

# INSPECTION REPORT

**MISTERTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST  
SCHOOL**

MISTERTON, CREWKERNE

LEA area: SOMERSET

Unique reference number: 123769

Headteacher: Mrs J Hunt

Reporting inspector: Mr J Evans  
20297

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2003

Inspection number: 248505

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 category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Middle Street Misterton Crewkerne
Postcode:	TA18 8LZ
Telephone number:	01460 72745
Fax number:	01460 72745
Appropriate authority:	The Governors
Name of chair of governors:	Miss M Shepley
Date of previous inspection:	17 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20297	J Evans	Registered inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, physical education, religious education, special educational needs, equal opportunities	Results and achievements Teaching and learning Curriculum opportunities School effectiveness and improvement Staffing accommodation and resources
9880	A Comer	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils Partnership with parents and community links
18393	J Donovan	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English, science, art, geography, history	Leadership and management Provision for pupils' personal development Financial efficiency Assessment

The inspection contractor was:

Full Circle Division of Parkman  
35 Trewartha Park  
Weston-super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Misterton Church of England First School is a small village school near Crewkerne, Somerset. It is in a rural area with a mixture of different types of housing nearby. There are 62 pupils on roll aged from four to nine, taught in three classes. It is a popular school and the number of children has more than doubled in the last few years. Pupils are from a variety of backgrounds, few are from minority ethnic groups and all speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs is about average. The overall level of attainment of the children when they first start school varies from year to year but is broadly average.

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

This is a good school with many very good features. Teaching is of good quality and establishes very good relationships between staff and pupils. Because there is such a positive ethos, all pupils develop high levels of confidence in themselves as learners and develop very good attitudes to work. The school has raised standards of attainment in the past few years and has been successful in maintaining this improvement at the expected level. As a result, the school earned an Achievement Award from the Department for Education and Skills in 2002. Leadership and management are good and have resulted in continued improvement of the quality of education. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Establishes all pupils as confident learners with very good attitudes to work.
- Provides good quality teaching.
- Makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Works well in partnership with parents and carers.
- Makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

This is a good school where staff and governors have already successfully identified major areas for improvement and have taken the appropriate action, so there are no key issues. The following are minor points.

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

- The time allowed for the teaching of science.
- The understanding of staff and governors of how to apply 'best value' principles in managing the school. (This has already been identified as a point for improvement by the school).
- The facilities for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage. (The school already has plans to improve these).
- The facilities for the teaching of gymnastics (within the curriculum for physical education).

*These minor points for improvement will be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan.*

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

The school was last inspected in November 1997. There were five key issues and all these have been addressed successfully. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment have improved in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education, and have been maintained at the expected level in all other subjects. Attitudes and behaviour have improved to the currently very good levels. As a result of the hard work of the staff and governors improvements have also been made in the quality of:

- teaching
- the provision for pupils with special educational needs
- the provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development
- the school's work in partnership with parents
- the accommodation available for teaching.

## STANDARDS

The overall level of attainment of children when they first start school varies from year to year, but is broadly average or slightly above average. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Nearly all reach or exceed the expected levels for their age in all areas of learning, and are well prepared for Year 1.

The number of pupils taking the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 has varied in recent years between six and 15. These small numbers mean that comparisons between national and school data are unreliable. For this reason the comparisons are not published here. Where, as in this case, the numbers in each year group are small, it is more useful to look at results over the past three years together. Examined in this way the results show that Year 2 pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics slightly exceeds the national average for their age group.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

The school sets realistic targets for attainment (for year groups and individuals) and is largely successful in reaching them.

*The table shows the inspection team's judgements on the levels of attainment in Year 2 and Year 4 for all the subjects taught in the school:*

Subject	Year 2	Year 4
English	At the expected level for this age	At the expected level for this age
Mathematics	At the expected level for this age	At the expected level for this age
Science	At the expected level for this age	At the expected level for this age
Art and Design	At the expected level for this age	At the expected level for this age
Design and Technology	At the expected level for this age	At the expected level for this age
Geography	At the expected level for this age	At the expected level for this age
History	Insufficient evidence to make a judgement.	At the expected level for this age
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	Above the expected level for this age	Above the expected level for this age
Music	At the expected level for this age	At the expected level for this age
Physical Education	No judgement made because no lessons were seen.	Insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement. Attainment was high in the one lesson seen.
Religious Education	Above the expected level for this age (locally agreed syllabus)	Above the expected level for this age (locally agreed syllabus)

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have high levels of confidence in themselves as learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The high quality of relationships is an important factor in the school's success.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There is very little unauthorised absence. Punctuality is

	generally good.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The excellent relationships between adults and pupils underpin the good teaching in this school. There is a very good atmosphere for learning. As a result, teachers successfully meet the wide range of needs in their classes. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are confident learners.

Teachers know their pupils well and match activities and challenges in lessons well to ensure good progress for individuals. They receive good quality help from other adults in the classroom. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is of good quality in English and mathematics. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is often very good and is sometimes excellent. One science lesson was unsatisfactory because it lacked challenge. Consistency in lesson planning has improved since the last inspection.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 2 to 4. There have been big improvements in ICT. Too little time is spent teaching science. There is a good range of extra-activities such as sport, music and dance. The shortcomings in the accommodation restrict the teaching of physical education and limit the opportunities for outside play in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs have access to the full curriculum and give them good quality support so that they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. There are particular strengths in the way that the school promotes pupils' social, moral and spiritual development. The school successfully teaches pupils right from wrong and instils in them the importance of working together to achieve common goals.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. Safety and welfare are top priorities. Staff know the pupils well and use this knowledge to good effect in planning their work.

Parents have very positive views about the work of the school. A good partnership between home and school has been established.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school well with good support from the senior teacher. Many improvements have been made as a result of the well focussed efforts of the staff team. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is very effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	There have been many changes in the governing body in recent years. The new team are enthusiastic and very involved in the daily life of the school. They are effective and fulfil all their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Evaluation of performance is good. The staff and governors keep the quality of education under review and have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
Aspect	Comment
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used wisely. Staff and governors are still developing their understanding of best value principles and how they apply to all aspects of the school's work. The school has already identified the need for further development in this area.

