

INSPECTION REPORT

ABBAS & TEMPLECOMBE CE VC

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Templecombe

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123775

Headteacher: Mrs Bernie Green

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Gosling
22453

Date of inspection: 4 – 6 November 2002

Inspection number: 248506

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane
Templecombe
Postcode: BA8 0HP
Telephone number: 01963 370481
Fax number: 01963 370409

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Sandra Kiddle

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22453	Brian Gosling Registered inspector	History Information and communication technology Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9644	Michael Whitaker Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12116	Christina Morgan Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography Music Religious education	
3942	Keith Sanderson Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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

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

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Abbas and Templecombe CE VC Primary School is smaller than most schools. It was originally built in 1870 and was extended and modernised in the 1970s in keeping with its original style. There are 128 pupils currently: 64 boys and 64 girls. A few pupils come from minority ethnic families but there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average and the proportion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is also below average. Pupils come from a mixture of council and privately owned housing in surrounding villages and the nearby town of Wincanton, although the large majority comes from council owned housing in Templecombe. The school's records show that children enter the reception class with attainment that is below the county average, particularly in language and mathematical skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Abbas and Templecombe Primary is a very effective school. Children arrive with attainment that is below the county average and they attain high standards by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. The very good leadership and management of the school ensure that this is achieved by consistently good teaching within a well-developed curriculum. Consequently, the school clearly provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain high standards by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are very positive and they are keen to learn because the school's provision for their personal development is very good.
- The quality of the teaching is good throughout the school.
- The quality and range of the curriculum are very good and include a wide range of after-school activities.
- The very good leadership of the school is clearly focused on improving pupils' education within a caring and supportive learning environment.
- A strong feature of the school is the positive effect of parents' involvement in their children's learning.

What could be improved

There are no significant areas of weakness requiring improvement but the school could consolidate its high standards and very good provision by:

- extending the good improvements in the monitoring role of co-ordinators to all subjects as planned;
- prioritising more clearly the many items within the school improvement plan.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997 and, since then, has made good improvement. Standards have been raised in English, mathematics and science primarily as a consequence of the school's successful efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The planning of the curriculum has been improved and greater opportunities for independent study have been organised with opportunities developed in the use of computers and homework activities. The governing body now ensures that statutory requirements for pupils' annual reports, the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are met.

Additionally, the decoration of the school has been improved and a computer suite has been established. The monitoring of teaching has been developed and the governing body has developed its role and organisation well. The school is now well established to secure further improvements and there is a shared commitment to succeed amongst all members of the staff and governing body.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	C	A	A
mathematics	B	C	A	A
science	B	A	A*	A*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table¹ above shows that the school's results in 2002 are impressive when compared to all schools nationally and to similar schools. (A* indicates that the school's results are in the top five per cent of schools. The school's results overall were also in the top five per cent of schools.) It is not unusual for results to vary from year to year with small groups of pupils. However, when the results are compared with schools with similar attainment at the end of Year 2 in 1998, the results are also well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science. These pupils, therefore, have made very good progress in Key Stage 2. Results at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were also good: above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics, although results of teacher assessments in science were below average. The children in the reception class make good progress and almost all attain the nationally expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. The attainment of many pupils exceeds national expectations in history as they develop good skills in using and comparing various sources of historical evidence. Pupils attain standards that meet national expectations in all other subjects, although there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in geography. The school is successful in reaching the challenging targets it sets itself in the national tests and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well by the time they leave the school.

¹ It is necessary to exercise caution when interpreting the results of small schools with low numbers of pupils in each year group as a single pupil can represent a high percentage and results may vary much more from year to year than they would in a larger school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and they work well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of the teachers and they work and play together well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The positive relationships enjoyed by pupils contribute to their learning and enjoyment of school.
Attendance	Good. The attendance rate is above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. A significant proportion of the teaching seen was very good, particularly in Key Stage 1. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and is the result of the clear focus the school has given to improving teaching and learning in recent years. English and mathematics are taught well and the effective implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy ensures that the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Learning support assistants work well in partnership with teachers and they make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Assessment is used well to plan tasks and activities that meet the different learning needs of the pupils, and teachers ensure that work is sufficiently challenging for those pupils who are capable of attaining higher standards. This, and the good relationships that exist throughout the school, enable pupils to maintain concentration well and to complete their tasks. They record investigations and studies in their books to high standards of presentation, which indicates the pride that pupils take in their work. Homework is used well to extend the work that pupils do in school and the support that parents provide has a significant impact on the good standards that pupils attain.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school enhances the curriculum with a number of visits and visitors and there is a wide range of after-school clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are identified early and the good provision for them ensures that they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development that underpins pupils' very good attitudes to school. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. This is a caring school that is concerned to ensure the welfare and safety of all its pupils.
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The partnership with parents is very good and parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads and manages the school very well with a clear focus on improvement. The deputy headteacher is supportive and the role of subject co-ordinators is being developed well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are well organised and well informed. They are effectively involved in school improvement and they ensure that statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school monitors and evaluates all aspects of its performance carefully to identify areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school deploys its learning support assistants and specialist teachers well to support pupils' learning. The principles of best value are applied very well.

A good number of effective learning support assistants contribute to a good level of staffing. Resources for learning and the accommodation are also good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are very supportive of almost all areas of the school's provision and their children's behaviour and achievements. In particular, all parents who returned the questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework provided.

Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views of the school. The school has recently revised its homework policy, and homework, which is similar to most schools, is used well as an extension to lessons that supports pupils' learning effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school assesses children's attainment when they first start school. Although there is some variation with the small number of children in each year group, these assessments generally show that children's attainment is below the county average, particularly in language and mathematical skills. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress and almost all attain the Early Learning Goals² expected of children of this age by the time they enter Year 1.
2. The school's results³ in 2002 are very impressive. At the end of Year 2, the school's results are above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. The wide range in pupils' attainment is reflected in the fact that the proportion of pupils who attained the nationally expected Level 2⁴ was above average in writing but average in reading and well below average in mathematics. Nevertheless, the proportion that attained the higher Level 3 was well above average in reading and writing, and very high in mathematics. (Very high indicates that the school's results were in the top five per cent of schools in the country.) This is a strong indication that the school provides good challenge for those pupils who are capable of high attainment. The results of teacher assessments in science show that the proportion of pupils who attained the nationally expected Level 2 was below the national average and the proportion that attained the higher Level 3 was well below the national average. However, this can be rather misleading due to the small number of pupils in the year group, where each pupil represents a large percentage. For example, all but two pupils attained Level 2 in science, as well as in reading and mathematics, but the comparative descriptors are very different. In comparison with similar schools, the results were broadly average in reading, but well above average in writing and mathematics.

