

INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL (VA)
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wincanton

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123858

Headteacher: Mr A Quinn

Reporting inspector: Mr G Bassett
21500

Dates of inspection: 18 – 20 November 2002

Inspection number: 248514

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tout Hill Wincanton Somerset
Postcode:	BA9 9DH
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Ashfield
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21500	Mr G Bassett	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music Equal opportunities	How high are standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school managed?
9789	Ms L Barclay	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
20603	Ms A Coyle	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design technology English as an additional language	The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
22990	Mr C Furniss	Team inspector	English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
23055	Mrs W Lucas	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Foundation stage Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Aided Catholic primary school is in Wincanton. It was formerly a Convent school and was established as a Voluntary Aided primary school in 1975. The school serves the parish of Saint Luke and Saint Teresa in the town of Wincanton and also areas, including Castle Cary in the north to Milborne Port in the south, as well as smaller surrounding villages. The socio-economic status of the area is above average. The school has 110 pupils on roll including 17 reception children. The pupils are taught in mixed aged classes. Virtually all pupils are of white ethnic origin. The school has four classrooms and a hall in one building; the offices, pupils' library and computer suite are in a second building across the top playground. The grounds are small but attractive with a hard surfaced playground, a lawn area and gardens. The school's initial assessments show that the pupils' attainment on entry to the school covers the full range but is broadly average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low compared with other schools. A high number of pupils with special educational needs has joined the junior classes over the past three years. There are 15 pupils on roll with special educational needs and nearly all are in junior classes. No pupil has a statement for special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school and it has made good improvements since the last inspection in January 1998. The headteacher gives a clear educational direction to the work of the school. The standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. The standards reached by the end of Year 2 are above average. Throughout the school the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected levels for their ages is higher than the national performance. Throughout their time at the school most pupils make good progress and at present the progress made by the pupils in the reception and infant classes is very good. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very good and often excellent in the reception and infant classes. The quality of the leadership and management of the school is good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively. The cost per pupil is at the higher end of the scale in relation to expenditure nationally, but considering the significant improvements that have been made since the last inspection in teaching, curricular development and management, the school provides good value for money. The school has a good capacity for improvement in the future.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides good and clear educational direction to the work of the school.
- The staff have a shared commitment to improvement; the capacity to succeed is good.
- The teaching is good overall and, more often than not, very good or excellent, in the reception and infant classes.
- The pupils' behaviour is very good.
- The pupils' attitudes and their respect for feelings, values and beliefs are excellent.
- The standards of the pupils' work in English and mathematics in the reception class and by the end of Year 2 are above average.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

What could be improved

- The school does not check rigorously enough either the quality of the pupils' work or the coverage of the teachers' plans.
- The teachers do not make sufficient use of their assessment records to identify possible gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The pupils' annual reports to parents are unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in January 1998, the governing body, headteacher and staff have made significant improvements to the quality of education. The quality of leadership is now good and the school has responded positively to the findings of the last inspection. The pupils have access to the full range of curriculum for information and communication technology and design technology. The quality of teaching has improved substantially and is now good overall. The co-ordinators have established the curriculum for all subjects and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well embedded into the daily routines. The school development plan is now more precise and is shared appropriately with all staff and governors. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is now very good and cultural development is good. The pupils' annual reports are still unsatisfactory but have improved slightly since the last inspection. The regular use of the library by the pupils is still difficult for the school to organise.

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	C	D	C	E
mathematics	D	C	C	E
science	C	C	B	C

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

The table shows that the pupils at the end of Year 6 in the national tests for 2002 attained standards in English and mathematics that were broadly average when compared with all schools but well below average when compared with similar schools. In science the standards were above the national average and broadly average when compared with similar schools. The school has small year groups and the analysis of the above results needs to be undertaken with caution as the performance of one pupil can make the difference between the school being above or below average. This is most noticeable in the comparison with similar schools.

Since the last inspection the school has maintained standards effectively at the end of Year 6, despite the increased number of pupils with special educational needs. In the national tests for 2002 an above average proportion of pupils reached the higher level 5 in all three subjects. The fact that the school increased the proportion of pupils that reach the higher level counteracted the lowering effect of the pupils with special educational needs. This is the reason that the English and science results improved from those of 2001 and that mathematics remained broadly average. The school's overall performance is noteworthy, considering that half of the pupils had special educational needs. The targets set by the school for the end of Year 6 tests in English and mathematics for 2002 were achieved.

Currently the quality of the pupils' work in the junior classes in English, mathematics and science is broadly in line with expected levels for their ages. The pupils throughout the junior classes make good progress in all their work. The quality of the pupils' work in all other subjects is in line with the expected levels for the end of Year 6.