The accommodation is bright and colourful and is used as well as possible. However, there is no suitable space for gymnastics and the facilities for outdoor play for the Foundation Stage children are inadequate. (The school has plans to address this.) Apart from these points the accommodation is satisfactory. There are sufficient teachers and resources to meet the demands of the curriculum.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What a few parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The standards of attainment</li> <li>• The good standards of behaviour and the effective management of behaviour</li> <li>• The approachability of staff</li> <li>• The provision for pupils with special educational needs</li> <li>• The attitudes and values promoted by the school</li> <li>• The dramatic improvement in the school in recent years since the appointment of the current headteacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents were concerned about aspects of teaching in mathematics and the possible stressful effects on a few pupils</li> <li>• Some parents felt that they would like there to be more extra-curricular activities</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the very positive views of parents. The team looked at all aspects of teaching in mathematics and found that on balance the methods used were effective in promoting learning for the majority. The school is aware of the need to look at the sensitivity of individuals in this matter. The inspection team found that the school already provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards of attainment in Years 2 and 4 are at least as high as they should be in all subjects where it has been possible to make a judgement, and are better than the expected level in ICT and religious education. Pupils of all capabilities reach standards that are appropriate for them.
2. When looking at the performance of pupils in national tests it is important to bear in mind the small numbers in each year group in this school. This number has been as low as six in recent years. Only 15 pupils took the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, for this group, one pupil represents more than seven per cent of the cohort. This makes comparisons with national test results unreliable. Looking at the results of the previous three years together gives a more reliable picture; the performance of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics slightly exceeds the national average for their age group. Since 1998, there has been a marked improvement in results which has been maintained. The school earned an Achievement Award by the Department for Education and Skills last year.
3. The school carefully tracks the progress made by every pupil. This information is used to set targets for the expected level of attainment in the future. These targets are realistic and well informed and the school is largely successful in reaching them. The school is maintaining the improvement in standards it has achieved. The key factors that underpin this are the good quality leadership, management and teaching.
4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the appropriate targets that the school sets for them. Their success is due to the very good ethos for learning and the high quality input of staff that helps them to overcome their barriers to learning.
5. The overall level of attainment of children when they first start school varies from year to year because of the small numbers involved. This year it was broadly in line or slightly above the expected level for children of this age. During the Foundation Stage children make good progress and are on track to achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals thanks to the very good management of their learning.
6. In Years 1, 2, 3 and 4, pupils of all abilities continue to make good progress overall. In English, the attainment of Year 2 pupils is broadly average and the attainment of Year 4 pupils is above average. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. In mathematics, standards of attainment are slightly above average in Years 2 and 4. The teaching of the national strategies successfully boosts pupils' achievement in numeracy and literacy. Pupils use their numeracy and literacy skills well in other subjects.
7. Pupils throughout the school attain above expected standards in ICT, this improvement since the last inspection is due largely to the good management of the subject and the successful revision of the curriculum. Pupils use their ICT skills well in the other subjects of the curriculum. In religious education pupils in Years 2 and 4 exceed the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus.
8. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on attainment in physical education, but in the one lesson seen standards were high.

9. Attainment is at the expected level in Years 2 and 4 in science, art, design and technology, geography, and music. In history it is at the expected level in Year 4, but it was not possible to judge attainment for Year 2 because limited evidence was available.
10. There are no clear differences between the levels of attainment of girls and boys. There have been some differences in past national test results, but these are not necessarily significant given the small cohort sizes. Girls' and boys' results have not been reported separately in Part C of the report for this reason.

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

11. In all classes, pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and the interest and enthusiasm they show in lessons and in the range of activities outside the classroom are also very good. They have great confidence in themselves as learners.
12. Parents believe that children like coming to school and that they are encouraged to work hard and do their best. Parents also believe that behaviour is good and that the school helps children to become mature and responsible. The inspection evidence supports the very positive views of parents.
13. Overall, behaviour is very good. Pupils play happily together and move around the school sensibly and politely. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour reflect their self-confidence and their respect for each other and for their environment. Parents have reported to the school a noticeable improvement in children's attitudes and behaviour at home over the recent past. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. There was one brief exclusion last year.
14. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good. There are very good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility, both for their own learning and in school activities. The involvement of pupils in setting their own rules of behaviour and annual targets, as well as their co-operative and collaborative behaviour in lessons, are good examples of this. The range of educational visits, visitors and after school activities, as well as the emphasis that the school places on personal, social and health education, all contribute significantly to pupils' personal development.
15. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils' punctuality is good and lessons begin on time.
16. Overall, attitudes and behaviour have improved since the last inspection. Attendance has declined somewhat in the past, but is now in line with the national average.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was satisfactory overall. Now it is good or better in most lessons, there is less unsatisfactory teaching, many lessons are very good and some are excellent.
18. A key factor (and major strength) common to all teaching in the school is the high quality of relationships between adults and children. Teachers establish an atmosphere of mutual respect, this means that pupils feel secure and confident as learners and so develop very good attitudes to their work and very good patterns of

behaviour. This applies to all, but it is especially true for those who have special educational needs. The result of this is that teachers can spend nearly all their time teaching, rarely having to remind pupils about their behaviour. An example of how the quality of relationships produced very good learning was seen in a Year 3 and 4 physical education lesson. The lesson was in the W.I. Hall and pupils had to devise a way of crossing an imaginary crocodile swamp. The aim of the lesson was for them to work together to solve a challenge. They worked very well in teams with impressive levels of co-operation and found various ways to solve the problem rapidly, without once resorting to raised voices or disagreement. The way that the teacher interacted with the pupils had given them an excellent example of how to interact with each other and so solve the challenge quickly by being positive, purposeful and constructive.

