and seven-year-old pupils. Regardless of which base children attend, they benefit from caring, supportive teachers and staff and well-planned lessons and activities. They make good progress, and most are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup>, with some attaining above that level.

#### The infant classes (Years 1 and 2)

3. The results of the 2002 tests and assessments for seven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing and science. The percentage attaining the higher Level 3 was very high in writing, well above average in science and above average in reading and mathematics. In comparison with those in similar schools, results were well above average in writing and average in reading and mathematics.
4. The school's results, compared with those in all schools in England, have been consistently high since it merged in September 1998 (see standards table page 8). In the three years before the most recent tests, results for seven-year-olds were never lower than well above average and in 2000 were very high in all subjects. Despite a slight downturn in mathematics results in the last two years, the school's trend of improvement is above the national average. This is especially difficult in a small school, where the ability of each year group might differ significantly from year to year. Consistently high results such as these reflect the high quality of teaching that was apparent during the inspection and a detailed knowledge of the pupils and the progress they make. The comparatively lower results in 2002 are not because teaching was any less effective. Results indicate a higher than usual number of pupils with significant learning problems who, nevertheless, achieved as high a standard as they could.
5. The marked difference in results at Level 2 and Level 3 reflects the wide range of pupils' ability in school and the fact that the school challenges pupils of all abilities to achieve the best results they can. Ninety-eight per cent of parents agreed in their questionnaires that their children make good progress. Those pupils who do not always find learning easy are well supported by teachers and assistants, for example individually and in small groups, using the Early Learning Strategy. Those pupils whose attainment is higher than average are 'pushed on' by the school to attain high standards and achieve their full potential. In last year's tests in reading, two pupils attained Level 4, the standard expected of pupils four years older than them.

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<sup>2</sup> Early Learning Goals – these are targets for children by the end of the reception year. They refer to personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development.

6. During the inspection standards in Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics, science and information and communication technology were above average. Although these judgements are slightly lower than the grades obtained by pupils of the same age in last year's tests and assessments, it should be remembered that this is a different group of pupils. Teachers have already identified a small number of pupils who, they feel, will not attain Level 2 this year. In a small cohort of only 12 pupils each one counts for 8 per cent of the total marks. If two pupils do not attain the national average, the highest possible percentage attaining Level 2 would be 88 per cent – only slightly higher than last year's national average. Standards in the foundation subjects during the inspection were those expected for seven-year-olds, except in music and physical education, where limited time meant that it was not possible to judge standards.

### Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

7. By the time pupils leave St Mary and St Peter's at the end of Year 4, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above those expected nationally. The good, and sometimes very good, progress that pupils make in the infants is maintained in the junior classes, as can be seen in the table below with results for 2001 and 2002. Although schools are not obliged to set tests for pupils in Years 3 and 4, national tests are available and most schools use them to gauge whether or not pupils are making progress. Pupils are expected to attain Level 2 at the age of seven and Level 4 at the age of eleven. Level 3, therefore, is seen as an expected level for most pupils at the 'midway stage' at the end of Year 4.

Year 4 tests 2001	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
% of pupils at Level 3 (the expected level)	91%	82%	73%
% of pupils at Level 4 (higher than expected)	36%	0%	9%
Year 4 tests 2002			
% of pupils at Level 3	100%	63%	81%
% of pupils at Level 4	45%	9%	36%

8. During the inspection, standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology were higher than expected. Standards in the other foundation subjects seen were as expected for nine-year-old pupils. No judgement was possible in music and physical education.

### Across the school

9. There are several reasons why standards are so consistently high and why pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good, and sometimes very good, progress. They are:
- the school is very good at tracking and recording pupils' progress from the time they start school to ensure that they are doing as well as possible (**see paragraphs 37 - 39**);
  - pupils benefit from high quality teaching (**see paragraphs 17 - 25**). Teachers' planning for different ages and abilities in each class is particularly effective;
  - the school identifies and provides good support for pupils with special educational needs as well as those who are gifted and talented. It is constantly looking for ways

- in which pupils can achieve their best and has recently introduced a system of target setting to make high expectations explicit;
- small classes: the school has used its budget well to maintain small classes. These are especially important considering that classes contain pupils from more than one year group.
10. Although the school quite rightly emphasises the importance of literacy and numeracy, it does not do so to the exclusion of other subjects. Throughout the school pupils enjoy a wide range of subjects, often involving first hand experience through visits to places of interest to reinforce learning or to stimulate pupils' interest in a new topic. There are very good links between subjects, and literacy skills are very well developed through subjects such as science, design and technology and history. Information and communication technology is playing an increasingly important and significant part in other subjects, for example English and mathematics. This very good approach is enhanced by many planned opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment. This was particularly so in science. Lessons in many subjects frequently provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to work collaboratively and this approach helps to develop positive attitudes to and enthusiasm for learning.
  11. The very few pupils with English as an additional language and from minority ethnic groups make the same progress as other pupils. They are fully included in all activities. Although there was no apparent difference between girls' and boys' attainments during the inspection, the school has noted that recently boys have done better than girls. It is monitoring trends to ensure that there is equal opportunity for both. The school also keeps a careful eye on pupils' results when they leave to go on to middle school. Information supplied by the headteacher there enables St Mary and St Peter's to follow and monitor their progress and results at the age of eleven.
  12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school includes in this category pupils with learning difficulties as well as those who are regarded as academically gifted or who have particular talents, for example in music. Work is very well planned in lessons, so that pupils are working at just the right level to challenge them and for them to succeed. They receive very good support from learning assistants. One pupil commented, *'Work is just right. If we do lots of work we get harder things to do. It tests you as it gets harder'*. Although teachers know how to plan work that is appropriate for them, targets in pupils' individual education plans are not always sufficiently precise and it is difficult to measure progress towards them.

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

13. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well. They are very enthusiastic about their work and are eager to learn. This has a very good impact on the standards that they achieve. Pupils' good levels of attendance show that they are keen to be there. Parents recognise that these are very good features of the school and say that their children like school, that they know how to behave and that they are being helped to grow up.
14. Pupils show a keen interest in learning. They listen intently to their teachers and confidently ask and answer questions. They are able to maintain concentration and attention throughout the lesson and greet each new task or activity with enthusiasm. Pupils settle to work quickly with the minimum of fuss and work very well together in pairs, in groups and as a whole class. They show great pleasure in their work and in others' achievements. One of the strengths of pupils' attitudes is the way in which they listen carefully to each other and often spontaneously applaud others' achievements.