The current work in the infant classes shows that standards are above average in reading, writing, and mathematics and it is clear that the pupils make very good progress in their learning. The results of the national tests for the end of Year 2 in 2002 showed that the pupils' standards in reading and writing were

above average but the standards in mathematics were below average. The quality of their work in information and communication technology is now above the expected standards for their age. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of the pupils' work in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication was judged to be satisfactory. The quality of the pupils' work in all other subjects is broadly in line with the expected levels for their ages.

It is evident that most reception children make very good progress and quickly settle into the routines of the school. The quality of much of their work is already above the expected levels for their age and nearly all of them are on course to compete early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the reception and infant and satisfactory progress throughout their time in the junior classes.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Nearly all pupils show an enthusiasm for school and respond well to the caring ways evident throughout the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school at all times is very good.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is good and they work well in collaboration with others. Their relationships with one another are good.
Attendance	The pupils' attendance is above average and good. The pupils are keen to come to school and most arrive punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very 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 good overall, having improved since the last inspection, when it was satisfactory. During this inspection 39 lessons were observed. Almost nine out of every ten were good or better and there was an extremely high proportion of very good or excellent lessons. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen. With this high quality of teaching the impact upon the children's learning is significant.

The quality of teaching of literacy and numeracy was good overall and often very good with instances of excellent teaching in the infant and reception classes. The teachers make good provision for all pupils in the mixed age classes. Where the teaching is best, the pupils are given good support, when encouraged to explain their own thinking and ideas. This works well in mathematics lessons, when the pupils explain their methods of calculating. The teaching of information and communication technology is now strong and the teachers use computers effectively to enhance the teaching in other subjects. When the teaching is satisfactory, it could be improved if the teachers used their good assessment records more effectively to identify where groups of pupils needed extra support or required extension tasks to promote further learning. This is particularly so in lessons, where the pupils with special educational needs require small steps in their learning to consolidate what they have already learned in their small group sessions with the co-ordinator.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a well-balanced and relevant curriculum. The provision for information and communication technology and design technology has improved significantly.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision made for pupils with special educational needs in the classrooms is satisfactory and they receive very good support when taught in small groups.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Although there are very few pupils with English as an additional language they are given good support with their work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good and for cultural development it is good. More could be done to increase the range of opportunities for the pupils to become more prepared for life in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very safe and caring environment for all the children. The support for their personal welfare is very good.

The parents are very supportive of the school. They support the education of their children effectively. Their involvement in the work of the school and their contributions to learning are high.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a clear educational direction to the work of the school. The co-ordinators have enhanced their management role well and this has brought about significant improvements to the development of the subjects. However, the school does not yet have a sufficiently robust system for checking either the quality of the pupils' work or the coverage of the teachers' plans.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has improved its management role since the last inspection. It fulfils its responsibilities effectively and gives the staff, pupils and parents good support. The governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes good use of the finances made available. It is prudent when monitoring its expenditure and checks up regularly to ensure the principles of best value for money.
The strategic use of resources	The resources are used effectively. The school makes particularly good use of the funding to employ classroom assistants. The level of resources in all subjects is good and those provided for music and information and communication technology are very good.

The school has a good level of staffing and all adults contribute effectively to the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the dispersed nature of the two buildings creates constraints upon the use of the library and the computer suite.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The parents are very supportive of the school and their children like school.• They believe the quality of teaching is good.• Most parents believe that their children make good progress.• They believe the school helps their children to become mature and to work hard.• Most parents believe that the school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents expressed the wish that they would like more information about how well their child is doing.• A small number would like to see a wider range of out of lesson activities.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of the parents. However, the pupils' reports are unsatisfactory, as they do not give the parents sufficient detail about what the children can do and what they need to learn next. The range of out of lesson activities is judged to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. It is evident from the discussions held with the pupils, the scrutiny of their work and from lesson observations that the pupils in the present Year 6 are attaining standards in English, mathematics and science that are broadly in line with the national average. This is also reflected in the results of the national tests for 2002. These standards are the same as at the time of the last inspection. The pupils' work and the results of the national tests in Year 2 show that the standards are above the expected level for their age. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be broadly average.
2. The school's performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6 over the past three years shows that the results fluctuate significantly from one year to the next. This variation is caused partially because of the small cohorts of children that have passed through the school and also because of the large proportion of the pupils with special educational needs. Last year nearly half the pupils in Year 6 were on the special educational needs register.
3. From the analysis of the school's results it is clear that the small size of the year groups affects the overall scores for each subject significantly. The score of one pupil has a significant effect upon the school's overall performance. For instance, the result of one pupil's score can cause the school's performance to be either above or below average. Consequently, the interpretation of these results needs considerable caution when comparisons are made with the national averages and the averages of similar schools.
4. The school's performance in the national tests 2002 for pupils in Year 6 shows that in English and mathematics the standards achieved are broadly average when compared with all schools but are well below average when compared with a similar type of school. In science the school's performance was above average when compared with all schools and broadly average when compared with a similar type of school. The school is extending the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics and science effectively. This is clearly evident in the test results in 2002 as the proportion of the pupils who reached the above average level 5 in English, mathematics and science is higher than the national average in all three subjects. These results are confirmed by the scrutiny of work and following discussions with pupils during the inspection.
5. Further analysis of these results shows that the girls' performance in English and mathematics was better than the boys', but this is because there was a larger proportion of boys with special educational needs. However, the school predicted this result and the targets set for the proportion of pupils that was likely to reach the expected level in the English and mathematics tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were met.
6. The long-term trend over the past three years shows that the school has maintained a broadly average performance, even though successive year groups over the past three years had a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