19. Another major strength of the good teaching is that teachers know their pupils well. This knowledge is used effectively when planning activities, which are matched to pupils' capabilities. It is also used well when questioning pupils. For example, in a reception class lesson when children had listened to the story of 'Goldilocks and The Three Bears' the teacher skilfully directed questions to individuals and groups, which challenged them and directed their learning through play activities.
20. The major strengths in teaching are important for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils have very good levels of confidence in themselves. They are happy and make good progress in lessons. Teachers work closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure that the curriculum is carefully adapted to ensure best progress.
21. The consistency of lesson planning was a key issue in the last inspection report. This has now improved and teachers clearly identify what is to be learnt in nearly all lessons. Teachers' marking is of good quality and gives pupils good pointers for improvement. Homework is set in reading and mathematics and this is effective in helping pupils to make progress.
22. The teaching of Foundation Stage children is good and is often very good. One excellent lesson was seen. The children had gone on a walk through the village to a school governor's house where a 'shop' had been set up for them. The activities were expertly matched to pupils' capabilities and stages of learning, resulting in rapid progress in several areas of the foundation curriculum.
23. Teachers give due weight to the skills of literacy and numeracy. They have a clear understanding of the national strategies for promoting these. Opportunities are found in other subjects of the curriculum for pupils to use these skills, for example, in religious education where pupils use their writing skills well. The teaching of English is of good quality overall, being slightly stronger in Year 3 and 4 than in Years 1 and 2.
24. The teaching of mathematics is good. Pupils of all capabilities are well challenged by the activities set for them and are well supported by teaching assistants and voluntary helpers. Teachers make effective use of introductory and plenary sessions in mathematics.
25. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen, this was in science where progress was slow because the work set was too easy.
26. Timetabling arrangements meant that there was too little evidence to make overall judgements on the quality of teaching in the remaining subjects of the curriculum, with the exception of music where it was judged to be good.

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

27. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good for pupils in the Foundation Stage and are satisfactory for pupils in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4. The curriculum is relevant, broad and generally well balanced. It includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and covers the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school priorities are English and mathematics, ICT is also given high priority.
28. Several improvements have been made in the curriculum since the last inspection. There are now suitable schemes of work and guidance in place for all subjects. The school has made a big effort to improve the curriculum for ICT, this has been very successful and it is now a strength of the school (this was recognised in comments received from parents). The officially recommended strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been successfully introduced and help to maintain standards of attainment.
29. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good – another improvement since the last inspection. Their learning is carefully matched to their needs and this contributes to the good progress they make. All pupils have equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum.
30. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and prepares children well for Year 1. The last inspection found that there was insufficient emphasis given to reading and writing for foundation children. Provision has now improved, but there is still scope for further improvement in writing opportunities, the details of this appear in Part B of the report.
31. The curriculum for physical education is as good as can be expected within the constraints imposed by the current accommodation. However, attainment is affected by the lack of a hall and appropriate equipment for gymnastic activities.
32. Too little time is spent on the teaching of science, it is currently half the recommended amount and standards, though satisfactory, are not as high as they could be as a result. Further details appear in Part B of the report.
33. The curriculum is enriched by trips and visits. Parents' appreciate the school's efforts, for example in taking children to the beach and to the pantomime. Visitors make valuable contributions to learning, for example in religious education. Responses to the parents' questionnaire showed that a few parents felt that they would like to see more extra-curricular activities. The inspection team found that there is already a good range provided, including football, tennis, hockey, tag rugby, aerobics, music, and dance.
34. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and skills are identified in each aspect of the curriculum. In addition each class has regular circle times which enable all pupils to reflect on and discuss relevant issues. These sessions are highly valued by pupils and staff. The whole ethos of the school has a positive impact on the personal and social development of pupils. The governors have decided that there will be no formal education about sex and relationships, but any issues that arise are dealt with sensitively by staff and referred to parents if necessary.

35. Provision for personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good overall. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in provision for spiritual and cultural development.
36. Provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of the values and beliefs that the school promotes. Daily acts of worship are provided and lighted candles provide a focus for the pupils during quiet moments of prayer. Year 3 and 4 pupils show thoughtfulness and insight into spiritual matters in their prayers for the world. They also show a good understanding of the spiritual meanings of aspects of the Hindu faith. Reception children experience a 'spiritual' moment when they express wonder at the way in which a helium balloon floats to the ceiling.
37. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is very good and they show a clear understanding of right and wrong. This is as a result of the very positive behaviour strategies and clear role models provided by all staff. Each class has negotiated and agreed a set of class rules and pupils clearly understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Older pupils show an understanding of their own responsibility when one writes 'Dear God, please help me make the world one big peaceful nation'.
38. Provision for social development is also very good. All staff model co-operative and friendly relationships with each other and pupils. Lessons provide many opportunities for pupils to co-operate with each other and develop independence in their learning. Pupils act as monitors for class responsibilities and older pupils show care for the younger ones.
39. Provision for cultural development is very good as a result of improvements made on the satisfactory provision noted at the previous inspection. The school has good links with the village community and takes part in village life. Pupils are developing a very good understanding and empathy with the customs and beliefs of people from other cultures and faiths. For example during the inspection Year 3 and 4 pupils were able to learn about the Hindu faith from a visitor who shared his beliefs and customs with them. All listened with interest and courtesy, showing a developing understanding of how cultures have similarities and differences.
40. The school's links with the wider community remain good. Pupils are involved in charitable fundraising and the school has links with the local church and with some local businesses. Pupils also take part in village events such as the Misterton Fete and the Women's Institute Pancake Day. They study the local environment during regular 'wellie walks'. To compensate for the lack of shops in the village, some governors set up a 'temporary shop' to give children the experience of shopping. There has been effective collaboration with the Parish Council over the provision of a traffic-calming scheme through the village. Pupils are also involved with designing the décor of the school. These and other similar activities have benefited the school and have contributed to pupils' learning and personal development.
41. Relationships with other schools are good. The partnership with the pre-school group, the close working relationship within the CASS (Collaboration Amongst Small Schools) group and liaison with middle and upper schools all benefit pupils, families and staff by ensuring a smooth transfer from one phase of education to the next.

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

42. The school's procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment are comprehensive and effective in English and mathematics. The information gained from half-termly

assessments is used to set individual, group and school targets for learning and to group pupils for lessons. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing most other subjects at the end of each unit of work. The progress of each pupil is tracked in English, mathematics and science throughout the school, and where progress is causing concern appropriate support is provided. Day to day assessment informs planning for English and mathematics effectively so that the work is closely targeted to the needs of pupils. This is less effective in other subjects where pupils tend to do the same work and any differences are in levels of adult support or the actual outcome.