² On Early Learning Goals: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1 in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development; and personal social and emotional development. The Foundation Stage continues until pupils enter Year 1, when they begin Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

³ On the school's results: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic with which to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stage 1, the National Curriculum levels of attainment are given a score. For example, in mathematics Level 1=9 points and Level 2=15 points, and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to that in other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

⁴ On levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

3. At the end of Year 6 in 2002, the school's results were well above average in English and mathematics, and very high in science in comparison with all schools nationally and also similar schools. Although it is necessary to be cautious as results can vary significantly from year to year in schools with small groups of pupils, these results are, nevertheless, very impressive. The proportions of pupils who attained the nationally expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 are similarly high. There is some variation from year to year but the trend in the school's results had been rising broadly in line with the national trend to 2001. The improved results in 2002 have the effect of improving the trend in the school's results so that it is above the national trend. The school set challenging targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics for year on year improvement. These targets have been met.
4. The impressive improvement since the last inspection (when standards were average in all three subjects at the end of both key stages), and particularly in the last year, is the result of the concerted efforts of the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. This has been achieved through a focused programme of professional development, the development of the role of curriculum co-ordinators and improvements to the way the school plans and delivers the curriculum. It is significant that the headteacher joined the school 18 months ago with recent responsibility for teaching a class. She is clearly a skilled practitioner and has brought these skills to the school, sharing them with a supportive team that is committed to improvement. This has continued and heightened the general school improvement since the last inspection.
5. The school makes suitable provision to ensure that all pupils are fully included in school life. It notes the gifted and talented pupils in each class and the area in which they excel in order to ensure that they receive suitably challenging work. The school has established a suitable range of assessment strategies to monitor pupils' progress and the attainment of individual pupils is recorded as they move through the school. This shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Although there is some variation in the relative attainment of boys and girls from year to year, this is to be expected with small groups of pupils and, overall, there is no identifiable difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
6. Inspection evidence supports the view that standards are high. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics and, at the end of Key Stage 2, it is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards meet national expectations at the end of both key stages in all other subjects, except for history at the end of Key Stage 2 where standards exceed national expectations, and geography at the end of both key stages where there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils have very good attitudes to school, which represents an improvement on the good attitudes reported at the time of the previous inspection. The atmosphere before lessons commence in the morning is happy and relaxed. The youngest pupils, in the reception class, play cheerfully whilst their parents chat, and they settle confidently to their classroom routines as soon as parents have left. Older pupils take positive advantage of the opportunities offered by the school. The wide range of extra-curricular activities provides considerable support for their development and a large number of both boys and girls enthusiastically took part in football training after school

outdoors on a wet evening. In lessons, pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to their work. Most are interested and enthusiastic and keen to respond to challenge, as was seen in a Year 4/5 mathematics lesson on the subject of two and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils show a pride in their work, as the high standard of presentation demonstrates.

8. Behaviour is good, as was the case at the last inspection, and parents overwhelmingly support this view. There have been no exclusions over the last year. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations, benefiting from the supportive environment and the opportunities it provides for reflection on moral and social issues. Movement about the school is orderly. Play is lively but good natured and nobody is left out. The few pupils from minority backgrounds are fully involved in all activities, both in and outside lessons. Pupils are open and friendly with visitors, respectful towards adults and careful of school property and resources. There are a few pupils who present considerable behavioural difficulties. This small minority is well managed by staff and the common sense of the majority of pupils ensures that lessons are not disrupted. Pupils with special educational needs generally show positive attitudes to their work. On occasions when this is not so, they are consistently well managed by both teaching staff and learning support assistants.
9. Personal development is good. Pupils respond well to the school's clear social values. They discuss and agree their class rules and they are happy to accept responsibility. Older pupils look after younger ones, especially at play. Pupils know that the school is part of a wider village community and they contribute to that community, for example, by singing carols at senior citizens' parties, visiting residential homes and singing to employees at a local business. They appreciate that assemblies are occasions of significance and behave with appropriate respect. Parents appreciate the school's promotion of independence. Pupils are encouraged to research topics at home, in libraries or on the Internet. Relationships are very good. Adults in school provide very good role models of co-operative working and pupils respond well. Relationships between pupils are very supportive; they work well in pairs and groups, and share equipment, such as computers, amicably. Members of staff treat pupils with respect and all contributions by pupils in lessons are valued.
10. Attendance is good. Unauthorised absence is very small. Pupils arrive punctually for school and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. All lessons in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 were good or better, with a third of the lessons in Key Stage 1 being very good. In Key Stage 2, most lessons were good, with one seventh being very good and another seventh being satisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when half were good or better and there was some unsatisfactory teaching.
12. The reason for this improvement is that the school has focused clearly on improving the quality of teaching and learning. A teaching and learning policy, aimed at creating a more supportive learning environment and raising teachers' expectations of pupils, has been established through extensive discussion and implemented throughout the school. Teachers' planning for lessons has been improved through discussions at staff meetings and professional courses for all the staff, which has included teaching for more effective learning. Teaching is now monitored regularly by the headteacher

and the co-ordinator for literacy, with other co-ordinators developing this aspect of their role in the current year. The school has agreed a code of conduct for these observations, which are recorded and shared with the teacher. Further, the local education authority is invited into the school each year to ensure that observations are objective. These strategies are effective and the quality of teaching and learning is improving across the school.

13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage takes very careful account of the learning needs of these children. The teacher and the learning support assistant work well in partnership to provide a range of practical activities through which the children learn effectively. Resources are well organised for children to develop their creative and physical skills as well as to assist their personal and social development. For example, the playhouse takes on different characteristics to reflect and support the intended learning at the time. During the inspection, it had become the 'Three Bears' House' and play activities supported pupils' understanding of number.
14. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum are good and they use this knowledge to plan tasks and activities that take account of the range of age and ability within their class. Assessments are used well to plan tasks that are sufficiently different to take account of the different learning needs of the pupils, along with an emphasis on open-ended activities. This good match of the task to the particular learning needs of the pupils is instrumental in maintaining the good attitudes that pupils show in lessons. They are able to maintain concentration well throughout the lesson because the tasks are neither too difficult nor too easy. Teachers also take care to ensure that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged and the success of this is the well above average proportions of pupils who attain the higher Level 3 in Key Stage 1 and Level 5 in Key Stage 2.
15. Basic skills are taught effectively and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented well. Teachers are sufficiently confident to adapt these strategies to the particular learning needs of the pupils in their class. Links with other subjects are established effectively to support learning. For example, information and communication technology is used extensively to improve and present written work, to analyse data that they have gathered and to research information on topics such as the Mary Rose in history. Teachers also plan homework well to extend the work that is done in school. In history, for example, pupils conducted an independent study to research the Tudors and produce a booklet, complete with an index and a glossary, that other pupils use to compare sources of evidence in school.
16. Teachers have suitably high expectations of the pupils, whose work is presented to high standards. They share the learning intentions of lessons with pupils effectively and this allows pupils to be aware of what they are learning and why. Teachers manage pupils well, ensuring that pupils behave well and work hard to complete the tasks that they are set. The basis of this good management of pupils is the good relationships that exist throughout the school.
17. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and resources are organised well. Of particular note is the effective way that learning support assistants work alongside teachers. They have a good understanding of the purpose of the lesson and the methods to be employed. They are confident and very able and this enables the provision of a greater range of learning opportunities. For example, learning support assistants work with younger pupils in the class or a specific ability group and, on other occasions, they work with a group outside the classroom. This permits a greater and

more effective use of the school's resources, including the computer suite.

18. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in both key stages for English, mathematics and science, as well as for history in Key Stage 2. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects, except geography in which there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement.

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

19. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils and meets all statutory requirements. The quality of learning opportunities, at both key stages, is very good. A wide range of visits and visitors is supported by good, purposeful teaching that motivates pupils to engage fully in the learning opportunities offered.
20. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. The very positive ethos and close-knit family atmosphere promotes the effective inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into every aspect of school life, and very good planning ensures suitable opportunities for those pupils with the potential for higher attainment. The successful introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and the national guidance relating to schemes of work adopted by the school, have ensured that planning reflects the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The school is now adapting these national planning guidelines so that they address the needs of its own pupils more specifically. It is also developing a range of support groups for English and mathematics to support further learning opportunities for pupils experiencing difficulty. Long and medium-term plans provide a good overview of the curriculum and help secure continuity and progression in learning in all subjects. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
21. The school complies with the Code of Practice⁵ for special educational needs and individual education plans are good and clearly identify appropriate targets. Pupils generally make good progress towards the targets set for them. Targets are defined well and constitute achievable steps for the pupils concerned. Teachers write the individual education plans in conjunction with support from the special educational needs co-ordinator, and the knowledge teachers have of individual pupils' needs has a positive effect on learning. Progress towards targets is regularly reviewed. Teachers differentiate well for different groups in their classes and planning takes good account of targets for individuals and groups. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs take part in all activities and parents are encouraged to become involved as soon as needs are identified.
22. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school's policy is reviewed regularly and it effectively draws the different strands of this work together. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught through topics in science and the school nurse supports teachers in delivering this work. The school has held drugs awareness meetings for parents and a written scheme guides work in

⁵ On Special Educational Needs Code Of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

school. The school is developing circle time⁶ activities where pupils have opportunities to reflect on, and discuss, issues with their teachers and fellow pupils. This helps provide a secure environment and gives pupils both the opportunity to value the experiences of others and the confidence to discuss feelings and ideas.

23. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities with the school offering after-school clubs in hockey, netball, football, recorder playing, information and communication technology, cookery, cricket, cycling proficiency, gymnastics and cross-country running. These activities are well supported by teaching staff, teaching assistants and parents and they make a significant contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development. The school also provides a wide range of educational visits and encourages visitors into school to share experiences and expertise. Older pupils take part in a residential trip to Swanage. Other visits include to Kingston Maurward, Bath and Lulworth Cove. Visitors include the Kathakali Indian Dance Troupe, members of the district council, professional artists and sculptors, and the Jeep National Horse Riding Festival.
24. Links with partner institutions are very good. Pupils mainly transfer to one school and good induction procedures exist. Pupils in Year 5 also have a chance to visit this school with their parents. The secondary school readily makes facilities available, where feasible, and offers courses for more able pupils in a variety of subjects. Links with the community are very good. Pupils have good contact with the parish and district councils, and the school's facilities are well used for further education courses in computers, aerobics and 'reading and writing with your child'. A local firm helps to sponsor the school crossing patrol.
25. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and effectively underpins all aspects of the curriculum.
26. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Teachers demonstrate a commitment to establishing and maintaining a strong spiritual ethos in the school. The ethos is rooted in Christian values and a belief in the unique capacity and worth of every individual. Both assemblies and religious education lessons make a profound contribution to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development and pupils are encouraged to think deeply on a range of issues and reflect on their own role in the school and wider community. For example, in a religious education lesson on 'choices', a Year 4 pupil commented that 'making choices is like the tiller on a ship, sometimes it turns one way, sometimes the other'. The school has close links with the church, reinforced by a visit from the Bishop of Bath and Wells, who blessed the school's 'quiet area'.
27. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school has identified key values and behaviour, which are adhered to throughout the school. New pupils entering the school quickly absorb the prevailing idea that the basis of good behaviour is care and sensitivity to others. Pupils respect each other, themselves and property. They understand that they have a right to be treated well and must treat others in the same way. For example, in a class assembly in Years 1 and 2, pupils were clear in their view that if we promise to do something we should carry it out and that what we do is more important than what we say. This was linked to the 'golden rules' on display in the classroom.

⁶ On 'circle time' - this is the provision of a discussion period which provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about issues that face them in everyday life.

28. The procedures for promoting pupils' social development are very good. Teachers give pupils increasing responsibility through the school for their own conduct and learning. By Year 6, pupils assist in many jobs around the school, such as taking responsibility for the overhead projector and audio equipment in assembly and looking after younger pupils at playtime. There is a school council through which pupils' views are expressed and opportunities exist for pupils to write articles for the parish newsletter. Pupils write regular reports on sports events and one report noted that, 'We came joint runners up, but unfortunately didn't qualify for the play off. The team took the result well and as consolation had their photo taken for the Western Gazette'.
29. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. This is promoted through art, music, geography and history and through a strong sense of community. The village uses the school's facilities. For example, members of the local community come in to use the school's computers and pupils see themselves as part of a continuing tradition of living and learning in the area. Pupils regularly take part in debates in the county 'children's parliament'. They learn about the wider locality and the other cultures through visits to museums and galleries, and through residential field trips. The school has links with a school in Zambia and a group of Kathakali dancers inspired a dance project.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. There are good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection purposes. All other members of staff, including support staff, are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern. Parent helpers have been appropriately cleared and pupils' access to the Internet is properly supervised. Health and safety procedures are conducted by a committee of the governing body and the premises are regularly inspected. Contracts are in place for the regular safety inspection of electrical and fire equipment, and physical education apparatus. There are competent arrangements for dealing with first aid and pupils' medical needs. The health and welfare of pupils have a high priority in the school. For example, all pupils have their own bottles of water with them all day (the bottles were originally provided free by a nearby large supermarket). The school encourages healthy eating at the mid-morning break.
31. The school has effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Registrations are carried out promptly and efficiently and registers are monitored for patterns of absence. Lateness is well managed. Pupils are required to report to the school office if they are late and arrival after 9.30 am is recorded as unauthorised absence. The school has the services of an educational social worker who deals with the rare cases of unsatisfactory attendance. The high levels of attendance are due in no small measure to the happy atmosphere in school and parents' unequivocal support.
32. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. A strong moral ethos pervades the school, which encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. The atmosphere in school is positive and encouraging, and pupils are both expected and helped to work hard. Each class discusses its own 'golden rules' at the beginning of the school year and classes have behaviour targets. Pupils are rewarded for hard work, good effort and positive attitudes, for which there are both individual and team rewards. Displays celebrate good work. The prospectus is very clear about sanctions and rewards, and parents are very supportive of the school's