7. The quality of work in all other subjects is broadly in line with expected levels for their age group at the end of Year 6. There are many pupils who exceed the expected levels in each subject but the school's overall performance is reduced because of the low scores of the lower attaining pupils. Most pupils have made good progress since joining the school.
8. The results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 show that the school's performance was well above the national average in reading and writing. When compared with schools of a similar type the standards were average in writing and below average in reading. The standards in mathematics were below the national average and well below the performance of similar schools. The school quickly put into place a programme of numeracy to raise the level of these pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in mathematics. This points to the fact that the teachers do not use their assessment records effectively enough on a regular basis to identify possible gaps in the pupils' knowledge and skills. Currently this strategy has been successful as the quality of most of the pupils' mathematics in Year 3 is now in line with the expected level for their age.
9. It is clear that in the present Year 2 the quality of the pupils' literacy, numeracy and science work is above the expected levels for their age. The quality of work in information and communication technology is also above the expected level. Their work in all other subjects is broadly as expected. Nearly all pupils in the infant classes make very good progress. This is due to the very good quality of teaching and the level of support from the learning support assistants.
10. On entry, most reception children attain standards which are in line with what is expected at this age although a small group are already achieving or are about to achieve the early learning goals. By the time they reach the end of their reception year, most will have achieved the early learning goals for all the areas of learning and a significant number will exceed them in communication, language and literacy, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's achievement in the reception class, including those with special needs, is very good overall.
11. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans in the infant classes and satisfactory progress throughout the juniors.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. The school is successful in promoting and achieving the pupils' positive attitudes. It has improved this aspect since the previous inspection by providing a happy, secure environment in which the contribution of each member of the school community is respected and valued highly. As a result, most pupils in Years 3 to 6 work with keen interest and commitment and are developing good levels of concentration. However, a few pupils with special educational needs lose concentration sometimes but are, nevertheless, supported well by staff and included in all activities. The pupils respond very positively to the caring ethos the school provides. Their excellent attitudes are reflected particularly well in the way the oldest pupils care for the younger ones at break times and in the responsible manner in which they conduct themselves around the school. They are open, polite and interested in their work. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 respond very well to their teacher and the support staff. This was clearly evident in a design and technology lesson when the pupils were keen to share their ideas and explain their work to each other. The teacher captured their interest, sustained concentration and

thus improved their skills and ability to work together. The children in the reception class are confident when expressing opinions. They show tolerance and interest when listening to the views of others. They are keen to come to school, settle quickly to lessons and are fully involved in their tasks. They concentrate well and show clear enjoyment in their work and an interest in learning.