43. The personal support and guidance which pupils receive, both formal and informal is good. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and problems. The school is a very caring environment where teaching and non-teaching staff know the pupils and their families well and respond to their needs. The support for the under-fives and for pupils with special educational needs is good.
44. The school policies and procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Parents, pupils and governors are involved in the formulation of behaviour policy and rules and these are respected throughout the school. There is much celebration of pupils' achievements and school success - in the local press, on notice boards and in assemblies. Pupils' progression from one level to another during 'five minutes maths' is a good example of the way in which achievement is celebrated.
45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The effective use of 'circle time' and the regular feedback that parents receive about their children's personal development are good examples. Transfer from the pre-school group and to the middle school is effectively managed. There are close working relationships between teachers and their classroom assistants and parent helpers that ensure pupils receive effective support in lessons.
46. Policies and procedures for promoting health and safety are good. There is a rigorous attitude towards school security. The management of the situation regarding the school's proximity to a main road is effective, with co-operation from parents, pupils and the Parish Council.
47. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The training and procedures for both child protection and First Aid have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Liaison with the education welfare service and with a variety of other outside agencies further underpins the effective care of pupils.
48. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance and punctuality are now satisfactory.

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

49. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents and the impact that their contribution has on the life of the school is good and has improved since the last inspection. Those parents (over one half) who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire or who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting have very positive views of what the school provides and achieves. The inspection evidence supports the very positive views of these parents.
50. There is an effective range of methods of communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, notice boards, parents' meetings, workshops and annual reports. The governors' annual report to parents is well presented and now meets all statutory requirements. There is also a 'parent

partnership' group that meets weekly. Parents initiated one workshop in order to improve the effectiveness of the home school agreement. Parents know that they can discuss issues informally with staff and appreciate the 'openness' of the school in this respect. Parents have been consulted on a range of aspects of school life and their opinions have influenced school policies. Pupil reports are satisfactory. They give parents a clear picture of children's knowledge and progress, but for the under-fives, they do not include achievement of Early Learning Goals. Home school diaries are used effectively. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are maintained effectively and parents are involved in the review process.

51. The school makes significant efforts to encourage parental involvement. A number of parents provide help in the classroom and in other school activities. There is a supportive Friends of Misterton School group that raises a significant sum of money that annually supplements the school budget. Parent governors are very supportive and committed to the activities of the school.

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

52. The school is well led by a conscientious, hardworking headteacher. She provides positive direction and is well supported by the senior teacher. Everything that the school does reflects the positive ethos that underpins its aims and values and these are strongly reflected in the School Improvement Plan. There is no doubt that the improvements in the school since the last inspection are a direct result of the way in which the whole school team works together for a common goal. The senior teacher shares much of the work of curriculum management with the headteacher and her contribution has had a positive impact on many aspects of school development. This effective delegation means that the headteacher is able to use her time efficiently in her dual role as teacher and manager.
53. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs is very effective in ensuring that pupils' needs are met and that they make the best possible progress. Individual planning for pupils' learning is of a high standard, pupils' needs are identified early in their schooling and the expert advice of outside agencies is very well used. This is a strength of the school.
54. There have been many changes on the governing body over recent years, but the new team is enthusiastic and very involved in the day to day life of the school. They are developing their understanding of their roles and responsibilities well and have taken a lead in the development of the school improvement plan. Some governors do not yet fully understand their responsibility for the standards of attainment achieved by pupils. All governors are very supportive of the school and very proud of its achievements. Most governors are beginning to have a clear view of the strengths and areas for development identified. They are well supported by information and advice from the headteacher.
55. The school uses assessment information and test results well to analyse trends in attainment and takes appropriate action. Within the constraints of a small school with few staff, the school's procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching and the curriculum are good. The headteacher and senior teacher carry the responsibility for almost the whole curriculum and have identified priorities for monitoring within the constraints of time. Arrangements for the appraisal and performance management of all staff are in place and valued by both teaching and support staff. There is a high commitment to ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training and support for both professional and personal development objectives.



56. The school has identified appropriate priorities for development and has made sensible plans to achieve them within time and financial constraints. Links to the overall vision and direction of the school are implicit, rather than explicit, in the plans. The whole school community - staff, governors and parents - clearly shares a determination to develop and improve the school for the benefit of the pupils.
57. Sound financial procedures have been established and a draft finance policy will shortly be adopted in line with advice in the recent auditor's report. Capital grants have been well used to extend and enhance the accommodation and there are plans to make further improvements next year with funds that are being carried over. Specific grants have been used wisely to ensure that the headteacher has a manageable teaching commitment and to provide support staff and staff training. The priorities identified in the school improvement plan are supported by careful financial management and there is a developing understanding of how expenditure impacts on pupils' learning. Staff have ensured that new technology is well used to support the administrative work of the school. In making decisions about priorities and expenditure in all aspects of the school's work, the senior staff and governors have begun to take into account the best value principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition. However, this is an area that has been correctly identified for further development to ensure that the school uses all its available resources as wisely as possible.
58. The school is well staffed. There is a suitable number of qualified teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The learning assistants give good support in lessons and in small groups to those with special educational needs. The previous report identified shortcomings in the arrangements for the professional development of staff. These have now been rectified and suitable steps are taken to ensure that requirements are met. Procedures for the induction of new staff are effective.
59. The accommodation, though well maintained, bright and colourful is nevertheless unsatisfactory. The school makes best possible use of it, but it is not possible to teach the whole curriculum for physical education because there is no suitable space for gymnastics. There is no separate outdoor play area for reception children, (though the school has plans to address this) and opportunities for the physical play required in the Foundation Stage are limited. Further details are in Part B of the report. Apart from these points, the accommodation is sufficient to allow the teaching of the curriculum.
60. The school has sufficient resources for learning to support the teaching of the curriculum. Good use is made of shared resources, for example, a number of portable computers are shared with others schools to good effect.