- approach. Lunchtime supervisors manage lunchtimes well. They have been trained in the management of pupils and succeed in creating a pleasant, sociable atmosphere in the dining hall. If the behaviour of a child becomes particularly difficult, parents are involved, instances monitored and a behaviour contract may be drawn up. Bullying is similarly dealt with, although everyone agrees that it is a rare event. Issues of racism are addressed effectively through circle time.
33. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, though less well developed in other subjects than in English and mathematics. In addition to the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the school uses optional tests at the end of other years. The results of these tests are analysed to identify pupils who are in need of additional support, together with those with the potential to attain above the nationally expected levels. Test results are, in addition, analysed by gender. The school conducts moderation exercises, to ensure that all staff understand and agree upon the criteria for the various levels in the National Curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and effective support is provided.
34. Pupils' personal development is supported well. Much of the support is informal and pivots on the closely-knit nature of the school community and the very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils' reports contain perceptive comments on the pupil's personal development, together with the pupil's own comments. Pupil profile files contain copies of letters of commendation sent by the headteacher to the pupils' homes. Parents are impressed by the degree of individual support for their children.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents have very positive views of the school. They are particularly appreciative of the high standards achieved, the friendly atmosphere throughout the school, the ready availability of the headteacher and staff and the positive promotion of children's confidence. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, attended the pre-inspection meeting or were spoken to during the inspection were unanimous in their appreciation of the headteacher's leadership and management of the school.
36. There are good links with parents. The presence of an adjacent pre-school group allows the school to ease induction into the reception year. Parents are given good quality information about the school in a clear prospectus that is written in language easily accessible to parents. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about school activities and there are termly opportunities for formal parent-teacher consultations. The headteacher writes to parents when their children have been awarded a Headteacher's Commendation. Pupils' progress reports are good and they provide a clear statement about the standards achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The pupils' effort and behaviour are reported on, as is personal development. Pupils add their own view of the year and their own personal targets, and parents have the opportunity to record their response.
37. Parental involvement on the work of the school is very positive. Parents volunteer to help in classrooms, to provide additional supervision on visits, to work on the school environment and to run after-school activities. They support their children's work at home by supporting the school's homework policy and children's homework diaries are well used as vehicles for home-school dialogue. Parental attendance at school events, such as sports day, the Christmas concert, the Year 6 drama production and the leavers' service, is further evidence of the extent of their support. There is a lively parent-teacher association, which acts both as a social link between school, parents

and the community, and as an effective fund-raising organisation.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The headteacher leads the school very well and the management systems in place are very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision of how the school can improve that is focused on teaching and learning and she has set about this task with enthusiasm and commitment since her appointment in January 2001. The deputy headteacher is supportive and there has been a concentration on developing teamwork, involving all staff and governors, through sharing the best skills and practices in the school and implementing common practices and procedures. This has included a review of the curriculum, development of the school environment to improve learning opportunities and the effective implementation of a number of policies, particularly those for teaching and learning and performance management.
39. The role of the co-ordinators is being developed effectively and co-ordinators monitor the provision and standards in their subjects well. Each co-ordinator maintains an attractive and informative portfolio of work in their subject that shows clearly the range of learning experiences offered and indicates the standards achieved. The school has focused on the core subjects, and primarily English, before implementing developments in the monitoring role of all co-ordinators. Pupils' work is analysed each term to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and co-ordinators receive teachers' planning each term. The English co-ordinator has observed every teacher, using a format agreed by the staff, in the last year. Following the school's agreed programme of development, the mathematics co-ordinator will be included in this monitoring system this year, followed by other co-ordinators. This is good planning for effective development that is careful to ensure improvement before further procedures are introduced. Led by the co-ordinator for art and design, co-ordinators produce a review and evaluation of their subjects that highlight areas for development, which is used to inform the school improvement plan.
40. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with colleagues, ensuring that documentation is well managed and up to date. She has a half day each week non-teaching time for management duties. The school makes full use of the local educational authority's special educational needs support teacher, who provides good support and advice, as well as other outside support agencies. The budget for special educational needs is spent appropriately and well. For example, the school has purchased specialised equipment to ensure that any pupil with physical problems is enabled to take a full part in lessons.
41. The governing body, which is active and supportive, has been organised very well to carry out its duties, and statutory requirements are fully met. Each governor is linked to a specific subject area and they establish a good knowledge and understanding of the work of the school through, for example, visits to the school for discussions with co-ordinators and observations or participation in lessons. Governors are active in analysing the results of the national tests and setting school targets. They involve parents in talks when deciding the improvement plan for the next year, which includes an action plan for governors. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document that establishes a good focus for school improvement. Although priorities are identified, all subjects of the curriculum and most aspects of the school's provision are identified in the current year's improvement plan. This denotes clearly the action to be taken, personnel responsible, timescales, financial implications and success criteria. All members of staff are involved in the production of a draft that is discussed and amended by each committee of the governors. The progress of items within the improvement plan is monitored by governors through a system of

discussions with co-ordinators, which informs the curriculum committee and the full governing body.

42. Financial planning is very good and it is linked closely to the requirements of the school improvement plan. Clear priorities for the development of facilities, such as the computer suite, have been derived from the previous report. The finance committee monitors the budget each month through an analysis of spending and rigorous questioning of the school administrative officer. The most recent auditors' report in October 2002 declared that 'financial systems at the school are very good'. The amount carried forward from last year's budget was above the recommended figure. The understandable reason for this was to maintain staffing levels despite fluctuating pupil numbers, and it is planned to reduce this to within recommended limits this year. The school administrative officer provides a friendly welcome to parents and visitors alike. Financial records are maintained well both in written and computerised versions. Quotes are sought from a number of sources to ensure best value in the school's spending decisions.
43. Staffing levels at the school are good, primarily because of the number of learning support assistants who provide good support for pupils. A large number of courses are attended by the members of staff, and their professional development is linked both to the school improvement plan and the individual's own professional needs. The accommodation is good and includes use of a playing field on the site as well as a swimming pool and large nature area that is being developed. Resources for learning are good, overall. They are good for English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and music, whilst they are satisfactory for all other subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. There are no significant areas of weakness requiring improvement. Nevertheless, the headteacher, governors and staff might consider consolidating the school's high standards and very good provision by addressing the minor areas for improvement.

Minor areas for improvement

- (a) The good improvements in the monitoring role of the co-ordinator for English should be extended to all subjects as planned in order to enable effective leadership to focus on raising standards across the curriculum. (Paragraphs 39, 59, 63.)
- (b) The many items within the school improvement plan should be prioritised more clearly to take account of the constraints of a small staff and the timescales necessary to ensure effective improvement. (Paragraph 41.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	26	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	17	74	9	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 almost three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	128
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18

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	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	7	7	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	13	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (100)	93 (100)	86 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (100)	86 (74)	86 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

The numbers of boys and girls has been omitted as there were fewer than 10 boys or 10 girls.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	8	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (68)	100 (79)	100 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (78)	90 (88)	100 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

The numbers of boys and girls has been omitted as there were fewer than 10 girls.