13. The pupils' behaviour in lessons and at play is very good. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the high standards of pupils' behaviour and, as a result, there have been no exclusions. The inspection findings confirm the very positive views of parents who are pleased with the high standard of behaviour from children of all ages. The pupils' respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs is excellent. They reflect the values shown to them by teachers and other staff in the school who act as good role models. Many pupils take part willingly in organised lunchtime activities. No issues of bullying were observed and parents are confident that any such issues will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively. The very good behaviour in the school contributes well to the positive ethos for learning and leads to an increase in the good opportunities for pupils' personal development. The relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils have a genuine respect and affection for their teachers, which is reciprocated. During quiet lesson times when pupils sit in a circle with adults they are confident to question and challenge politely, and they learn to build harmonious relationships. Around the school, pupils hold doors open for each other and act sensibly when moving to the library or dining room. This helps to create an environment of care and security, where work and learning can progress well.
14. The pupils' personal development is good and they work very well together in lessons. This aspect has been maintained well since the last inspection. One particularly good example was seen in mathematics, when pupils in Year 1 worked well independently and were very keen to co-operate, when using equipment. All pupils are sensible and patient with each other. They are caring and considerate towards others and show great concern for small creatures, such as the little hedgehog spotted recently scurrying through the school grounds. They contribute successfully to the daily routines of the school and are sensitive to other pupils' well being. From the reception class onwards, all pupils are responsible for their own equipment and by Year 6 they take a good level of responsibility for the younger children. The pupils are confident and show good initiative in lessons. They take advantage of the good opportunities to develop personal skills and citizenship throughout their time in the school. For example, pupils in Year 6 organised and ran the sale of produce after the Harvest Festival very successfully, selling and accounting independently. The pupils display good levels of maturity and social awareness in the way they exercise their responsibility and show pride when explaining school routines to visitors.
15. The pupils' levels of attendance are good. The pupils are keen to come to school and do so willingly. Most arrive punctually and enter classrooms calmly and quietly. The staff record any lateness carefully and suitable action is taken if this is persistent.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory.
17. During this inspection 39 lessons were observed. Almost nine out of every ten were good or better and there was an extremely high proportion of very good or excellent lessons. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen. With this high quality of teaching the impact upon the children's learning is significant.
18. The children enter the school in the year in which they become five years old, after visiting the school several times to become familiar with their new surroundings. The teachers and class assistants take full advantage of these visits to enable the children to know some of the routines of the school. They create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, where the children are encouraged to develop good working habits. So much so that very soon after joining the class, the reception children settle and confidently take part in whole school gatherings such as assemblies. For example, nearly all the reception children sang the song and sat very quietly and orderly during the school's Harvest festival in the company of 40 parents.
19. The children in reception work alongside some of the youngest pupils in Year 1 and the teacher provides for all pupils in this class very effectively. She focuses successfully upon the completion of the early learning goals by each child by the time they enter Year 1. Likewise the Year 1 pupils in this class have equal opportunities and cover work that is appropriate, broad and balanced for their age group.
20. In many instances throughout the school the lessons were very well constructed, exciting and very stimulating. In a mathematics lesson the pupils in Year 2 were inspired by the teacher's approach to learning tables. She used the guitar to accompany a song to learn tables and the pupils bubbled with excitement and enthusiasm. All the teachers have high expectations and this has a marked effect upon the quality of the pupils' work and upon their excellent attitudes towards their work and school life in general.
21. The quality of teaching literacy and numeracy is good overall and often very good. The curricula for literacy and numeracy are now firmly established and the teachers' weekly plans detail the work they intend to cover during the year. Although each class is made up of two different year groups, the teachers plan very effectively for both groups. The tasks are prepared and based securely upon the national strategies. The tasks set for the pupils with special educational needs are matched well to their needs.
22. The pace of the first part of each numeracy and literacy lesson is particularly stimulating and is organised well. This has a good effect upon the pupils' attitudes. They are encouraged to answer questions and to make suggestions. This they do willingly. A strength of teaching is seen, particularly in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2, when the teachers give time for the pupils to explain what they have done. This is especially good in mathematics lessons when pupils describe their methods of calculation. For example, a boy in Year 4 confidently explained how he found out the answer to a subtraction problem. Others had similar methods, which they eagerly described.
23. The quality of teaching music and information and communication technology is now very good and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. In all other

subjects the teaching is good. The teachers throughout the school have improved their planning significantly since the last inspection. They have acquired a greater understanding and knowledge of the subjects, because of the developments undertaken by the whole school. This is especially so in information and communication technology and design technology. One strength of the teaching is that the teachers ensure that the pupils are aware of what they are to learn during the lesson. This gives a purpose to their learning and the teachers refer to these aims at the end of the lesson to enable the pupils to assess how well they have learned.

24. The learning support assistants in each class provide very good help to the teachers and the pupils. This helps to maintain the very good management of the pupils. Consequently, a purposeful and productive atmosphere is maintained and most pupils benefit from this by sustaining their concentration. This was most noticeable in a design and technology lesson when the pupils were observed making a vehicle to carry a 'Beanie Baby'. They would have happily continued their task all afternoon, if time had not prevented them. The teachers are fair to all pupils and give equal opportunities to all. This is acknowledged by the pupils and also by their parents. The teachers and the other adults in each class intervene appropriately to ensure that all pupils make good progress and complete their tasks on time. This in turn fosters a sense of self-discipline and very good behaviour in every class.
25. The teaching meets the needs of most pupils with special needs as they are suitably supported by class teachers and support staff. The pupils with special educational needs are identified in the reception class through the use of baseline assessment. Strategies are immediately put in place within the classroom in order to accelerate their progress. Extra small group activities are provided for pupils by the co-ordinator with detailed plans focusing on the varying needs of groups of pupils.
26. There are a few occasions when, although the teaching is satisfactory, the teachers do not make sufficient use of their assessment records to identify possible gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in order to plan the next step for their learning. **(This is a key issue for action).**
27. The teachers do not analyse their assessment records robustly enough to identify the pupils' specific needs. For instance, they do not pay enough attention to the progress being made by pupils who achieved either the lower level 2 in the national tests for 2002 or for those in the junior classes who will require extra help to achieve the expected levels for their ages. **(This is a key issue for action).**