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

61. Staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and have already successfully addressed the major areas for improvement. Therefore there are no key issues for development. However, the following points should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:
  - i. Increase the time allowed for the teaching of science to the recommended minimum. (Paragraphs 32, 93)
  - ii. Continue to develop the understanding of how to apply the best value principles in the work of the whole school by providing appropriate training if necessary. (Paragraph 57)
  - iii. Improve facilities for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage. (Paragraph 74)

- iv. Work towards the improvement of the school's facilities to allow the teaching of the whole curriculum for physical education including gymnastics. (Paragraphs 31,122)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	11	2	1	0	0
Percentage	5	25	55	10	5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	62
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	6.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	12	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (85)	93 (85)	93 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (92)	80 (92)	87 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

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

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	1	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	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)	3.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.8
Average class size	21

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52.4

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	185794
Total expenditure	173836
Expenditure per pupil	3343
Balance brought forward from previous year	21784
Balance carried forward to next year	33832

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	62
Number of questionnaires returned	34

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	47	0	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	64	31	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	36	6	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	47	8	6	0
The teaching is good.	61	39	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	44	8	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	36	6	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	31	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	33	8	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	31	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	56	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	42	22	6	6

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents are very supportive of the work of the school, in particular they are pleased about:

- The standards of attainment
- The good standards of behaviour and the effective management of behaviour
- The approachability of staff
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The attitudes and values promoted by the school
- The dramatic improvement in the school in recent years since the appointment of the current headteacher

### Other issues raised by parents

- Some parents were concerned about aspects of teaching in mathematics and the possible stressful effects on a few pupils



- Some parents felt that they would like there to be more extra-curricular activities

The inspection team agrees with the very positive views of parents. The team looked at all aspects of teaching in mathematics and found that on balance the methods used were effective in promoting learning for the majority. The school is aware of the need to look at the sensitivity of individuals in this matter. The inspection team found that the school already provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

## **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**

62. The quality and range of opportunities for the children in the reception class are good. Children enter school with attainment in line with, or slightly above that expected for their age. Their language skills are often good. This is confirmed by the initial assessments made when the children first start school. By the time they enter Year 1 nearly all achieve well and are set to reach, or exceed, the Early Learning Goals - the expected national standards for all children starting in Year 1 - in most areas of learning. Attainment in writing is slightly below the expected level. Children achieve these levels as a result of the good teaching and wide range of practical activities provided for them which have a positive impact on the way in which they develop knowledge, skills and understanding. All children, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in their learning.
63. Learning in the reception class is very well managed. The teacher is well supported by voluntary helpers. She plans an effective early years curriculum that emphasises the importance of practical activities for the youngest children. The quality of teaching is good overall and half the lessons seen were very good or excellent. The teacher manages the children very well and makes very effective use of the resources and space available. Regular assessments are made and used to track the progress of each child. There is a good induction programme for parents and children before they start school and parents support learning by sharing books with their child at home. The provision for reception children has a positive impact on the children's learning and sets a firm foundation for future development. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

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

64. All pupils make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and nearly all achieve the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. Their achievement reflects the very good focus on these skills, which is a feature of the work of all staff who work in the class. The teacher sensitively develops social skills such as taking turns with materials and equipment and has high expectations of appropriate manners at all times. She provides a very good role model in the way in which she relates to the children and adults. As a result children are helpful and support each other. There is a high commitment to the safety and well-being of the children. The children concentrate well and complete tasks; they are interested and keen to learn because of the stimulating learning activities provided for them. Staff use praise effectively to establish expectations of appropriate behaviour and to maintain high levels of self esteem.

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

65. Many children begin in the reception class with skills in the important area of language above those expected nationally. Their attainment in early reading and writing skills is about average, although about 25 per cent of children are achieving better than this on entry to school. Nearly all children make steady progress in their acquisition of skills and achieve close to the expected levels in all aspects of this area of learning. Most children speak clearly and confidently and those who do not are well supported by staff to extend their skills by talking about their activities and by taking part in imaginative play.

66. The teacher acts as a good role model when reading stories. She demonstrates her own enjoyment of books and is enthusiastic. The children listen attentively and recognise how intonation and expression are used in the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Children develop their reading and spelling skills well through the teaching and use of letter skills. For example, more able children playing in the 'three bears' house' sound out 'b.e.r.' for 'bear' and find objects that also begin with 'b'. Most children know that print is read from left to right and how to turn pages carefully. They all enjoy the daily independent reading sessions when they look at books.
67. In writing children are developing skills through play activities and some can write simple words like 'daddy' and make plausible attempts at spelling words like 'ber (bear)'. Most can use initial letter sounds to indicate the word they want to write, while some convey meaning through pictures and a series of familiar random letters. The focus on learning through play is effective for developing early writing skills but does not always provide sufficient challenge for the more able children. The school decision not to provide a writing book for pupils means that there is no record of children's progress in writing skills on a daily basis. However, the school does keep termly assessments of writing for each child. These suggest that at present, children's attainment in writing is slightly below that of similar children nationally, though nearly all will comfortably reach the levels expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1.
68. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. Staff use language effectively to extend and enrich the children's vocabulary. The teacher uses questions effectively to extend understanding and gives clear explanations. Her enthusiasm inspires the children and her excellent use of praise and support enables them to feel confident and high in self esteem.

### **Mathematical development**

69. In mathematics children are on target to achieve the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1; more able children will exceed these targets. They make good progress in their learning as a result of the excellent teaching. They use mathematical language like 'big, bigger, biggest', 'more than/less than'. Most can count to ten, although some need support to count accurately, and many can count to 20. They can count in twos and most recognise numerals to ten. More able children can add to ten and even 20, and some can work out change from 10p. In a shopping expedition children showed their ability to use coins to buy items for their teddy bears' picnic. This excellent lesson supported all pupils because it was practical, fun, and the teacher had carefully prepared different amounts of money/coins to enable each child to work at his or her own level of ability. The most able child was able to say "I've spent 8p - that's 12p change - 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12 - that's right!"

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

70. This area of learning covers the curriculum subjects of science, history, geography, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and religious education. Many children have a good level of general knowledge in these areas when they start school and the very good range of activities provided for them enables them to build on this and make progress. Nearly all pupils will reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. In a science based activity children enjoyed watching while balloons were inflated and deflated. They made predictions, for example "that one will go long and straight" and used language effectively to describe what they observed, "now it looks like a lemon on a stick".