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	123	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	336,406
Total expenditure	322,373
Expenditure per pupil	2,499
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,287
Balance carried forward to next year	29,320

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)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	91
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	43	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	49	5	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	46	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	43	15	6	2
The teaching is good.	52	42	3	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	54	9	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	25	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	46	46	3	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	71	29	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	45	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	37	0	2	0

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

45. At the time of the inspection, there were 17 children under five in the mixed reception/Year 1 class. Children enter the school in September, when they attend part-time for half a term before attending full-time, which they did for the first time during the inspection. The school's arrangements for admission to the reception year are good and children are introduced to school routines gently and securely. The indoor accommodation is small and limits opportunities for practical activities. Nevertheless, suitable activities are planned appropriately with clear reference to the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and daily assessments are used well to plan the next step of the children's learning.
46. The school makes careful assessments of children's learning when they start school. Although there is some variation because of the small groups of pupils, these show clearly that children's attainment when they start school is variable but, overall, it is below the county average, particularly in language and mathematical skills. For example, on starting school, very few children can recognise or write their own name, count ten objects or sort objects by their shape. They are unable to work independently for more than a few minutes and many children's speech is limited to single words with which to express themselves. The inspection took place early in the school year when the children were just starting to attend full-time. Consequently, many children were still working below the level expected of children of this age. Nevertheless, school records show that children make good progress. This is because of the good teaching in the Foundation Stage and almost all children are on line to attain the Early Learning Goals expected of children of this age by the time they enter Year 1. A feature of the good teaching is the effective partnership between the class teacher and the learning support assistant. They work well together and this enables them to ensure that learning for these young children is appropriately organised and that these children are well prepared for work on the National Curriculum by the time they enter Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

47. The arrangements for children starting school are suitable and children enter school with an appropriate level of confidence. They settle quickly into school routines and they receive good support from the teacher and the learning support assistant. There are clear expectations of their behaviour and children respond well. They work happily and co-operatively, taking turns when it is required. Children develop positive relationships with adults and other children. They sit quietly when listening to the teacher and most are willing to volunteer answers to the teacher's questions, although some offer only single words. The children join the other pupils for assemblies and lunch. They line up and wash their hands sensibly, although a few need assistance. A number of pupils have difficulty putting on their coats for play and they receive help from the older and more mature children. Teaching is good and opportunities are planned well. A visit to a local supermarket helps them develop their social skills and a visit from a pet rescue centre provides valuable experience in relating to animals. Gentle encouragement from the adults helps children gain confidence and relate well to others in the classroom.

Communication, language and literacy

48. Although many children enter school with limited language skills, they make good progress and the school's records show that almost all attain the Early Learning Goals by Year 1. Teaching is good and the children are encouraged to improve their speaking and listening skills through the gentle encouragement and focused questions of the teacher. In oral sessions, the teacher ensures they participate fully by asking suitable questions and encouraging fuller explanations when the child is capable of doing so. During the inspection, children were encouraged to write names for the robots that they had made earlier. Asked about the names they had chosen, one boy said that he had used capital letters because, 'It's big' (so that they can) 'see it'. Although many pupils prefer to say no more than a few words at this stage, they speak clearly. A few children, however, still choose to point rather than speak. The skill with which they are now beginning to form their letters is indicative of the good progress they have made in the short time since they started school. They enjoy looking at books and using the 'talking stories' programs on the computer and story tapes. Their familiarity with books is developed by taking books home regularly to share with their parents.

Mathematical development

49. Children learn to count to ten and they join in with Year 1 pupils in the same class in counting to 20. They have difficulty counting groups of objects to ten but, with adult support and guidance, they learn to arrange the objects in a line so that they can count them accurately. They know and recognise the colours red, blue, green and yellow. The children develop their ability to write numerals well and they are encouraged to write them accurately from an early stage by the adults in the classroom. They are guided through simple activities that enable them to develop mathematical concepts, such as bigger and smaller, when they describe the shape and size of flat shapes. Teaching is good and lessons are planned well to ensure the small steps through which children of this age learn most effectively.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

50. Teaching is good in this area of learning and children receive a suitable range of experiences that effectively develop their growing awareness and knowledge of the world around them. Children recognise many common materials and their properties, such as the fact that wood is smooth and hard. During the inspection, they sorted packages into those that contain food and other packages. Through this and associated activities they learn that food is necessary for healthy living. Children note the weather each day, which helps them learn more about the changing seasons, and they make good use of the school grounds and local environment to observe living things, such as insects and plants. They quickly develop a familiarity with the computer and they use the mouse and keyboard skilfully.

Physical development

51. Children have good opportunities for their physical development. They show a developing awareness of space, themselves and others as they move sensibly around the hall, and they use a range of small and large equipment for climbing, balancing, sliding, pushing and pulling. Children use the playground when appropriate to ride wheeled toys that develops their co-ordination well. They enjoy food technology sessions and they use tools well in cutting up fruits to create animal

designs. They are skilful in using construction equipment and they work well together in making models. Teaching is good and children receive a variety of opportunities to develop their skill in handling large pens and paintbrushes. Some children find this difficult and, with good guidance and support, they improve their manipulation of these writing and drawing implements.

Creative development

52. Children develop their confidence and creative skills through a well-planned range of techniques and media. They experiment with mixing colours and create patterns using a variety of colours, applying the paint with care. Printing techniques are developed and they make patterns with a variety of materials. Children happily sing songs from memory together, such as 'Old McDonald' in which they enthusiastically contribute the animal noises. The playhouse in the classroom has a different purpose each half term with associated playthings to stimulate the children's creative imagination. For example, it was designated the 'Three Bears' House' during the inspection and contained threes, such as three teddy bears. One child was observed phoning the doctor because the bears had eaten too much. The robots that the children made from recycled materials showed the application of their creative imagination. Teaching is good and a variety of creative activities are planned well.

ENGLISH

53. Inspection evidence confirms the high standards in English indicated by recent national test results. Pupils enter the infants with standards broadly in line with expectations. By the time they leave the infants at the end of Year 2, standards are above average. By the time pupils reach the end of the juniors, at the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. This represents good progress throughout the school. This is as a result of consistently good teaching, across both key stages, very effective planning of appropriate activities for different ability groups and the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers and pupils enjoy their work in English and teachers now have the confidence and awareness to adapt the strategy to the particular needs of pupils. The basic literacy skills are taught well.
54. There is some good teaching of speaking and listening across the school, much of it informal, but nonetheless effective. Many pupils enter the school with below average speaking skills. From the outset, teachers create opportunities for pupils to relate their experiences and share their observations. The ways in which teachers, at both key stages, listen to pupils talk, ask questions and then value their contributions, gives pupils confidence and encourages them to express their ideas. In a lesson with Years 4 and 5, where the class was discussing the poem 'Clouds', the class teacher drew out some perceptive observations from the pupils through very effective questioning. One pupil confidently offered, 'The clouds look ferocious before a thunderstorm - everything is uneasy'. By the time they are aged 11, pupils articulate their ideas clearly and concisely, as in a discussion the oldest pupils had about the respective merits of a range of advertising leaflets they were considering. Listening skills are good. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and other adults, and also listen carefully to the contributions from other pupils.
55. The school gives great emphasis to the teaching of reading given the limitations of pupils' skills on entry to school, and pupils make good progress throughout, so much so that standards for seven and 11 year olds are above average and often well above.