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

28. The school provides a well-balanced and broadly based curriculum that meets all statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been effectively put in place and are well taught. The key issues for action, set out in the last report in 1998, have been effectively addressed. There is clearer identification of coverage of the National Curriculum through the literacy and numeracy strategies and through the introduction of the national guidelines for other subjects. The provision made for information and communication technology has improved significantly and this is being well developed across the curriculum to support the teaching in other subjects. The curriculum for design technology is now in place and working well. The provision made by the school for the pupils for personal, social, health education is very good and some

particularly good examples of drugs awareness were noted in the science work. There is an appropriate sex and drugs education policy.

29. The pupils with special educational needs have equality of access to all areas of the curriculum, including after school clubs. In conjunction with the special needs co-ordinator, the teachers write clear and precise individual educational plans, which contain appropriate and attainable targets. Good planning and effective use of resources enable the pupils to work successfully towards their identified targets.
30. Although a small number of parents do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons, it is the view of the inspection team that the range of activities offered is good, especially for a small school. These include netball, hockey, soccer, rugby, art, guitar, recorders, a story club, a homework club and others depending upon the time of the year. A well-planned and balanced range of visits and visitors also enhances the curriculum offered. These include theatre trips, field trips to the local area and visits to museums and exhibitions, such as the Tutankhamen Exhibition in Dorchester and the Yeovil Museum. Resident artists helped the pupils to produce the attractive and interesting willow animals that 'roam' the school grounds. Musicians have visited the school and demonstrated a range of instruments and styles and Kathakali Indian dancers made a great impact upon the pupils. Community carol singing, involvement in the music festival, close involvement in the local church, a health week, book fayres, visits from drugs awareness officers and a five day residential visit for older pupils provide a further range of experiences for the pupils and make for very good links with the community. The pupils are involved in raising money for charities; for example, prior to the inspection week there was a 'silly socks' day to raise money for Children in Need. There are good links with partner institutions, for example, the local secondary school, which has been awarded 'Sports College' status.
31. The provisions for spiritual, moral and social development are very good. The whole ethos of the school is very positive in setting the spiritual tone and pupils are encouraged to examine their feelings and emotions. They are encouraged to recognise and respond to the beauty in creation around them. The staff provide very good role models. Relationships are very good throughout the school and a respect for people's feelings, values and beliefs permeates the whole school. The pupils know what is expected of them; they are treated fairly and in return treat others with respect and courtesy. The provision made for pupils' cultural development has improved and is good. As well as the music and dance referred to, cultural development is promoted through literacy, art and history. There is still a need to increase further the range of opportunities for pupils to become more prepared for life in a multi-cultural society.
32. There has been a good improvement to the balance and relevance of the curriculum since the last inspection and all teachers make good provision for the pupils in the mixed age classes.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' welfare are very good overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The support for the pupils' personal welfare is very good, reflecting the school's mission to foster the development of the whole child. The caring ethos is evident throughout the school. All members of the school community contribute to the establishment of a friendly, sharing and secure environment. This helps the pupils to feel confident, safe and happy, which makes a positive contribution to their achievements. With one exception, all procedures relating to health, welfare and safety are in place, including the storing of medicines, maintenance of registers, fire drills, accident book and first aid arrangements. The exception is that morning registers need to be taken before assembly in case there is a fire. There is a fully equipped medical room and one member of staff is a qualified nurse. There has not been any serious accident in the school since its inception. The school maintains very close relations with social services. There is a comprehensive and effective personal, social and health education curriculum across the school including an annual 'Health Week', which highlights health issues in a practical way.
34. The school checks upon and supports the pupils' personal development closely. When a pupil behaves really inappropriately, the headteacher sees the child with a parent and targets for improvement are agreed. Such incidents are rare. The teachers know the pupils and their families very well. Families find it easy and comfortable to turn to the school for help. All members of staff provide good role models in their warm relationships with the pupils. The teachers use praise well to enhance pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The pupils grow in self-confidence through the school and their music and drama performances play a significant part in this.
35. Every school day begins with an assembly which emphasises appropriate moral and social values. These are happy, celebratory, community occasions. The calm, supportive atmosphere that the school creates gives the pupils a secure sense of belonging and encourages them to work co-operatively, both within and outside the classroom. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy, backed by clear procedures. The governors work alongside the headteacher to ensure that any potential hazards are identified and rectified. External agencies are involved without delay when required. The pupils are expected to take responsibility and to use their initiative. The pupils in Year 6 become "buddies" for a short time and they are paired with reception class pupils to help the young ones find their feet.
36. The procedures for promoting and improving attendance are good. There is systematic daily monitoring of absences. The school contacts the home immediately for unexplained absences where there is a record of absenteeism, and the educational social worker is informed. These are rare. The school emphasises to parents the importance of regular attendance.
37. The school is a small community committed to providing an example of welcome, visible care, concern and respect for people. This creates an atmosphere of mutual respect. There is no bullying or other oppressive behaviour. The classes of mixed age groups are particularly effective in involving pupils in all activities, appropriate to their age and development. There are good systems in place to promote and celebrate good behaviour, good manners and other desirable attitudes by positive reinforcement, including awards and badges. There is a headteacher's award for individuals or groups who have made a significant contribution to school life.