15. Pupils' behaviour in and around classrooms is very good and contributes to the orderly and calm atmosphere in the school. They are polite and respectful to one another and to adults. The ethos of the school is excellent and all staff expect high standards of behaviour. Pupils respond very well to this and say that school rules are easy to understand and are there, *'for everyone's benefit'*. Pupils themselves say that manners are good and that *'people aren't rude'*. The school is highly effective in dealing with anti-social behaviour and there is no evidence of bullying. Following a series of serious incidents, which were well documented, the school decided to permanently exclude one pupil last year.
16. Very positive relationships help pupils to mature and to become confident and enthusiastic learners. Staff consistently praise and encourage them and the rapport helps pupils' self-confidence and independence. They enjoy carrying out jobs in classrooms and say that they feel confident to make suggestions to any teacher, for example when they organised a Blue Peter fundraising event. Inclusion is given a high priority and, as a result, pupils of all ages, genders and abilities work and play very well together. Pupils say that the small school atmosphere is, *'Easy to settle in to'* and, *'Everyone helps each other'*. The older pupils are very caring and responsible towards the younger ones. They appreciate and value each other's differences and understand each other's feelings very well. This has a positive impact on their personal development, which is very good.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. During the inspection 32 lessons were observed. The quality of teaching is very good overall and plays a major part in the high standards that pupils attain. Of the 32 lessons observed, two were excellent, 14 were very good, 12 were good and four were satisfactory. The few satisfactory lessons lacked the sharpness and pace of good and very good lessons. There were times when, as the pace dropped, there were missed opportunities to develop pupils' ideas and assessments of what they had learned were not thorough enough. In the vast majority of lessons, however, teaching was extremely effective. High quality teaching is evident in:
  - teachers' very good relationships with pupils and their high expectations of them;
  - very good planning that takes account of all abilities and pupils of different ages in the same class, including opportunities for collaborative work;
  - teachers' very good subject knowledge and cross curricular links;
  - very good questioning that helps them to assess how well pupils have learned;
18. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. Teachers like and care for them and want them to experience success. Pupils were very positive about their teachers and spoke of the benefits that they felt a small school offered. One was that teachers knew all pupils well because there were so few of them. Another was that in small classes they did not have to wait for teachers to respond to them if they were 'stuck' with their work and that they knew that if they did ask for help they would get it. As one pupil said, *'Teachers are kind. If you're stuck you wouldn't sit there thinking, 'What shall I do?' You ask for help and they will get you on the right track without telling you the answer'*.
19. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. The calm, purposeful atmosphere in classes helps pupils to concentrate, work hard and get their work finished on time. Pupils know that teachers have high expectations of their behaviour and they invariably respond well. On the few occasions that teachers have to remind pupils to behave appropriately they do so without fuss. For instance, in one class pupils had temporarily forgotten the rule about putting up their hands to answer questions. The teacher very positively said, *'I'm only going to ask children who have got their hands up'*, to which the pupils responded immediately. This is just one example of a range of quick and effective reminders that teachers use. Often a glance or a moment's pause is sufficient!

20. Teachers plan their lessons extremely well. This is a strength of their work and the main reason why work is so well matched to pupils of different ages and abilities in the same class. Work planned at just the right level for all pupils challenges them and helps them to achieve the best standard of work they can. Considering that most pupils start school with attainment at expected levels, and leave with attainment above average, the effectiveness of teachers' planning is clear.
21. Teachers plan very well for pupils at both ends of the ability range. Those with special educational needs are well supported, often working in small groups or individually with a learning assistant who helps them concentrate, breaks down their work into easy stages and gives them lots of praise and attention. This works very well. Occasionally, assistants have no specific part to play during the lesson introduction, which is not good use of their time. Pupils feel confident, know that they are doing well and enjoy the individual attention. Pupils who are identified as academically very able also receive good support. Their work is challenging. It is not just that teachers plan more work of the same sort for them at a harder level. They often plan work that will make them think in a different way, for example opportunities for investigative work in science, where they can put forward their own suggestions and then find out whether they are correct.
22. There were many occasions during the inspection when opportunities for collaborative work were a prominent feature of lesson planning and one reason why pupils find lessons so interesting and stimulating. Teachers' lesson introductions are not automatically followed by pupils going off to work individually. Teachers value the contribution that shared ideas and discussion can make to their lessons. They expect boys and girls to be able to work together sensibly and constructively. Providing opportunities for discussion among pupils of similar abilities enables them to share appropriate resources and for the teachers to provide help on specific aspects of each group's work. This means that their time is well focused and helps to move pupils on quickly.
23. Teachers' ability to help pupils is enhanced by their very good subject knowledge and their willingness to link subjects together. Their responsibilities as subject co-ordinators, and their enthusiasm for continuing professional development through courses, have enabled them to become increasingly knowledgeable. The planned links between subjects are very good. For example, teachers make very good use of information and communication technology in English, mathematics and science, as well as in other subjects.
24. Teachers are very good at finding out how much pupils know during lessons. In their introductions they use a range of questions to recap on previous lessons to find out how much pupils have remembered. They address questions to the class as a whole, for example *'Who can tell me...?'*, and to individual pupils, for example *'Have you got an idea?'* so that they are sure in their own minds that pupils are ready to move on. In an excellent literacy lesson, the teacher constantly directed questions to a pupil with special educational needs to ensure that she understood and was fully included in the activity. In a very good numeracy lesson the teacher's questions about solving a problem were met with correct answers, to which the teacher added a supplementary question to make them think even harder, *'You're absolutely right, but can you tell me why?'*
25. Although a few parents disagreed with the amount of homework that teachers set, the pupils themselves think it is about right and follows on well from their work in school. The inspection team supports this view. Teachers' marking in some subjects is usually very good, for example literacy (**see paragraph 76**). It praises pupils' efforts, is fair and offers suggestions for improvement. It is not always as good in other subjects (**see paragraph 85**) and teachers' written comments do not reflect the high quality of oral praise and pointers for improvement that are frequently apparent in lessons.

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

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are very good and meet the statutory requirements in all subjects of the National Curriculum, and the local syllabus in religious education. The very good support provided for pupils with special educational needs, including those identified as gifted and talented, ensures that they have a very good access to the full curriculum.
27. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are also very good and a particular strength is the way in which teachers link subjects together, for example literacy and history, and information and communication technology and science. Pupils word process poems in English work. In science and mathematics lessons pupils use a variety of graphs to effectively display the data they have collected. In a very good design and technology lesson, evaluating a range of purses, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made very good links with their history project on the Romans when they were shown a 'bulla', which is a purse to hold a lucky charm. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have also investigated fruit when making a fruit salad in a design and technology lesson and they make good links with both science and mathematics in their work.
28. School planning strategies provide a clear framework for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Topics are planned over a two-year cycle, so that pupils of different ages in the same class do not repeat work. This school overview is used by teachers to plan work in more detail each term, using schemes of work based on guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Teachers with pupils of the same age in different classes, and on different bases, work very closely together to ensure that they learn the same thing but, due to a shortage of resources, not necessarily at the same time. Subject co-ordinators have a very good knowledge and grasp of their subjects, their needs and their future development. They monitor their curriculum areas to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered.
29. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented well across the school. The frameworks they provide are helping to maintain and raise standards in both English and mathematics.
30. The school adds further breadth to its curriculum through personal, social and health education and includes good provision for sex education and information about drugs misuse. The programme is operated mainly through 'circle and badger time' where pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. At these sessions it is usually agreed that no interruptions occur and only one person at a time will speak. Pupils generally are very willing to speak and also are good at listening to one another, so that opinions and concerns are shared.
31. The school provides a very good range of activities that extend and enrich the curriculum. These include visits to Bristol where pupils in Years 1 and 2 have hands-on experiences to support their work in science. Older pupils in the school do gardening at the nearby Barrington Court. Pupils visit the British and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol to study world journeys and there is a variety of clubs, for example art and craft, gymnastics, football and other sports. All pupils go swimming for six weekly sessions during the year. They also have the opportunity to sing, or play the recorder. The oldest pupils in the school attend a residential camp in the summer term for a week.
32. The local community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Parents have close contacts with the school and Ilton and Barrington churches are used for visits and services. Because most pupils live near the school there is a community atmosphere and