71. There is very good support for the development of ICT skills. Children can switch on the computer, open a file and use the mouse with a good level of skill. Many can already use correct language like 'keyboard, mouse, screen'. More able children can add simple text to their picture. The teacher promotes independence but is supportive and enables all children to enjoy success in using the program.
72. No lessons or children's work was seen during the inspection to support other aspects of this area of learning, but the teacher's planning indicates that the full curriculum is covered.

### **Physical development**

73. By the time they enter Year 1 all children are likely to achieve the expected levels in physical development. Staff provide many opportunities for children to handle small tools such as pencils, crayons, paint brushes and glue spreaders, and most children are developing these skills well. Progress is better when children are reminded of the necessary skills before they begin a task.
74. Children are able to use large wheeled toys in the playground when it is not in use by others, but there is no separate outdoor play area for them, and no direct access to the playground. The school plans to put a door through to enable direct access to outdoor play and this will enhance the current provision. There is no climbing apparatus outside and no hall with large PE equipment, although the children can use the W.I. hall at present. There is a small climbing frame and slide which can be used with care if the classroom tables are cleared. This provides limited opportunities to climb and slide and children show a good sense of their own space, and that of others, as they move about the room. They can say why exercise is good for them and why they need to warm up before taking exercise. Staff make the best use possible of the limited opportunities for physical play. Children also have the benefit of an outdoor climbing frame. The friends of the school are currently improving the landscaping of this area.

### **Creative development**

75. There is limited evidence for this area of learning as no specific art or music sessions were seen during the week of the inspection. However, very good work was seen in the provision for role play and children enjoyed playing in the 'three bears' house' and sharing a picnic with their teddies. In one lesson pupils responded quickly to the music played and moved in time, pretending to be bears in the wood. They joined in with short poems and rhymes showing a good sense of rhythm. Teachers' planning indicates that children are offered a range of art activities and that there are opportunities to play simple musical instruments and sing.

### **ENGLISH**

76. In the most recent national tests at the end of Year 2, standards in English were in line with the national expectation. However, the very small number of pupils in the year group means that these figures must be viewed with caution. Standards of work seen during the inspection indicate that pupils in Year 2 are working at about the national expectation, while in Year 4 they are working just above that level. This would appear to confirm the results from 2002 for Year 2 pupils. These results reflect the standards achieved by pupils in both reading and writing, but in speaking and listening skills pupils achieve standards above the national expectation throughout the school. The school has put in place the Early Literacy Support programme for Year 1 pupils to help boost the attainment of those who need it.

77. Pupils throughout the school achieve good standards in speaking and listening skills. For example, in Year 1 and 2 pupils enjoy acting out the story of Red Riding Hood using puppets, using a good range of vocabulary, remembering the sequence of the story and using lovely expression "Oooh, grandma – what big teeth you have!" Later the rest of the class listen to their play carefully, even though with an audience the players become shy and speak very quietly. By Year 4 pupils express themselves confidently in a range of situations, talking about their lessons, expressing preferences for choice of reading material and using language effectively to write their own acrostic poems.
78. Standards in reading are in line with national expectation throughout the school and some pupils read very well. In Year 2 most pupils read simple texts with expression and a good level of independence. They have learned to use a range of strategies to help them, including picture and phonic cues. They are able to read a play text to act out a story and enjoy adding expression to make it more interesting. By Year 4 many pupils are able to read a range of texts with a high level of fluency and independence. They talk confidently about books they have read, expressing preferences for a favourite author or genre. They can describe how to use an index and a glossary and understand the principles of alphabetical order. The most able pupils can read adult books with a good level of understanding. Occasionally more able pupils in Year 2 are reading a text that does not provide sufficient challenge.
79. By the age of seven standards in writing are in line with national expectation. Letter formation is satisfactory overall although writing is not yet joined. Most pupils spell a range of basic words correctly and can make a plausible attempt at other words. Basic punctuation is becoming consistent. More able pupils use capital letters and full stops reliably and are beginning to write using more interesting words. By Year 4 standards are slightly above the national expectation and most pupils are writing with confidence and fluency. For example in one lesson pupils write their own acrostic poems, selecting interesting and relevant words, and sustaining the conventions of the poetry form. The more able even make their poem rhyme while keeping to the acrostic format. Lower attaining pupils are well supported by a teacher assistant and are therefore able to produce their own poem. Pupils use their ICT skills well in English lessons, for example when re-drafting their word-processed written work.
80. Teaching in English is good overall, it is good and occasionally satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4, the teaching is good and sometimes very good. This reflects the satisfactory progress made by pupils overall in Years 1 and 2, and the good progress in Years 3 and 4. Good elements of all the teaching are the clear lesson planning with work carefully targeted at pupils' needs, good use of praise and encouragement and good time management. Where lessons are less effective there is a slower pace and pupils find the task too difficult.
81. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work in English. In all lessons they behave well, listen carefully and are keen to contribute their ideas. In the Year 1 and 2 class, one group co-operates very well together to create a puppet play, while another group works together to read and perform a play script. They listen well to each other and are supportive in their response.
82. Staff plan an appropriate and interesting range of activities to cover the requirements of the curriculum. They track pupils' progress carefully, carrying out half-termly assessments that inform subsequent lesson planning. Work is marked positively and comments usually help pupils improve their work for the next time. The management of English is good and the work is well monitored. The senior teacher has begun a school portfolio of pupils' writing to illustrate the levels of attainment achieved within the school. Resources to support learning are satisfactory and there are useful class