38. There are satisfactory procedures in place to monitor and record the pupils' academic performance and progress. The teachers use reliable procedures to record what the pupils can do in literacy and numeracy. They are gradually developing skills lists and other assessment records to plot the pupils' progress in other subjects. The children are maintaining a self-assessment record for information and communication technology skills. However, the teachers do not always make the best use of the information they collect about individual pupil's achievements. They do not make sufficient use of records to identify gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. This information is not used effectively enough to set targets for each pupil and to guide the teachers' planning and teaching in a way that builds most effectively upon the pupils' previous learning. **(This is a key issue for action).**
39. The pupils with special educational needs are identified when they enter the school in reception through the use of baseline initial assessments; teaching is suitably adjusted to suit their learning needs. The school takes good care to ensure that the progress of those pupils with special educational needs is appropriately checked and recorded regularly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The parents are very supportive of the school, as they were at the time of the last inspection. There is an active Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA), which raises significant funds for the school. The school's mission to build upon the relationships between the pupils' homes, the parish and the school is successfully achieved. The shared values play a significant part in the pupils' enjoyment of school.
41. Fewer than half of the parents responded to the inspection questionnaire but these parents believe that their children like school, are taught well and make good progress. They consider that their children are expected to work hard and do their best, and are helped to become mature and responsible. They believe the school promotes positive attitudes. They find the school very approachable if they have a problem. They also say that behaviour in the school is good. The inspection team judges the pupils' behaviour to be very good.
42. The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. The parents find it easy and comfortable to approach the school, when they have questions or problems. The regular newsletters are informative and include details about the topics that the pupils in all classes will be doing during the term. The prospectus sets out the school's policies clearly. The governors' annual reports to parents are comprehensive. Some parents feel that they could be better informed about their child's progress. The inspectors agree with this. The annual reports to parents on their children's progress are unsatisfactory. They are not sufficiently informative about the child's levels of attainment, nor do they describe what the child knows and can do. They do not set targets for improvement, which would make parents and pupils aware of what needs to be done to improve. Inspectors were told that targets are agreed with parents and children at the termly parents' evenings. This is a noteworthy procedure but these targets also need to be formalised in the annual written report. The quality of the annual reports to parents was an issue raised at the last inspection. **(This is a key issue for action).**
43. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and their contributions to learning are high. Most parents strongly support their children's learning at home. They are aware of the school's homework policy and are happy with it. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully aware of their child's individual