There is a good focus on teaching strategies for understanding letter sounds, and this enables pupils to tackle words that are unfamiliar to them. Pupils in Year 1 identify key words in a shared text and enjoy talking about the books they take home to share with an adult. By the age of seven, most pupils are confident readers, reading a range of texts with accuracy. A significant proportion read fluently and is able to talk about the main points of stories they have read very well. Junior pupils are exposed to a range of books and they become very effective readers of texts associated with all areas of the curriculum. The oldest pupils demonstrate an understanding of themes and the nature of characters in fiction. They recognise the use made of figurative language in prose and poetry as when, during one literacy session, pupils confidently explained the phrases, 'icebergs of the sky' and 'curtains drawn on the sun at noon'. By the age of 11, the reading skills of the majority of pupils are sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with a wide range of texts and to enable them to find information from different sources. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well through carefully planned activities and they make good progress. The good progress overall that pupils make with their reading owes much to the clear, systematic teaching of skills and strategies, and the support pupils have from parents.

56. Standards of pupils' writing are good. By the time they are seven, most pupils are able to write sequences of sentences with generally accurate spelling and punctuation. The more able pupils write well with a clear writing style and an increasing vocabulary. By the time they are 11, many pupils write very well. They are able to use different forms of writing appropriately, such as composing a traditional tale or when using persuasive writing in an effort to encourage people to donate money to a charity. Vocabulary choices are imaginative and include words such as 'hostile', 'encased' and 'visible', and words are used precisely and for effect. In a series of well-written sports reports, one pupil wrote 'Templecombe kept plugging away. They passed the ball well and seemed to know where their team members were going to be'. The teaching of writing is sharply focused and clear-sighted, and pupils are given valuable guidance on how to improve. They have good opportunities to review and re-draft, and when teachers review and mark writing with the pupils, they try to emphasise the literary features that contribute towards higher levels of attainment rather than just looking at errors. Comments such as, 'Extremely well written - remember to add as much varied vocabulary as possible', or 'A good page-turning start - try to build even more complex sentences next time', give pupils clear and deserved praise, and then point to how writing can be developed. There is some good teaching of pupils with special educational needs by class teachers and learning support assistants. The teaching of these pupils during lessons is focused on their needs and on the targets in their individual educational plans. The school is analysing test and other assessment data rigorously in English, sets good targets for groups and individuals, and lessons reflect these targets. By the time they are 11, pupils produce a fluent, joined, well-formed style of writing that is often attractively presented. Most pupils spell accurately and sentences are punctuated correctly.
57. There is some good use of other subjects to practice and extend skills learned in English. For example, pupils contribute extended pieces of writing in history and geography, and they use research skills to find information at the same time using information and communication technology skills appropriately. They use writing skills well to evaluate work done in design and technology. Word processing skills are used extensively to present written work in attractive and varied ways.
58. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is having a beneficial effect on

teaching and on raising standards. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and in the infants and the juniors, teaching was good, with many of the lessons seen being very good. Lessons are planned very well and show a confident grasp of the literacy strategy. Members of staff are successful in ensuring the involvement of different groups of pupils. They make sure pupils know what they are expected to learn and effectively use the endings of lessons to identify exactly what pupils have learned and to encourage them to think about what they need to learn next.

59. The subject is well led and the co-ordinator has developed a good overview of attainment and progress. There are very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating policy, planning and classroom practice. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good. As a result of these factors, the school has good, up to date information and is now more confident about developing planning and adapting the literacy strategy to meet the specific needs of its pupils. Resources for the subject are good and are constantly being enhanced. There is now a wider provision of good quality reading materials, helping to set a good model for pupils' writing, and school initiatives such as 'Book Week' help to ensure that enthusiasm for literacy is nurtured.

MATHEMATICS

60. Results in the national tests in 2002 were well above average at the end of both key stages. Although results might be expected to fluctuate with small groups of pupils, evidence from the current inspection indicates that standards remain high and pupils continue to make good progress. In the current Year 2, pupils are making good progress and are on line to reach or exceed national expectations by the end of Year 2. About half of the pupils in Year 6 are likely to reach the higher Level 5 by the end of the year.
61. Pupils in Year 2 count in tens to 100, have a good understanding of place value in tens and units and can write their answers in both numbers and words. They recognise a range of two and three-dimensional shapes and are beginning to identify right angles in flat shapes. Pupils in Year 6 are broadly confident in knowing multiplication facts and are adept at practising these on a computer program. They have a good understanding of place value and basic number processes and apply their knowledge to money and measurement problems with confidence. Pupils are increasingly confident in identifying the processes to use when solving word problems with several stages and use calculators appropriately for complex computations.
62. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good across the school. The National Numeracy Strategy is adhered to closely and information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning. Mental arithmetic sessions contain an interesting range of activities, which engage pupils' interest and help them to develop useful strategies for dealing with number problems. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and work is well matched to the range of ages and abilities in the class. Support staff are used well to support individuals or groups of pupils. Assessment is used well to identify not only those pupils needing additional support but also those requiring additional challenge in their work. This is provided by a stimulating range of open-ended problem solving activities. Routines are well established and a calm and purposeful working atmosphere prevails in all lessons. Pupils co-operate well in group activities and discuss their thinking with each other as well as the teacher.

Expectations of pupils are high and this is reflected in the high standards of presentation in pupils' books. Published schemes are used selectively to consolidate work but do not structure the learning.

63. The co-ordinator provides effective support for colleagues. She monitors planning and samples pupils' work but has not had opportunities for observing teaching. Resources are good and regularly supplemented. The recent investment in a published scheme is used well.

SCIENCE

64. At the time of the last inspection, the attainment of most pupils was judged to be in line with national expectations. At this stage in the year, pupils' current attainment in Year 2 is also judged to be in line with national expectations. This represents an improvement since the national tests last year partly as a result of fluctuations due to the small numbers of pupils but also as an effect in the quality of teaching and learning and a focus on practical activities and investigations. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and very good progress in Years 5 and 6 where standards are above average.
65. The school organises its work in the subject around common themes for the whole school. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 learned about healthy eating. They sort and label pictures of food and classify them into four main groups, whilst effective questioning encourages them to explain their reasoning. In Year 6, pupils consider data that shows what alcohol does to the blood, interrogate data that establishes a link between fluoride in the water and the incidence of tooth decay, and investigate the effects of exercise on pulse rate. Pupils are expected to come up with an independent hypothesis, test it according to the data they collect and assess its accuracy. Questions such as, 'How much should we trust our results?' ensure that pupils focus on the idea of a fair test and further extend their thinking. These topics being studied during the inspection did not lend themselves to investigation and most activities were tightly structured and teacher directed. However, pupils are encouraged to ask searching questions and to think analytically and there is evidence that the lack of opportunities for independent investigation, noted in the last report, has been satisfactorily addressed. Science makes an effective contribution to the school's provision for personal, social and health education.
66. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. Teachers consistently challenge pupils' thinking through, for example, open-ended questioning. Investigations are largely structured by teachers through the use of investigation planning boards, but provide a sound basis for pupils to plan their own investigations. Regular assessment opportunities are built into teachers' planning. Targeted help from learning support assistants enables lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, to contribute fully to the lesson. In fact, good use is made of learning support assistants to support learning for all pupils. For example, they supervise pupils in the computer suite when entering data into a data handling program, and information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning. Homework is used well to consolidate what is taught and to extend pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

67. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment meets national expectations. These standards are similar to those found at the previous inspection. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, from the evidence of pupils' work and the standards they attain, teaching is likely to be at least satisfactory.
68. Examples of pupils' work suggest they receive an appropriate variety of learning experiences and work with a good range of materials, processes and tools. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are encouraged to mix their own colours and they try using varying amounts of water to ascertain the effect. They are introduced to the techniques of wax rubbing, printing and collage and pupils widen their experiences appropriately as they move through school. They record from first hand observations through visits to Stourhead Gardens. They collect a range of different chair designs from magazines as an aid to developing their own design ideas for a model chair. Experience of three-dimensional work includes designing masks, working with wire, exploring how it can be shaped, and working with a professional artist to make 'withies' (willow structures). On trips to the coast, pupils create 'beach art' using driftwood, shells and other detritus. Older pupils develop literacy links, using such fables as 'The Three Little Pigs' and 'The Dog and the Shadow' and tell the story using textiles, paper and 'found objects'. They study Aboriginal art and develop patterns in a similar style. Portrait work by the oldest pupils shows a high degree of maturity and realism with clear, bold facial features. A feature of artwork through the school is the use of art sketch books. This enables pupils to try out ideas and techniques, and also provides an ongoing record of developing skills.
69. The school has set itself the task of changing the 'culture' wherein art is taught. The co-ordinator is making a conscious effort to move away from teacher dominated activities and towards involving pupils more in the thinking processes and in the development of individual ideas and styles. To this end, the school has organised the curriculum so that all the art lessons are taken by the co-ordinator.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

70. Standards of work meet national expectations at the end of both key stages, which is an improvement since the last inspection. A review of pupils' work, planning documents, photographic evidence and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that there is now a greater emphasis on design and technology, with better planning and more specialist teaching.
71. The curriculum is organised and planned well and is used consistently to ensure progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. As they move through the school, pupils learn progressively more about a full range of materials, components and techniques and gain insight into the designing, making and evaluating processes. For example, in investigating methods and techniques of joining, Year 1 pupils look at different ways of joining materials. Year 2 pupils consider how hinges can be used to join pieces of card or wood and enable them to move in and out. Year 3 pupils explore ways of joining fabrics using a variety of stitches. Year 4 make links with their work in science as they investigate the properties, strength and suitability of various materials for different jobs. As a culmination to this developing programme, the oldest pupils use what they have learned to design comfortable, attractive and well-made slippers. They disassemble commercially produced slippers and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses. They incorporate what they have learned when choosing appropriate materials and joining methods for their own slippers and evaluate their results well. Their own finished products showed many

strengths. In Key Stage 1, pupils use construction kits to investigate how to use bricks to make a wall strong, whilst pupils in Key Stage 2 use different construction kits to design and make a moving monster or a model of a moving vehicle. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 use the design and make process to create a puppet, whilst in Key Stage 2, pupils design and make a money container.

72. Teaching in this subject is at least satisfactory in both key stages and is improving. During the inspection, pupils enjoyed food technology studies. Features of these lessons included very good, clear planning, a good use of time through a balance of teacher demonstration and pupil activity and very good use of resources. Pupils consolidated previous learning and learned new skills. The pupils in Key Stage 1 extended their knowledge of food hygiene. On visiting the salad bar, they increased their understanding of taste and food value of various fruit and vegetables. 'Just like Ready, Steady, Cook' said one pupil happily. The pupils in Key Stage 2 learned more about adapting basic recipes to create their own biscuit design. All pupils were supported and encouraged and the teachers' interaction with pupils increased their self-confidence. Documentation to support the subject has developed well since the previous inspection. Assessment information is used well to support learning; good use is made of specialist teaching and available resources support the planned activities.

GEOGRAPHY

73. History and geography are taught alternately and geography has not been taught this term. Pupils' work from last year was not available for scrutiny so it is not possible to make a secure judgement of standards and the quality of teaching. However, the co-ordinator maintains a comprehensive file of examples of pupils' work from the last year. This shows that pupils receive a suitable range of activities and investigations.
74. The curriculum is carefully based on a study of the local area with an emphasis on the development of enquiry and investigative skills. This ensures that knowledge and skills are effectively built on in subsequent years and problems with the continuity of the curriculum, identified in the previous report, have been addressed effectively. In Years 1 and 2, pupils carry out fieldwork in the immediate area and also visit a more distant location, such as Lulworth Cove. Investigations in the village are consolidated by simple map work in the classroom.
75. In Years 5 and 6, pupils carry out investigations of local geographical patterns and problems. For example, pupils carry out a land use survey in Templecombe, using aerial photographs and maps with a variety of different scales. Traffic problems in the village are analysed and the possible benefits or disadvantages of a bypass are considered. Comparisons are also made between village life in India and life in Somerset. A residential visit and further field trips make meaningful links between geography and history, for example, when looking at aspects of change over time in Weymouth. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning, especially when analysing data.

HISTORY

76. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. Pupils' attainment now meets national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and the attainment of many pupils exceeds national expectations at the end

of Key Stage 2. A new co-ordinator has been appointed for the subject, which has been reviewed and improved.

77. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop a good understanding of change over time as they consider how toys have changed. This work is supported by stimulating resources that are brought into school and displayed well for the pupils to investigate. It is also enhanced by old toys, such as 'trap ball', that are shown to the pupils by a visitor to the school.
78. In Key Stage 2, pupils were conducting a study of the Tudors during the inspection. This study was carried out with sufficient depth for pupils to develop their historical knowledge and understanding very well. For example, family trees and timelines were constructed that provided pupils with a secure understanding of the chronology of the period. Onto this, pupils were helped to identify the major changes and events in the period, such as the execution of Sir Thomas More and the establishment of the Church of England. They were further encouraged to discover why these events occurred. As a result, discussions with pupils show that they have a very good understanding of the chronology of the periods that they have studied and the order in which they occurred. Older pupils produce their own booklets on the period that are used by other pupils in the class along with published materials and use of Internet sites to compare the evidence gained from different sources and identify contradictions.
79. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Improvements in the subject are raising both standards and the quality of teaching. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject and a good knowledge of the period they are teaching. This allows very good questioning to extend pupils' understanding. Good resources are used to stimulate pupils' imagination and teachers strive to make lessons interesting. For example, one teacher dressed up as a Tudor visitor and remained in character to answer pupils' questions. Of course, they realised it was their teacher but, nevertheless, they were enthused and an ordinary session became an extraordinary one that inspired them. In another lesson, the Internet was used as a source of information to compare evidence gained from books. This was effective because of the good supervision and guidance of the learning support assistant. The booklets on the Tudors produced by pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 were researched and produced as part of a homework project that supports learning in English by containing contents pages and glossaries. These booklets are extensive and demonstrate a good deal of effort by pupils and a pride in their work. This is a strong indication of the good partnership with parents in their children's learning and has a significant effect on not only the quality of pupils' work but also on the enjoyment that they take from their learning tasks.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

80. It was not possible to observe any lessons in which information and communication technology was taught directly. Nevertheless, extensive use of information and communication technology supported learning in other lessons. From a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, as well as discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator for the subject, it is clear that standards meet expectations at the end of both key stages. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching as no lessons were observed in the subject. However, considering the standards that pupils attain and the confident way that information and

communication technology is used in other subjects, teaching is likely to be at least satisfactory in both key stages.