involvement at both bases. In addition, there is a very constructive relationship with partner institutions. The school belongs to a strong cluster group of small schools and regular meetings take place. One outcome of these meetings has been the provision for 12 laptop computers to be made available for each school at certain times of the year. There are also strong links with the local education authority through its school adviser and good quality professional development training. This has had a positive impact on teachers' subject knowledge and their management of curriculum areas (**see paragraph 50**).

33. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is central to the school's work. The overall excellent provision is reflected in pupils' very good attitudes to school, their behaviour and relationships and their developing maturity.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good and is evident in their ability to think and reflect on their learning and their own lives. Their interest in and enjoyment of learning are particularly strong and add much to their development. Children of reception age showed great fascination when looking at plants. They sighed with amazement when they saw the plant's roots as it was lifted out of the pot. When asked what seeds need to make them grow, one child earnestly replied, 'Love'.
35. There is excellent promotion of pupils' social and moral development through the everyday life of the school. The simple school rules are well understood by pupils and set clear expectations of how they should behave. Pupils greatly respect them and recognise that they contribute to the positive atmosphere in the school. Younger pupils say that the rules, '*help us to learn to be good and to look after our school*'. Teachers and other adults provide very good examples for pupils and establish excellent relationships with them. Pupils say, '*Teachers are really kind to us and we would tell them if we felt unhappy*'. Pupils' social development is strongly promoted through opportunities for them to work together in the classroom and to participate in a wide range of activities. They learn to get on with others and to value each other's opinions and beliefs. They learn to appreciate wider moral issues, such as the promotion of fair trade for developing countries.
36. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school is well established in the local community and teachers make good use of events during the year to introduce pupils to traditions such as 'egg shackling' and maypole dancing. Although the school is situated in a mainly white, rural community, teachers seek as many opportunities as they can to widen pupils' knowledge of the varied cultures in Britain and across the world. In lessons, pupils develop a rich cultural awareness, for example through Jamaican poetry, Aboriginal art and the homes, transport and lives of people in Bangladesh.

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

37. The school's assessment procedures are very good and have a positive impact on pupils' standards of work. For the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, national tests are given to the pupils at the age of seven. They undertake additional tests in Years 3 and 4 in order to track their progress. The results of all these tests are carefully analysed by the subject and assessment co-ordinators to provide the school with indicators of pupils' progress. This data is also used well to highlight any weaknesses in the curriculum that require more attention.
38. Assessments are carried out in the reception classes and the data from these and subsequent assessments are used to track each child's progress through the school. This tracking helps teachers to set individual targets for pupils to achieve in English, mathematics and science. As well as identifying pupils with special educational needs, it



also identifies gifted and talented pupils in order to provide them with the support they need. All pupils have an assessment file covering the time from when they enter the reception class to Year 4 when they transfer to the middle school. These very comprehensive files contain the results of tests and analyses, as well as samples of work levelled against national expectations. Copies of the targets set for pupils and reports to parents are also in these files. These assessment files make a good and readily accessible profile of each pupil as they move through the school and help adults to identify the amount of progress that has been made, and whether pupils are achieving as well as they can.

39. Teachers also carry out assessments at the end of each topic. Coherent systems for assessments in the other subjects of the curriculum are at different stages of development. Co-ordinators of the non-core subjects, such as history, geography and design and technology, are already exploring and recording levelling procedures against appropriate expectations and these are gradually helping to build up a picture of how well pupils do and what progress they make. Additionally, teachers evaluate the lessons they teach and are very good at modifying subsequent lessons to accurately target pupils' needs. This is one reason why work is so well matched for pupils of all abilities.
40. This is a small, caring school where adults know all the pupils and their families well. Parents say that they can approach the school with any questions or concerns about their children's welfare or progress and that the small school environment has a very positive impact on their children's well-being. The quality of educational and personal support and guidance is very good because the school is very inclusive and provides very well for pupils' differing needs and abilities. Parents commented on the very good quality of support provided for pupils with special educational needs. The high quality relationships and the knowledge that staff have of pupils are reflected in pupils' comments such as, *'The teachers always help you when you're stuck'* and, *'This school helps us to grow up. We won't be bullies when we are older'*.
41. There are satisfactory procedures in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. Staff that are responsible for first aid care well for pupils who are unwell or hurt themselves. The provision of accredited first aid courses for pupils helps them to learn to look after others, and is a good feature of the extra-curricular provision. Although the school has a satisfactory child protection policy, and staff understand different pupils' backgrounds well, it is aware that there is an urgent requirement for them to undertake up-to-date training in child protection procedures. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and comply with statutory requirements. The school expects that pupils will attend whenever possible, and attendance is good. There is a good Internet safety policy in place that is understood by pupils and parents.
42. There are excellent procedures for promoting and monitoring pupils' behaviour. All adults have clear and consistent expectations and support pupils very well when they have difficulties. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them. When staff do need to give pupils small reminders, this is done respectfully. For example, one teacher said, *'Please don't shout out or interrupt. We are working so hard and you will have your turn'*. Pupils are praised for their attitudes towards others and their efforts at personal improvement. This raises their self-esteem and contributes to the harmonious atmosphere throughout the school. Staff provide excellent role models in their attitudes towards pupils and each other, and pupils clearly follow their example.
43. Pupils' personal development is monitored and supported well. They are helped to mature and are well prepared for their move on to middle school. Excellent relationships, high expectations and the use of praise to motivate and support pupils are particularly good features of this provision and provide a very good foundation for their learning.

Pupils appreciate recognition of their achievements when they are awarded with effort marks, stickers and certificates.