education plans. There are good opportunities for them to be kept up to date with their progress. They are encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children in meeting the learning targets set by the teachers. The parents are very confident that pupils experiencing any difficulty will receive the support they need while in the school, a number having chosen the school for that particular reason.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership and management of the school have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The headteacher gives a calm and clear educational direction to the work of the school and this has brought about significant improvements since the last inspection. The issues that were raised at the time of the last inspection have all been acted upon and most have been successfully completed. The issues concerning the role of the subject co-ordinators and assessment procedures have been more difficult to achieve fully because of the small size of the school. However, they remain at the centre of the school's priorities and are being developed satisfactorily.
45. The school is small compared with most other primary schools; consequently the teachers have experienced difficulties checking upon and developing all the subjects for which each one is responsible. It is evident that the teachers do not have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities for all their subjects and this has slowed down the pace of development. This is particularly noticeable because the whole school does not yet have a rigorous enough approach for checking the coverage of the teachers' planning. **(This is a key issue for action)**. Considering the nature of the mixed age classes it does not have a sufficiently robust whole school procedure for checking the quality of the pupils' work in each subject to ensure that what is taught in each year group builds upon the pupils' previous learning and becomes more demanding as they progress through the school. **(This is a key issue for action)**.
46. Nevertheless, since the last inspection the co-ordinators have adopted the national guidelines for each subject and identified what should be taught to each year group. This has been particularly successful for literacy and numeracy where the national strategies have been firmly established into the routines of the school. The good developments seen in information and communication technology and in design technology are significant, as previously they were both issues for action.
47. It is evident that the quality of teaching has improved substantially since the last report. The teachers have had some opportunities to visit each other's classrooms to observe and help. The headteacher has also carried out observations of science lessons as part of the school's performance management procedures. The teachers have benefited from verbal and written feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of their lessons following these observations.
48. The deployment of the co-ordinator for special educational needs is well managed. She attends all relevant meetings and conferences and is well informed about special needs policies and procedures. She has worked very hard to set up detailed procedures, which ensure that pupils with special needs are given as much appropriate help as possible. This results in the procedures for the education and welfare of pupils with educational needs being well met. Individual education plans are drawn up which identify the pupils' learning difficulties and appropriate support is given. The pupils' targets are reviewed each term. There is some unnecessary

detail and doubling up of information, which could be reduced without reducing the efficiency and effectiveness of the system. As the co-ordinator is only in school one day a week, pupils with special educational needs are not monitored sufficiently well to judge how they are coping in the class situation.

49. The governing body has improved in its management role since the last inspection. It fulfils its responsibilities effectively and gives the staff, pupils and parents good support. The governors are now better informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses and offer views when setting targets for the future development. Many of them visit the classrooms regularly to offer help with reading, art and with the general support of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. They have a secure understanding of the school's expenditure and they monitor the budget frequently. However, the chair of the finance committee does not attend the meeting that the headteacher has with the local authority finance officer when the annual budget is set. This would be a worthwhile improvement for the school to consider.
50. The governors have a good insight into the priorities set in the school development plan and can talk knowledgeably about the objectives for the future. They attend local courses to help them become more effective and supportive as a governing body. The inadequacy of the school development plan was an issue at the last inspection but now the plan has clear objectives and also identifies precise success criteria. These have proved to be useful in measuring the improvements made.
51. The school places great emphasis upon the employment of learning support assistants. It prudently manages the budget so that the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs can be supported in lessons by experienced and skilful helpers. The expenditure is well allocated and this is one of the areas where the school demonstrates the principles of best value for money.
52. The school is divided between two main buildings on a sloping site. There is no playing field but the children can use a small lawn, which is suitable for small team games and to practise ball skills. The local playing field is used mainly in the summer and for occasional football activities. The classrooms and hall in one building are some way from the administration building, which also contains the pupils' library and the computer suite. This arrangement is not ideal and consequently restricts the use of these facilities. The grants made available to the school are used efficiently; for example, the computer suite was funded partly by the grant from the National Grid for Learning. The money allocated for special educational needs is used to provide appropriate equipment and extra books. The other resources throughout the school are good.
53. The school sets aside an appropriate amount of its budget each year to pay for the leasing of the computers and to maintain the temporary wooden classrooms. Consequently the carry forward is larger than is usually seen for primary schools of this size. The cost per pupil is at the higher end of the scale in relation to the expenditure nationally. However, because of the significant improvements in the quality of teaching, the management and the development of the curriculum, the school is judged to provide good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) establish whole school procedures to check upon
 - (i) the quality of the pupils' work
 - (ii) the coverage of the teachers' plans. (Paragraph 45)

- (2) analyse the assessment records more rigorously to identify possible gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in each subject; (Paragraphs 26, 27, 38)

- (3) improve the pupils' annual reports so that they state what each child can do and what they need to do next. (Paragraph 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	14	16	5	0	0	0
Percentage	10	36	41	13	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	110
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	15	18	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (88)	100(88)	78 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	16	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	83 (94)	89 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	6	11	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	12	11	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (69)	65 (69)	94 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (82)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	12	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (75)	76 (81)	88 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	82	0	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	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	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	7	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)	4.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	286362
Total expenditure	286273
Expenditure per pupil	2651
Balance brought forward from previous year	27572
Balance carried forward to next year	27661

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.5

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	110
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	27	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	82	16	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	31	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	35	4	0	2
The teaching is good.	84	16	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	37	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	22	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	24	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	47	12	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	24	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	39	16	2	8