81. Pupils maintain progress books in which they evaluate their own progress and note what is necessary for the next stage of their learning, and the co-ordinator compiles a portfolio of pupils' work. It is clear from this evidence that the full range of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study is taught.
82. Pupils develop their information and communication technology skills effectively. For example, the youngest pupils in Year 1 and the children in the reception develop good control of the mouse and the keyboard when using games that support their learning. In one lesson observed, they created a shop using a simple drawing package in their work on food. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 use a more complex drawing package and they interrogate a database that they create about their favourite fruits, for example. They gain good knowledge of control technology through their work with a programmable toy and they write clear sequences of instructions clearly.
83. The records for pupils in Year 2 show clearly that they develop good skills in using a word processor to amend and present their work. This entails considering the font, style, size and colour to be used as well as the layout of the work. This is closely linked to the high levels to which the pupils present their work in many subjects and for which word processing is often used. Pupils use a scanner and they skilfully combine text and images. Outside temperature is taken and entered automatically into a database as pupils monitor external events using the computer. In a science lesson, learning support assistants supervise pupils in the computer suite when entering data into a data handling program. Groups of pupils also used the computer suite in a history lesson. They 'log on' and access an Internet page by typing in the world wide web address that they have been given to investigate the Mary Rose. Pupils find the answers to the questions they have been given about the ship and the reason for its sinking. During this time, they receive good support and guidance from the learning support assistant, who is responsible for the group, whilst the teacher works with the rest of the class in the classroom.
84. There have been significant improvements in the subject since the last inspection. This has been led by the co-ordinator who is very skilled in the use and teaching of information and communication technology skills. The resources for the subject are much improved and have included the replacement of old and out-of-date computers in classrooms with modern equipment both in classrooms and in the newly established computer suite. The benefits of this upgraded equipment and new software have been maximised by a range of effective professional development for all staff. This has led to greater confidence, so that information and communication technology is used as a natural method for their work in school, such as labelling and creating documents, as well as developing pupils' skills.

MUSIC

85. Pupils' attainment meets national expectations with a few pupils reaching standards that exceed this. Most pupils enter the school with limited experience of music. Basic skills are taught systematically and pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Weaknesses in provision, noted at the time of the last report, notably in music appreciation and understanding, have been suitably addressed. It was only possible to observe a few lessons in the subject during the inspection. However, the standards attained indicate that teaching is at least satisfactory.

86. By Year 2, most pupils can listen carefully to quite demanding music. They can say what images the music conjures up and create sound pictures to give a visual representation of the piece. By Year 6, pupils can identify and compose their own six or eight beat rhythmic patterns using tuned and untuned percussion instruments, and have a general understanding of musical terms such as timbre, duration and dynamic. Singing is generally tuneful and shows a good understanding of phrasing.
87. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed during the inspection was often good although some lessons were fitted into narrow time slots, which did not allow skills and themes to be developed sufficiently. Teachers were generally confident and able to generate enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were led through a series of warm-up exercises for their voices before singing, and frequent opportunities are provided for reinforcing learning through use of percussion instruments.
88. Music has maintained a high profile in the school. The curriculum is supplemented by occasional music days when a specialist music teacher will work with all classes. Visiting music groups and musical parents perform regularly and links with the music department of the local secondary school provide opportunities for more able pupils to attend music workshops. Peripatetic instrumental teaching is provided and an after-school recorder club additionally augments provision. Music is also used to extend learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, Elizabethan music enhanced a Tudor history topic and music from the 1950s accompanied the school's Golden Jubilee celebrations.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

89. It was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education programme during the inspection. However, in gymnastics and dance, which were seen, standards meet national expectations at the end of both key stages and so teaching is likely to be satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement in gymnastics in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection when standards were unsatisfactory.
90. By the age of seven, many pupils have improved their performance through practice. In gymnastics, pupils show sound control and developing awareness of their own, and others', spatial needs. They enjoy the activity and co-operate well. Most pupils are beginning to find ways of linking movements into simple sequences.
91. Pupils continue to make sound progress through Key Stage 2. In gymnastics, pupils are increasingly fluent in their movements by the age of 11. Sequences show continuity, variations in shape and in weight bearing and a greater variety of changes of direction. Focused teaching demonstrating good subject knowledge is helping pupils to improve the quality of their work. In dance, pupils demonstrate a growing awareness of how to use limbs in unusual positions to convey different moods and some pupils are developing a feel for interpreting music rather than simply copying it. Teachers give pupils time to reflect and offer views on their own and others' performance. This time for observing others is helping pupils develop a wider vocabulary of movement.
92. All pupils have the opportunity to go swimming at Wincanton Leisure Centre. The local secondary school, a designated sports college, helps subsidise the cost of

travel. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils are able to swim a minimum of 25 metres and many swim further. Stronger swimmers learn a range of strokes and personal survival skills.

93. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and work with enthusiasm. Without exception, all pupils dress appropriately. Teachers also set a good example by dressing appropriately and this is an indication of appropriately high expectations. In the lessons seen, teachers demonstrated sound, and sometimes good, subject knowledge. They managed pupils well and gave them good opportunities to demonstrate achievement.
94. The physical education curriculum makes a considerable contribution to pupils' social development. Extra-curricular activities such as netball, cross-country, football, hockey, rounders, cricket, gymnastics and country dancing provide a very wide range of learning and social opportunities, and the school plays friendly matches in a number of sports against other schools. Wincanton rugby, tennis and hockey clubs give coaching sessions. The school also promotes a programme of outdoor pursuits with pupils able to visit the Purbeck Centre in Swanage for a residential visit. These opportunities make a good contribution, not only to pupils' physical development but to their personal and social skills as well.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

95. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that attainment meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages and teaching, therefore, is likely to be satisfactory. The locally agreed syllabus is implemented in a four year rolling programme. The curriculum provides an effective balance between knowledge and understanding of the major world religions and discussion and analysis of important moral issues. Religious education lessons make a very strong contribution to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
96. In Key Stage 1, pupils become familiar with a range of Bible stories and learn about people who have done things through a commitment born of faith. Class assemblies reinforce knowledge gained in religious education lessons and build on pupils' understanding of Christian values. Lessons also identify aspects of other people's experiences and feelings. For example, pupils are shown nativity scenes painted by European artists and compare them with those painted by African artists. They understand that when people paint Jesus, they make Him look like themselves.
97. In Key Stage 2, pupils study Islam and Hinduism, analysing the meaning contained in religious stories from other faiths. They continue to appreciate the significance of the Bible in the Christian religion and this forms the context for the discussion of moral and social issues. For example, a comparison of the story 'The Fib' by George Layton and the story from St Luke's gospel of how Jesus is tempted forms the basis for a discussion on what people do when faced with difficult choices. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own lives and actions and frequently show great perception. For example, one pupil recognised that, 'When you do something bad, it triggers your conscience'.
98. Good questioning by teachers helps pupils to formulate their ideas without pre-empting what they might say. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils

and also amongst pupils themselves provide an appropriate atmosphere for open discussion and provide a forum for pupils to debate moral dilemmas.