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

44. The school has very effective links with parents, which have a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the life of the school. Parents say that their children are fortunate to attend this school and emphasise that the links between home and school are very good. They say that they are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of school life. Parents are particularly positive about the progress that their children make in school as a result of good teaching, high expectations and the fact that they can easily discuss any concerns that they may have.
45. Parents have few criticisms of the school's work. Some feel that the provision of homework is not always consistent between the two bases. The school has been quick in trying to resolve this issue and staff have already discussed and agreed a homework policy so that expectations are the same across the school. A few parents feel that the school does not work as closely with them as it might. The inspection team could find no evidence that this is the case and, on the contrary, feels that staff are very approachable and that parents can speak easily to them at the beginning and end of the school day as well as at regular consultation meetings.
46. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. They receive very good information about pupils' progress through reports and formal consultation meetings. The school places high value on maintaining close links with parents and encourages them to get in touch at any time to discuss their children's progress. Parents say that they find the half-termly newsletters helpful in keeping them informed about what is going on and are able to access information through the developing school website. While these features are very good, the school does not provide parents with information about the work pupils will do each term. The prospectus and governing body's annual report to parents do not meet requirements. Some of the required information is missing, for example the national comparative data for tests, and the prospectus gives only brief information about the curriculum. The prospectus does not do justice to the high quality of education provided by the school.
47. Parents have a good impact on the work of the school. They respond well to encouragement to support work in the classroom, visits outside school and extra-curricular activities. Many parents hear their children read regularly at home and record their support in reading record diaries. The school is keen that as many parents as possible help their children's learning in this way and is developing more opportunities for them to come into school to learn about how to help them read, for example by reading to pupils during the forthcoming World Book Day.

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

48. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management. As well as managing two separate bases four miles apart, with all that involves in terms of liaison, she has a teaching commitment each morning and all day on Friday with a class of reception children and pupils in Year 1. Ninety-four per cent of parents quite rightly indicated in their questionnaires that the school was well managed and led. This high percentage reflects the hard work the headteacher has undertaken to combine two separate schools and to win parents' approval and support for the merger. She is clear about the school's strengths and the areas for development. She is highly regarded by pupils and adults.
49. The school has clear and appropriate aims that are reflected in the day-to-day work of the school. The consistently high results attained by pupils since the merger were

recognised by the Department for Education and Skills in 2000 with an Achievement Award. The school improvement plan correctly identifies appropriate areas for review, investment and training. Personnel responsible for implementing change are identified, success criteria established and completion dates fixed. The plan is thorough and well thought out, although it only lasts for one year at a time. It addresses immediate needs, rather than setting out a strategic longer-term plan, for example, over two or three years.

50. The headteacher is extremely adept at delegating responsibility to teachers in their roles as subject co-ordinators. Even though some staff have many responsibilities and have only recently taken over, they are very willing to do so, very knowledgeable about their subjects, and have clear ideas about future developments. The headteacher has prudently allocated non-contact time for co-ordinators to review the status of their subjects and to monitor teaching and standards. Staff have responded very well to having budgets for their own subjects and opportunities for further professional development by attending courses. This has been a very effective use of time and the school budget. The school finance officer deals efficiently with day-to-day budget management and administration.
51. The involvement of the governing body in the management of the school is sound. Governors are very supportive, attend meetings regularly and are fully aware of the school's strengths. The chair of governors and the headteacher meet regularly. There is an effective committee structure to handle different aspects of the school's work, and communication between governors is good. For example, they observe lessons as a way of monitoring the curriculum and report back to other members of the governing body. They are aware of the principles of best value; for example, they know how well the school's results compare with others nationally and those in similar schools. They have very high regard for the headteacher. However, they are almost totally dependent on information supplied by the headteacher to keep them informed. They support her very well, but do not take a leading role in the management of the school; for example, they contribute to the school improvement plan but do not play a decisive role in developing it.
52. There is very good management of the budget by the headteacher. There are no nationally agreed criteria for funding schools with split sites. However, the headteacher and governors have felt for some time that St Mary and St Peter's is less favourably funded than it should be. For instance, the headteacher has shown that two separate schools containing the same number of pupils at the Barrington base and the Ilton base would be significantly better off. The chair of the governors' finance committee has calculated that the local education authority under-funds the school. Since the merger, the governors' attempts to address this issue have not been successfully pursued. Consequently, the school has used up its budget reserves and now faces a period of some financial uncertainty, with the possibility of reduced staffing
53. There is good and effective management of special educational needs. The school has worked hard to adopt the revised Code of Practice for special educational needs and to introduce new individual education plans. Currently, they are not fully up to date and pupils' targets are not sufficiently precise or easily measurable. Support for pupils with special educational needs in classrooms is much better than the paperwork would suggest. Support from learning assistants is very well organised and effective and teachers' lesson plans clearly indicate work that is appropriate for pupils' different abilities. The school is very good at identifying and supporting pupils who are gifted and talented. They, too, have individual education plans that are reviewed regularly. Observations during the inspection confirm that these pupils are regularly challenged to meet teachers' high expectations.
54. The school is well staffed. Teachers' experience and expertise match well the demands of the National Curriculum and the age range of the school. The two teachers who joined

the staff in September have been given very good support. There is a whole-school team spirit amongst all teachers and they offer each other mutual support. There are good mentoring procedures to help teachers who are newly qualified. The school's arrangements for managing the performance of its teaching staff are established and are sound.

55. All support staff provide valuable assistance. Classroom assistants in the Foundation Stage are well deployed and work closely with the teacher. They provide good quality assistance, particularly when supporting and teaching. Children and pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for.
56. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. However, there is no immediate access to the outside environment for children in the Foundation Stage in either base, but they take part in the school's physical education activities. There is only one school hall at Barrington, which is small and cramped. Pupils at Ilton use the larger classroom for physical education and as an area for assembly. The grounds in both sites are attractive and full use is made of them. The staff make the best possible use of the accommodation. There are good wall displays throughout the school, which demonstrate the value the school places on the pupils' work. The buildings are clean and well respected by the pupils, who are very proud of their school.
57. The quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory overall. The split site means that twice the number of resources have to be bought to ensure that the curriculum is delivered fairly to all the children. The distance between the two sites means that the sharing of large equipment, such as overhead projectors and computers, is impossible. This places a considerable strain on the school's budget. Pupils and children handle resources and books with great respect.
58. Taking into account:
  - the progress that pupils make and the high standards they achieve at seven and nine years of age;
  - the high quality teaching;
  - pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and their excellent personal development;
  - the very good curriculum provision;
  - the split site accommodation;
  - excellent leadership and management by the headteacher;

the school provides very good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

**59. In the context of its many strengths, and to maintain high standards and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:**

- **publish all the information that is required in the governors' annual report about pupils' results in national tests;  
(paragraph 46 of the main report)**
- **ensure that arrangements for training staff in child protection procedures are made.  
(paragraph 41 of the main report)**

**The following minor points for improvement should be considered as the basis for an action plan:**

**develop the role of the governors by:**

- **taking a longer-term strategic view of the school through the improvement plan;  
(paragraph 49 of the main report)**
- **investigating fully whether the formula for funding the school's split sites is equitable;  
(paragraph 52, 57 of the main report)**

**review the quality of teachers' marking to ensure:**

- **that it offers advice about how work can be improved and how pupils can raise their attainment even further.  
(paragraph 85 of the main report)**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

32

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	2	14	12	4	0	0	0
Percentage	6	44	38	12	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	72
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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	13	9	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (86)	86 (86)	91 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	73 (86)	86 (79)	91 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

**The existing guidance is that test and examination data should be excluded from inspection reports and parents' summaries if the year group is 10 or fewer. This also applies to year groups of boys and girls separately.**