libraries to supplement the school library. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and a great deal of work has taken place to implement the National Literacy Strategy effectively. Pupils use their literacy skills well to help their learning in other subjects. The school has already identified the need to continue to raise standards of attainment in English and particularly for the higher attaining pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 are slightly above average across all parts of the curriculum for mathematics. This judgement is supported by the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 and by looking at the overall trend in results since 2000. Girls did slightly better than boys last year, which reversed the picture of the previous two years.
84. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has been effective. It has helped to maintain standards since the last inspection. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in other subjects, for example when measuring materials for use in a design and technology project.
85. Pupils' past written work shows sound progression from Year 1 to Year 4, with a noticeable improvement in accuracy as they tackle increasingly difficult tasks in a well structured way. In Year 2, pupils are able to describe two-dimensional shapes using proper mathematical language. They are able to find missing numbers within a pattern and are able to describe and extend simple number sequences. They know that subtraction and addition are opposites. They are learning to measure everyday objects and to estimate and compare, for example, the lengths of crayons and pencils.
86. In Year 4, pupils learn about co-ordinates and apply their new knowledge and their initiative well to solve mathematical challenges. The higher attaining pupils are able to use eight compass points accurately and rapidly to describe movements across a grid. They present their results well and show that they have good strategies for investigation.
87. In Years 1 to 4, pupils benefit from daily 'Quick Maths' sessions in which they attempt challenging tasks in number against the clock. A few parents voiced their concerns at the pre-inspection meeting that these sessions were too stressful and were possibly de-motivating for some. It is the view of the inspection team that the sessions are effective in helping the majority of pupils to improve their number skills. Pupils use ICT well in all classes, for example, in analysing and presenting data.
88. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan activities for pupils that are carefully matched to their capability, and this is particularly effective in promoting progress. Teachers know their pupils well and skilfully choose questions for individuals to motivate and challenge them, ensuring that all are actively included in the lesson. Work is well matched for all, including the less able and those who have special educational needs. Thanks to the skill of teachers and support staff, these pupils are confident and happy in class and make good progress. Opportunities for links with other subjects are effectively explored; for example, Year 3 and 4 pupils used their knowledge of compass points very well in a physical education warm-up session. Teachers' marking of work is consistent and constructive, giving pointers for improvement and praise where it is due. The good quality relationships between staff and pupils are a major factor in building the pupils' confidence in mathematics. A good atmosphere for learning is established and this helps pupils to make progress.

89. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinators. Assessment and recording of pupils' progress is accurate, thorough and well linked to the National Numeracy Strategy. The National Curriculum requirements are fully met.

## **SCIENCE**

90. Standards of attainment in science are average in Years 2 and 4, based on discussion with pupils and the scrutiny of their work. Relatively little time is spent teaching the subject and this restricts standards of attainment to some degree. Teacher assessments for 2002 indicated below average attainment, but considering the small cohort size this may not be significant.
91. Pupils have a broadly sound level of knowledge, skills and understanding about the science topics they have covered. For example, in Year 4, they talk confidently about investigations they have done to find out how well different materials keep us warm and which magnet is the strongest. They use a range of instruments to measure their results and describe clearly how to make the experiment a 'fair test'. They use their knowledge of mathematics and ICT to record their findings and can explain their results. This indicates satisfactory attainment and progress overall.
92. No overall judgement has been made on the quality of teaching. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and in this lesson the teaching was unsatisfactory because the work was too easy for the pupils and there were insufficient gains in their knowledge. Progress of pupils by Year 4 would indicate that teaching is usually satisfactory overall.
93. Staff have planned an appropriate curriculum to cover the units of work agreed with the middle school but the allocation of teaching time to science is only half that recommended as a minimum by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The current recommendations are for one hour 30 minutes a week for Year 1 and 2 and two hours a week for Years 3 and 4. Currently the school provides 45 minutes a week for Years 1 and 2 and one hour a week for Years 3 and 4. As a result the amount of work done in the subject is less than that usually seen and there is too little work demonstrating higher attainment for the most able pupils. The science co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have a commitment to develop the subject. However, time constraints in a small school have not enabled them to evaluate the work in the subject sufficiently or to identify how it can be improved. Resources for science are satisfactory.
94. The work in science since the last inspection has remained broadly satisfactory. The school should review the allocation of lesson time to science and ensure that work is matched to the capabilities of pupils in all lessons.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. No art lessons were seen during the inspection and the judgement is based on an analysis of planning, pupils' work and discussion with co-ordinators.
96. Pupils' attainment throughout the school is in line with national expectation. There is clear progress as pupils move through the school. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have used paint or collage to represent flowers in different ways. There are some good examples of observational drawing in Years 3 and 4 where pupils have used pastels to draw the Queen Mother. They have also used paper collage to re-create the Bayeux tapestry, seed and paper collage to make Rangoli patterns, and waste materials to produce

posters to support environmental issues. Art work is used effectively to support work in other subjects.

97. Teachers' plans indicate that there is satisfactory coverage of the curriculum over time, but the work seen in the inspection was limited in terms of the range of media and techniques used. There is some blurring of the distinctions between art and design and technology in the planning for both subjects. Where this occurs, a clear focus on the objectives for each subject needs to be maintained. A portfolio of work for each pupil is kept to aid assessment at the end of the year. Resources for art are satisfactory. The management of art is satisfactory but the staff do not have a clear view of the standards achieved in the subject.
98. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory and the school has now adopted the QCA scheme of work. In order to improve further the school should broaden the range of media and techniques offered on a regular basis to pupils; evaluate the standards achieved by pupils; clearly identify the links and distinctions between art and design technology.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99. It was not possible to observe the teaching of design and technology during the inspection. However, the inspection of pupils' work shows that standards of attainment are about average at the end of Years 2 and 4. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection.
100. The school follows the Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidelines for the curriculum. Valuable links are made to other subjects; for example, pupils made Divali lamps, linked with their learning about the Hindu religion. This also enabled them to further their appreciation of other cultures. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in English and mathematics, for example as they use writing skills to describe a puppet making process and measuring skills when designing.
101. In Year 2, pupils have made puppets of different types. They are able to identify the materials used and describe the making process. They evaluate their completed work satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs tackle the same work as the rest of the class and make sound progress, for example, when designing and making a shadow puppet in the form of a fish.
102. In Year 4, pupils have designed and made leaf stencils, Divali lamps and money containers. Their work is satisfactory, but there is too little emphasis on the function and purpose of their work, both at the design and the evaluation stages. There is also too little focus on the qualities of the materials used in realising their designs. For example, when considering their completed money containers, few discussed the strength or the capacity of them. Management is sound and resources are adequate.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection and judgements are based on an analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' work.
104. By the ages of seven and nine pupils' knowledge and skills in geography are in line with those expected nationally. In Years 1 and 2, pupils follow the progress of Barnaby Bear as he travels the world. Year 1 pupils draw a simple plan of their route to school and in Year 2 pupils attempt to draw a free hand map of the British Isles. By Year 4 pupils know a lot of facts about life in Kenya and can label maps appropriately. Literacy skills



are used to support work in geography. Assessment is based on a comparison of what pupils know before and after each unit. No formal records are kept.