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

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

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

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
69	2	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
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 – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Average class size	15

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001 / 2002
	£
Total income	277,051
Total expenditure	250,681
Expenditure per pupil	3,256
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,136

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate - 52%

Number of questionnaires sent out	71
Number of questionnaires returned	49

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	41	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	18	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	35	14	0	2
The teaching is good.	69	29	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	35	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	20	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	35	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	37	4	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	33	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	51	6	2	2

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**

60. The quality of education for children in the Foundation Stage is good and provides them with a good grounding for the next stage of their education. Children are taught in two mixed-age classes, one in Barrington and the other at Ilton. They are taught with pupils in Years 1 and 2. The induction process into the reception class is good. Parents and children are well prepared for starting school. Meetings and visits to the school are well organised and purposeful. Parents receive adequate information about the school. The headteacher makes effective visits to the village playgroups to learn more about the children before they start in the reception class.
61. The curriculum offered is good. It is broad and balanced and covers all required areas of learning. It includes parts of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in preparation for work in Year 1. The parents are fully informed of their children's work and progress through formal meetings and also through informal discussions at the beginning of the teaching day. Children have a wide range of abilities. School assessments generally show levels of attainment that are those expected of children at this age nationally, although a significant number start with attainment below expectations, especially in early reading and writing skills. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Most will reach the Early Learning Goals in all areas and a significant number will exceed them.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

62. Children's levels of social development are above those expected of children at this age. They are happy, confident and able to establish effective relationships with each other and with adults. All children settle well and show a good understanding of daily routines. They sit quietly and are well behaved during registration or when adults are talking, sometimes for extended periods of time. They work well as part of a group and independently. They concentrate and persevere in their learning. They demonstrate independence in dressing and personal hygiene. They are considerate of others, taking turns, sharing fairly and understanding the principle of standing in a queue. Independence in selecting activities and resources, using initiative in solving problems and seeking help only when needed are fully established procedures in both classes.

**Language and Literacy**

63. The planned range of activities promotes children's language and literacy skills well. They listen attentively and enjoy story time. Adults give children good opportunities to talk about their experiences and interests throughout the school day. They recognise and write their names. They are taught the necessary skill for reading and are very careful when handling books. The most able children can recognise many words and have learned the sounds of many letters and groups of letters and how to read words they do not recognise. A small number of children are reading at a level expected of pupils much older than they are. Children know that writing is used for many purposes, for example stories, letters and lists. They copy and write independently, using their own symbols, individual letters, words and sentences to convey meaning. Their handwriting is developing well with clear, well-formed and correctly oriented letters. The majority will reach the Early Learning Goals and a significant number will exceed them.

## Mathematics

64. Teachers support learning in mathematics with a wide variety of resources and experiences and no opportunity is lost to reinforce number work in a variety of ways. Children make good progress in counting skills, number recognition and mathematical language. They are able to count well beyond 10. They know the names of common shapes, for example 'triangles', 'squares', 'circles' and 'rectangles'. They use non-standard measures well in the measurement of length and they compare length and estimate size. In their work on capacity, when using the sand and water trays, they begin to understand the relative capacity of containers and can make reasonable estimates. In role-play in the 'post office', children use mathematical terminology well, for example '*one more*' and '*too many*'. The quality of learning in mathematics is good. The majority will reach the Early Learning Goals.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children's attainment in this area of learning is good. Many very good opportunities are provided for them to begin to understand history. They talk about their families, homes and past and present activities in their lives. They can identify how washing day in the past differs from now. They learn about geography when they go on a visit to the village church and record what happens there. Walks and visits around the school and the churches help to foster among children a greater understanding of their own community. They learn to explore the world through well thought-out activities that make them become more curious. They plant seeds and water them regularly. Watching changes in the weather further promotes the sense of change, wonder and curiosity and a keen interest in the world around them. Children have good experiences of using technology. They use the computer confidently and attain a good level of skill.

## Creative development

66. Most children attain the expected levels in creative development and make sound progress. They all know their colours and select different paints and crayons in their work. They use a suitable range of techniques to work with a variety of textures. Children are imaginative and creative, for example, in their role-play. They enjoy making flowers for their sunflower garden centre and creating landscaped gardens in the sand. They explore sound and can sing many nursery rhymes and jingles such as 'Old King Cole'. Children show developing skills and evident enjoyment. Most will reach the Early Learning Goals.

## Physical development

67. Children do not have immediate access to outdoor play areas. They do, however, have the opportunity to use the school hall for physical development at the Barrington base and a very large classroom at Ilton. Teachers provide good experiences for them to run, skip and jump in the playground. Outside activity is always well supervised. By the end of the reception year, all children will reach the expected standards in body control and the hand control, which is necessary for writing, drawing and painting. Children move confidently inside and outside. They are aware of space and rarely bump into each other. They use a range of small equipment well, such as scissors, paintbrushes, crayons and pencils.

## Teaching

68. The quality of teaching for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good overall. The activities are very well planned and resourced and the tasks are matched well to the needs of the children. Staff have a clear understanding of how young children learn and know what will interest them. The teaching promotes the Early Learning Goals and

provides a very good foundation for the National Curriculum. The expectations of the teachers and teaching assistants are high and they work in close partnership. Teachers have very good questioning skills, which are a strength of their work. They make the children think very carefully before they answer.

## ENGLISH

69. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are above average in all aspects of English and they make at least good progress. They maintain this progress in Years 3 and 4 and by the time they leave school they attain standards that are above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress as a result of carefully planned lessons. Learning assistants support these pupils very well and contribute positively to their learning.
70. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. They listen carefully to each other and to adults. Their willingness to listen, and then contribute to discussion, helps to create an environment where learning is valued and where pupils learn from each other. Many pupils articulate their views clearly and boldly and enjoy discussion. They use their good general knowledge well to add interest and personal thoughts. In Year 2, pupils can deduce the meaning of words and show how carefully they have been listening through the quality of their responses. When discussing the acknowledgement page in a book the teacher was reading they offered sensible and sensitive ideas. For example, one said that 'David' to whom the book was dedicated, *'was likely to be someone that the author knew well'*, although as one pupil pointed out, it was unlikely to be the author's husband because she would have referred to him as *'my darling husband'*. In Year 4, pupils very thoughtfully discussed references to people's 'roots' in a Jamaican poem. One suggested that, *'the poet could mean that people had been uprooted from Africa'*, while another thought that the poet, *'was talking about family roots, like a family tree'*.
71. Pupils read well and enjoy reading. They learn basic reading skills thoroughly from the time they start in school, for example single letter sounds and the sounds that combinations of letters make. This helps them to tackle unknown words confidently. Their teachers read books to them with real enthusiasm, using voice tone and volume extremely well, and this love of literature is transmitted to the pupils. They have a good knowledge of books and are well aware of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They are developing an awareness of authors' different styles and many express preferences for authors and give sound reasons for their choice. Older pupils especially also use the Internet to obtain information for their work in school, for example about history topics. There is good dialogue between teachers and parents in pupils' reading records. The school is actively encouraging parents to read with their children at home on a frequent basis in order to promote the importance of and love for reading.
72. Pupils make good progress in writing throughout the school. The school emphasises the importance of neat, well-formed handwriting, accurate spelling and correct punctuation, and then provides very good opportunities for pupils to put these skills to good use in a range of writing for different purposes, for example stories, poems and descriptions. One pupil in Year 2 wrote not long after starting school, *'The caterpillar was fli in the ski'* (*The caterpillar was flying in the sky*). A year later the pupil's developing ability was evident in, *'When I woke up in the night I couldn't go back to sleep because of the rain, so I blocked my ears'*. Just over a year later the pupil word-processed an imaginary story about the 'Baby Monster', complete with punctuation and sentences. *'Once there were three baby monsters. They lived in a deep, scary wood. There was tall trees in the wood with big branches hanging off and webs and spiders crawling round. The baby monsters were very happy with their home'*.

73. The success of the school's strategies for teaching writing is evident in pupils' consistently outstanding results in national tests at the age of seven. By the age of nine, pupils' writing has developed still further in style and content. It is usually lively and thoughtful, and ideas are developed in interesting ways. Pupils write for an increasingly wide range of purposes, for example instructional writing, descriptions and syllabic poetry, such as:
- Frost*  
*On Webs*  
*Glistening*  
*Making patterns*  
*On the window panes*  
*Lovely, like frosty ferns*  
*Covering leaves and branches*  
*Like spiralling sugar crystals*  
*Tiny icicles hanging off twigs*
74. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They enjoy their lessons, find books fascinating, relish the opportunities to discuss and enjoy writing ideas in different ways. Pupils said how much they enjoy the school's annual 'Play in a Day' activity, which involves all pupils in Year 4 making scenery, adding sound effects and music and acting out a play that they have not attempted before.
75. In the four literacy lessons observed during the inspection, teaching ranged from sound to excellent and was very good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and a real flair and enthusiasm for literacy. Their planning is very good and takes into account the full range of pupils' abilities, as well as the mixed age groups in some classes. Teachers' questioning is very skilful and develops pupils' willingness to suggest ideas. All pupils' contributions are accepted and valued. In an excellent lesson in Year 2, the teacher's choice of a Big Book prompted gasps of wonder and lots of comments as the pupils looked at the illustrations to the story. Higher attaining pupils were well challenged when they were asked to draw conclusions about the text from the limited information they had available. In a very good lesson in Year 4 the teacher planned excellent opportunities for pupils to work together. The teacher's probing questioning prompted thought-provoking discussion amongst pupils. Lessons move at a brisk pace and no time is lost in any of the separate parts of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers have justifiably high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and this means that no time is wasted addressing noisy or 'off task' behaviour. Teachers use computers frequently to allow pupils to word-process their writing and these help to develop their keyboard skills.
76. Teachers' assessments are very thorough and help to identify pupils who might require additional help, as well as those who require additional challenge to their work. Tests are used constructively to identify pupils' progress in reading, writing and spelling. Regular pieces of written work are annotated by teachers, who offer a frank assessment of how well pupils have done in terms of National Curriculum levels of work. Teachers' marking is good. It shows that they know their pupils very well, is supportive and offers ideas for improvement, for example, '*A lovely story. You have remembered the details well. Now, try to write in correctly formed sentences with capital letters and full stops*'.
77. The co-ordinator for English provides good subject leadership. Lessons are regularly monitored and the subject is well resourced. Careful monitoring of results means that any variations in standards in tests are quickly identified and strategies put in place to address them.

## MATHEMATICS

78. Standards for seven-year-olds are above average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Lessons are well structured to take account of the National Numeracy Strategy, with a good balance of oral and mental work, teacher explanation and pupils' independent tasks. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment remains higher than expected nationally, and good teaching and a well-planned curriculum mean that they continue to make good progress. A greater emphasis on mental work and discussion about different strategies that pupils can use to reach their answers are contributory factors to the good standards reached.
79. Pupils in Year 1 develop their understanding of number well through appropriate tasks that challenge their thinking. In a very good lesson, as pupils were playing a game, the teacher encouraged them to split the number into fives. They soon found out that 14 is made up of  $5+5+4$  and 20 is  $5+5+5+5$ . The teacher encouraged them to ask questions such as, '*Is it odd?*', '*Is it even?*' and '*How many 5's?*'
80. Many pupils recognise coins to the value of £1 and use different coins to make equivalent values to 10p. Lower attaining pupils use their understanding of counting and adding simple numbers and use both 1p and 2p coins successfully to make amounts to 5p. Higher attaining pupils begin to develop problem-solving techniques when trying to decide how to take 2p away from a 5p coin.
81. By the time they are seven, pupils' understanding of money has further developed and some can give equivalent values to one pound. Pupils in Year 2 count confidently to 100 in twos, fives and tens. They count in tens from any one-digit starting point. Nearly all pupils can calculate a number that is 10 more or less than a two-digit number and higher attaining pupils can carry out this task using three-digit numbers. In a very good lesson pupils were investigating odd and even numbers, looking for rules in a sequence of numbers. By the end of the lesson they had worked out that adding two even numbers makes an even number answer, that two odd numbers would make an even number answer and an odd number and even number would always given an odd number. One pupil then went on to say, '*This will help me do my work, to see if my answers are right*'.
82. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to develop their mental abilities and most pupils in Year 3 confidently double and halve numbers to 20. They learn a number of strategies to work out problems involving '*real life*' situations, for example repeated addition and doubling. Very good teaching of patterns and sequences in numbers encourages pupils to use the information they have learnt to clarify their own thinking and ways of working. Pupils in Year 4 transfer the knowledge they have learnt about positions and angles in programming a toy robot. They are confident mathematicians.
83. Pupils respond well to their lessons. Their behaviour is very good and they co-operate with each other and share resources fairly when required. They settle quickly to tasks and their level of concentration is high. Their interest and involvement in the lesson are excellent. Pupils are all active and eager to participate. This level of pupil participation means that good progress is made during lessons.
84. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers plan very well and, during the inspection, tasks were suited to the individual needs of pupils. An analysis of pupils' books revealed that higher attaining pupils are well challenged and that the work they were doing in many cases was different to that of the rest of the class. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate work and are well supported by teaching assistants, who guide their learning through good quality questions. Homework, when given, further supports the classroom learning. A good feature of the daily mathematics lesson is the pace of lessons. They begin with quick-fire mental calculations, which

involve all pupils. Teachers share their objectives for the lesson with pupils, and they are written for pupils to understand and refer to.

85. Teachers use the beginning and end of lessons very well to find out what pupils have learned. They keep useful records of what pupils have achieved, which help them to plan work at the right level. The quality of marking varies considerably. In the better examples, teachers mark pupils' work and let them know whether they have achieved the lesson objective. This strategy is not consistently applied across the school and there is little evidence to suggest ways in which work could be improved. All pupils have individual targets for mathematics. These are accessible to pupils, parents and teachers, but little reference is made to them in teachers' marking.
86. Subject leadership is good. Lessons have been monitored and teachers have carried out a useful analysis of pupils' statutory and optional test materials to identify their strengths and weaknesses and plan accordingly.