105. Staff have planned an appropriate curriculum in agreement with the partner middle school and it is taught in alternate terms. Resources are satisfactory. Management is sound and the co-ordinator has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject.
106. Standards in geography have been maintained since the last inspection but to improve further the school should now identify a clear expectation of the level of geographical skills for pupils in each year group.

## **HISTORY**

107. No lessons were seen during the inspection and judgements are based on an analysis of teachers' planning, pupils' work and a discussion with Year 4 pupils.
108. It is not possible to make a judgement on attainment at the age of seven as very little work was available. Pupils in Year 4 have a good level of knowledge about the history units they have studied and their historical skills are in line with expectations nationally.
109. Year 4 pupils can describe the differences between life today and in Victorian and Anglo-Saxon times. They have a sound sense of chronology and can describe different sources of historical information. They are able to distinguish between fact and opinion. They talk confidently about history and clearly enjoy the work they do.
110. The school has planned an appropriate curriculum in consultation with the partner middle school. The subject is taught every other term, alternately with geography, and the time allocated to it is about that recommended. Literacy and art skills are used effectively to support the work in history. Assessment is based on pupils listing what they know before a unit of work and then again at the end. As yet, no formal records are kept of progress in history. Resources are satisfactory and pupils have access to artefacts to support their learning. Management of history is sound and staff are clear about strengths and areas for development in the subject.
111. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Work in the subject could now be improved by a clearer identification of the level of historical skills expected of pupils in each year group.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

112. There has been a big improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Standards of attainment are now above average in all classes. Pupils make good progress and enjoy using ICT equipment. In doing so, they have good opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills. Parents feel that ICT is now a strength of the school and the inspection team agrees.
113. The school teaches ICT skills discretely and then gives pupils ample opportunities to use them in the other subjects of the curriculum. This works very well. The result is that pupils have the skills and confidence to make good progress and achieve good standards. Year 2 pupils create a simple database of information about class members and use it well to answer questions and to produce bar charts to present the information. They use their ICT and design skills well to produce cards for special occasions, showing that they can choose suitable font styles, text size and colour to suit the type of card. They demonstrate their good editing skills to refine their work and

correct mistakes. They are able to combine text and graphics to good effect, for example in presenting the words to 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'.

114. Year 4 pupils use e-mail to pursue their enquiries in religious education. They use a data base to answer questions and produce charts, for example, showing the frequency of particular eye colours in the class. They achieve high standards in producing newsletters and posters, showing a good understanding of the intended audience.
115. No direct teaching of ICT skills was observed, but it is clear from the results that teaching of skills is effective. The curriculum is well planned and covers the requirements fully. The assessment and recording of pupils' work is thorough. The improvements in the standards reached by pupils and in the quality of the curriculum enjoyed by them is a result of the very good management of the subject.

## **MUSIC**

116. Throughout the school, pupils' standards of attainment match those expected for their age. Pupils enjoy their music lessons, work with enthusiasm and make good progress. The standards noted at the previous inspection have been maintained.
117. Year 2 pupils are able to recall and copy rhythmic patterns. They are also able to create patterns based on words and phrases. They use rhythmic patterns well to perform as a class.
118. Year 4 pupils learn that rhythmic patterns can be represented as symbols. They are able to follow these symbols when directed by the teacher, and successfully combine different patterns in a class performance. They are rightly pleased with the results and show pride in their work. One pupil explained that "patterns of rhythm can change, but the beat stays the same".
119. Teaching and learning is of good quality. The work is set at a challenging level and good progress results as pupils respond to suggestions for improvement.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

120. No overall judgement on attainment has been made, as it was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection. However, standards reached by Year 3 and 4 pupils in the lesson seen were high. At the last inspection, attainment was judged to be above average and on the evidence available it is likely that these standards have at least been maintained in the areas of the curriculum that the school is able to teach.
121. The one lesson seen was of very good quality, but no overall judgement on teaching quality has been made because of the limited number of observations. The lesson required pupils to work together to solve a challenge. It was very well planned and gave the class opportunities to use recent learning in mathematics as they moved in different directions about the hall in the warm-up session. The very good relationships between the teacher and the class enabled pupils to have confidence in themselves as they worked together impressively to find solutions on how to cross an imaginary crocodile infested swamp. Pupils of all levels of ability were successfully included in the activities.
122. The school has unsatisfactory accommodation for teaching physical education indoors (there is no school hall). The W.I. Hall is used well, but the school does not have the

facilities to teach pupils the breadth of gymnastics activities required by the National Curriculum. Pupils benefit from swimming lessons and athletics in the summer term.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

123. Standards of attainment are above average, exceeding those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of the subject makes a big contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps to reinforce the school's ethos and values.
124. Year 2 pupils understand what a religious symbol is, can identify the Cross as an example, and understand the meanings of the different parts of an advent wreath. They know that buttonholes are worn on the special occasion of a marriage ceremony, and explain (when asked), that this is done "because marriage is special". In written work they have used their literacy skills well in writing about their favourite Bible stories and to write about their feelings, and the beliefs held by other faiths. Their work shows a good level of insight and understanding for their age.
125. Year 4 pupils have written a book of their prayers. They have used their literacy skills well and made good use of the school's ICT equipment to present their work to good effect. The prayers show thoughtfulness, care for others, concern and responsibility. For example, one prayer asks God to "please help me make the world one big peaceful nation".
126. No overall judgement has been made on teaching quality because too few lessons were seen. The single lesson observed was of very good quality. A Hindu visitor shared his beliefs and customs with the pupils. They learnt about aspects of the Hindu Gods and the spiritual meaning of some associated symbols and actions. The teacher had prepared the pupils very well for the lesson. They showed high levels of interest and enthusiasm and learnt from experience that Hindus believe that religious ceremony should be joyful to perform. They were encouraged to reflect on the lesson and to use their ICT skills to e-mail further questions to the visitor.
127. The curriculum is well structured and the subject is well managed by the co-ordinators. Good links are made with other subjects, for example with design and technology, when pupils made Divali lamps that were used as part of the school Divali celebrations.