## SCIENCE

87. Current standards in Year 2 and Year 4 are above expectations and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to investigate forces through pushing and pulling. They explore a variety of resources, for example balls, hoops, skipping ropes and bean bags. In the good lesson seen, the teacher got pupils to recall their visit to a science museum before demonstrating with a toy 'duck' that could blow bubbles. The pupils watched the process in awed silence. The teacher then blew up a balloon and one pupil knew that it was the air inside pushing on the balloon to make it expand. Through this demonstration the teacher clearly introduced the word 'force' before embarking upon tasks that investigated 'push' and 'pull' forces.
88. Pupils in Year 2 investigate and sort materials by some of their properties. Pupils describe objects using appropriate vocabulary, for example 'rough', 'smooth' and 'how warm it felt'. They were able to detect that a wooden toy felt warmer than a metal one. Pupils co-operate very well in groups, sharing resources and ideas. They are articulate and ask detailed questions.
89. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 compile a chart of what they already know about light and shadows. Pupils work co-operatively in groups discussing and recording their ideas. The teacher provides appropriate challenges and questions in order to make pupils think. In the plenary session pupils share with the rest of the class what they know and have found out. They also make suggestions about what they would like to find out in the next lesson. They are good at using their literacy skills to phrase the questions they would like to investigate later. Pupils have a good knowledge of experimental and investigative science. They know what a fair test is and can predict outcomes confidently.
90. Pupils' attitudes to science are very good. When working in groups they collaborate, handling resources carefully and sharing tasks and ideas. Behaviour is extremely good, allowing pupils to gain the maximum from the learning experiences.
91. Throughout the school, teachers plan very well for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs. This is evident, during question and answer sessions at the start and end of lessons, when teachers ask questions to find out what pupils know and what they have learned during the lesson. This enables all pupils to progress well throughout the school. Teaching in science is never less than good and in some lessons it is very good or excellent. Teachers plan many good opportunities to encourage experiments and investigations. They manage pupils very well, which contributes positively to the good behaviour in science lessons. They show confidence in what they



do and have good subject knowledge. Science lessons proceed at a brisk pace and there is no wasted time. Teachers are good at making clear to pupils their expectations of how much work they should do in a set time.

92. Good use is made of pupils' skills in information and communication technology in science. There are good examples of word-processed reports and graphs compiled to illustrate data. Pupils in Year 2 plot the distances toy cars travel when on a slope and in Year 3 they plot the length of a shadow during the day. Good use of literacy skills is shown when pupils in Year 4 write about their work on shadows.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

93. During the inspection no lessons were timetabled. Judgements are made on a scrutiny of pupils' work on walls, their sketchbooks and work completed in the past. Standards for seven-year-olds and pupils in Year 4 are as expected and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. The school places great importance on displaying pupils' art around the school. This is often linked to their work in other subjects, for example science and history. The care with which this work is displayed shows how much it is valued by teachers and helps to create a stimulating working environment.
94. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 painted vivid scenes from 'The Fire of London', which they have studied, mixing shades of red and orange well to obtain bright 'fiery' colours. They use a variety of natural materials to carefully weave patterns on cardboard looms and use a range of joining materials well to make collages, for example glue and split pins. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use a range of media to make different types of marks, for example charcoal, pastels and chalk. They use water paints and pastels to draw and paint very colourful portraits in the style of Picasso and follow up this work by 'drawing' surreal faces using a computer program.
95. Pupils have good opportunities to carry out three-dimensional work using clay and salt dough. They have sketchbooks, in which they practise techniques, but they do not use them on a regular basis and they do not provide an informative ongoing record of any progress that pupils make. There are good links with the school's multi-cultural work, for example a trip to a museum in Bristol to learn about and produce 'Aboriginal' art.
96. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very positive. They are very proud of their work on display and say modestly, *'It's a bright and colourful school. Seeing my work on the walls makes me feel proud – but not overproud!'* They greatly enjoy the annual school art days when they follow a specific theme and use both sites for different aspects of their work.
97. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and runs a popular after-school art club, which provides pupils with good opportunities to experience different media. She plans to develop and extend pupils' work in art and design by involving more local artists to work with them and to concentrate more on opportunities for them to do more outdoor art work, using pupils' own experiences, which is a good initiative to raise pupils' attainment. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in art activities with others from local small schools. A good, new two-year plan for art has been introduced in school and includes a basic assessment record of pupils' coverage of different areas of art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

98. From the small number of lessons seen, a scrutiny of pupils' work on display and talking to pupils, standards in design and technology are as expected for seven and nine-year-olds. Pupils carry out design and make projects throughout the school and have a

satisfactory range of experiences in all areas of design and technology, including food technology and construction.

99. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 satisfactorily design and make a house for a pet such as a hamster. They have satisfactorily made drawings to design a roundabout for a play area and then make their designs as a model. They show sound cutting and sticking skills in making their models. They are currently designing a coloured coat, after hearing the story of Joseph. Pupils discuss their designs and the colours they will use. When they start their tasks they show good colouring skills, although some have difficulty repeating a pattern.
100. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 evaluate a collection of purses and wallets before making their own money container. In a very good lesson the teacher was very skilful in questioning pupils to make them think and focus on the important factors for both designing and making. When asking questions and describing what they have done, it is clear that they know what they are describing and can use clear language to express it.
101. Pupils link science and design and technology well when they revise and construct electric circuits from bulbs, wires and batteries. They will later put their circuits into a toy that they will make. There is good use of information and communication technology when some pupils use the laptop computers and the crocodile clips program to design a circuit. Once they have constructed the circuit they have the added challenge to make a switch, and most are able to achieve this.
102. The teaching of design and technology is at least good. Teachers show confidence and enthusiasm and are able to impart their enthusiasm for the subject to the pupils. Teachers are always mindful of health and safety requirements when handling tools. Planned tasks take into account the ages and abilities of all pupils. Assessment procedures focus appropriately on the skills of the subject and pupils' achievements are being levelled against national expectations. The co-ordinator is giving a good lead to the subject and this is having a positive impact on standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103. Although only a small number of lessons could be observed during the inspection, the samples of work in books on display around the school show that by the age of seven pupils' attainment in geography is as expected. They maintain their progress and by the time they leave the school at the age of nine their standards are as expected at that age.
104. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about 'Barnaby Bear' visiting other countries. Younger pupils satisfactorily plot their route to school and also compile data on the school building. Teaching for pupils in Year 3 makes good links with English and history when pupils find out the meanings of place names found on an Ordnance Survey map. Another good link with history occurs when pupils studying the story of Florence Nightingale, plot the route and the mode of transport she took from London to the Crimea.
105. Pupils find out about life in Bangladesh and compare it with their own. Some of these pupils have travelled abroad to places such as Dubai, New Zealand, Paris and Portugal and they are aware that Bangladesh is far away from Somerset. In an example of good teaching, they were shown pictures of rickshaws and the types of transport available in that country. The teacher, who is very knowledgeable, was able to explain that rickshaws are constructed from recycled bicycles and metal. The pupils know about recycling and know that in this country we throw away many things that could be used again.
106. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listened to a story about the Isle of Struay. The teacher gave them clear instructions to draw an island on squared paper and then place the post office,

houses and other features on the map. At the end of the lesson the teacher demonstrated how to put co-ordinates on the map and most pupils were able to do so.

107. The co-ordinator, who is giving a very good lead to the subject, has travelled widely, including a recent visit to Gambia to experience what life is really like for the inhabitants of the country. She is instrumental in leading a project in the school on fair trade, where producers from Third World countries can get a fair price for their commodities and what they grow. This helps to develop pupils' awareness of life in other countries and an understanding of the difficulties faced by families in some other parts of the world.

## **HISTORY**

108. Standards throughout the school are as expected at seven and nine and progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is sound. By the age of seven, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of famous people and events in the past, for example Florence Nightingale. They learn about the differences in the attitudes to women working in hospitals and the conditions in hospitals during the Crimean War. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 study 'The Great Fire of London' and know that there were no fire engines then. Pupils develop a growing sense of chronology and write simple events in a story about life in the past. There are good links with literacy. A task was to write a newspaper article about Guy Fawkes. One wrote, '*Today Guy Fawkes was arrested. He was caught in the cellars underneath the Houses of Parliament. Guy Fawkes was arrested and taken away and they put him in the Tower of London*'.
109. By the time they reach the end of Year 4 pupils have gained a basic understanding of the way of life at different times in the past. They know about the raiders and invaders of Great Britain. They study the Romans in some detail and know they were formidable soldiers. They study Roman writing, they make Roman shields and draw pictures in a mosaic pattern. They recall many historical facts. Pupils in Year 3 carry out some good research using books to draw a typical Tudor garden and label each part.
110. The teaching is satisfactory overall. In a very good lesson the teacher brought history to life through a study of the Tudors. Teachers plan good visits in the local area, for example to the grand house of Barrington, to learn about history. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their experiences and say that history is one of their favourite lessons.
111. Subject co-ordination is sound. The policy and scheme of work give sufficient emphasis to the skills that should be developed in history. Good links are made with literacy and other curriculum areas, for example information and communication technology, and these help to develop pupils' skills in accessing information from different sources.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

112. Standards are higher than expected for seven-year-olds and for pupils in Year 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The many good features of pupils' work in information and communication technology are the result of:
- good subject leadership and management;
  - national staff training;
  - carefully planned opportunities to use information and communication technology across a range of subjects.
113. Infant pupils in Year 1 are aware of the use of computers in the wider world, for example in shops and banks. They use a data-handling program very well as part of their science work to record the distance travelled by cars rolling down a slope. They make very good

links between literacy, science and technology when they use a word-processing program to write their own lists of requirements and instructions to make a 'dark box'. Pupils in Year 2 use pencils and paper to record their findings about favourite toys, before transferring that information independently into a data-handling program. They are adept at using different layouts for the presentation of their writing that will have the most impact, for example, in writing prose and lists of instructions. Throughout the infants there is clear evidence of a steady development in pupils' skills in information and communication technology.

114. In Years 3 and 4 pupils continue to make good progress. There is added challenge to their work in terms of decisions they make about how to use them. For example, in their science topic, pupils in Year 3 used a data-handling program to construct a graph that showed how far their cars travelled on the 'flat board catapult'. Pupils themselves had to decide on the scale for their graphs and the way in which the axes of the graphs were labelled. In Year 4, pupils use laptop computers confidently to log on to a word processing program in which they type their messages that will be e-mailed to pupils in the parallel class at the other base.
115. Pupils' attitudes to information and communication technology are very positive. They enjoy using computers and do so confidently, even when they have had little experience of using them at home. They look forward very much to the four weeks each year when it is their turn to use the laptops that are jointly owned by the local cluster of small schools. They use these and the computers in their own classes sensibly and share well with other pupils. They are well aware of the potential dangers of accessing the world-wide web.
116. Several lessons were observed when teachers used computers effectively to complement the subjects they were teaching. Teaching was good overall, with some very good features, not least being teachers' own subject knowledge. This enables them to answer pupils' queries and to solve problems quickly and confidently. Lesson planning is good and enables computers to be used imaginatively in other subjects, for example mathematics and geography.
117. The subject co-ordinator has a high level of personal skill and is able to support staff well with identifying the potential of information and communication technology in their planning. Her own use of computers in lessons is extremely effective. Costly resources are carefully prioritised for purchase and the school's resources are good. Assessment sheets are beginning to be used increasingly effectively to record pupils' progress. These help teachers to plan work that is at an appropriate level and help pupils to make good progress.

## **MUSIC**

118. It was not possible to make a judgement on pupils' standards in music. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, which was taken by an advanced skills music teacher from the middle school. This initiative is funded by the Department for Education and Skills and its purpose is to help classroom teachers gain confidence in teaching music, and in so doing help raise standards in the subject. Little singing was heard in assembly.
119. Pupils talked about their music lessons with enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 4 were confident in talking about rhythm and rhythmic patterns. They said they like playing the range of instruments in school and thoroughly enjoyed going to the church at Harvest, Christmas and other times to sing.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

120. It is not possible make a judgement on physical education as only one games lesson was timetabled during the inspection. A sound range of extra-curricular clubs includes football, netball and gymnastics, and are well attended by both girls and boys. All pupils go swimming for six weeks during the year.
121. When practising games skills pupils generally co-operate well and show satisfactory balance and control. Lessons are well planned using nationally produced guidelines as a framework. Teachers are quite clear in what they want pupils to learn and they explain these clearly at the beginning of the lesson. Good attention is given to health and safety matters.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

122. Standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about special places and times in their lives. They identify special Christian festivals and talk about the visits they have made to the church. They describe birthdays, christenings and weddings as being special events. They identify the Jewish faith as being a belief of some people, and name signs, symbols and know some events associated with this religion, for example Sukkot.
123. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about Christianity. In Year 4 they identified the different features of a church following a recent visit. In Year 3 they correctly retell the story of Adam and Eve and other Old Testament stories. In a good lesson, pupils in Year 4 learned the significance of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. The higher attaining pupils realised it was about trust and faith in Jesus.
124. Pupils respond positively. They are enthusiastic about activities such as drama and role-play and they are keen to join in. Pupils' books contain a very limited amount of written work, but they are able to talk knowledgeably about other faiths and Christianity.
125. In the one lesson observed teaching was good. The teacher used a range of questions well at the start of the lesson to assess how much pupils had remembered from previous lessons. An active pace to the lesson and a number of short, focused activities meant that pupils did not have time to lose concentration. Resources for the study of Christianity are adequate and the local churches are used well. The subject is taught to the whole school by a part-time teacher who co-ordinates the subject and is able to have a good overview of its development throughout the school.