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

54. Children enter school in the September of the year in which they become five. There are currently 18 children who are taught in a class where there are 10 of the youngest Year 1 pupils.
55. The quality of teaching in the reception class has improved since the last inspection and is now very good and a particular strength of the school. Teaching strengths include the teacher's very good knowledge and understanding of the stages in the early years curriculum. She has good understanding and is knowledgeable of the ways that children learn through play and their own interests. She has created an interesting environment where very good relationships between children and adults are fostered.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. By the end of the reception year, most children will have achieved personal skills above that expected for their age. The children have very positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy coming to school and form good relationships with the staff. They all work with increasing confidence alongside each other and with adults. They show independence in looking after themselves. Most children persevere and stay on task when working at a chosen activity, as when they play with construction toys or take part in directed task such as drawing bears, trains, cars and bikes.
57. The children are given good opportunities to engage in a variety of activities during the school day. There is a good balance between directing and instructing the children. Opportunities for children to choose their own activity in order to foster and develop their independence are built into the daily plans for the class. They show increasing confidence as they move from one activity to another. The children develop very good social skills and take turns happily. The result is that they make good progress in their first year in school.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Most children join the reception class with above average speaking skills. They are developing greater confidence in speaking and listening. They can report and recount the activities they have completed to the class, and talk about their books and activities fluently. They demonstrate their ability to use complete sentences and have a wide range of vocabulary when talking. The children listen attentively to stories and sing songs with increasing interest and concentration.
59. Children are given frequent and regular opportunities to read. They choose books to look at and they know how to handle them correctly. Most of them recognise their own names and are beginning to learn the names of sounds through the use of imaginative structured activities, using actions and expressions to help them remember. They are learning initial sounds by reading repetitive sentences from the 'big books' and sentences, which have been written by the teacher. For example, they eagerly join in when the class is repeating phrases such as, "What can I see? What can I see?"

60. The children are developing an understanding of the purpose of writing. They make good attempts to write their own sentences on completion of their pictures. They work from left to right and write some legible letters. They copy over teacher's writing, make good attempts at copying underneath and are confident in their ability to state what they want written. The higher attaining pupils are able to write some initial letters when they make an attempt at writing for themselves. By the end of the reception year the most able children can write a simple sentence without help. For example, "I see a mkee haning on the chree" [I see a monkey hanging on the tree]. They use secure strategies for sounding out unknown words. By the end of the year the higher attaining children write half a dozen sentences when writing a known story in sequential sentences. They have a good awareness of full stops and capital letters. Regular practice in writing individual letters enables pupils to become more fluent writers. The strategy of re-reading is taught which helps children to focus on writing successfully. The writing activities are well chosen to fit in with current interests and this makes writing relevant to the children. Most children are well on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Mathematical development

61. As a result of very good teaching, most children in the reception class, including those with special needs, are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. Number songs and rhymes are used frequently and effectively to reinforce the learning of numbers as well as to develop mathematical vocabulary. They are developing an understanding of time and know whether their birthday is 'soon' or 'in the summer like my mum'. They can recite their numbers to ten and more when counting imaginary steps to climb the rocket during a class activity. The higher attaining children can count accurately to ten, recognise the numerals 1 to 5 and sort by colour and shape. The imaginative, practical activities provided by the teacher effectively develops all children's skill and level of understanding in addition to fostering a love of the subject. A number of children can match the correct number of objects to numerals 1 to 5. They say what is one more and one less than a given number, and contribute to class discussions in deciding what numbers are bigger than others. They colour the correct number of objects when given a random number to choose from. The scrutiny of work shows that by the time they enter Year 1 most of the children can write the story of different numbers in a number sentence, for example, $7+0=7$, $6+1=7$, $5+2=7$. They use a number line to solve simple number problems. They can sort basic shapes correctly, name coins, and use a mirror to examine symmetrical objects.
62. The day-to-day assessments are carried out and adjustments made to the activities or level of support which ensure that learning activities match the different needs of the children and the different rates of progress. Children with special needs are given appropriate tasks to help them achieve well. Most children are well on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 and many are likely to exceed them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. The provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. The skilful questioning of children and the promotion of an atmosphere, which encourages the exchange of views and interests, helps to extend their knowledge and understanding.

64. The children are developing a good understanding of the world around them by taking part in first hand experiences and using their senses to interpret them. For example, they study the features of their faces and make good attempts at drawing them in pencil and charcoal. Information and communication technology is used well to support the children's learning. When paired with a Year 1 pupil they collaborate well activating the Clip Art program by clicking the mouse and guiding the cursor to a chosen colour and shape in order to paint a circle. They quickly progress to being able to make the circles bigger or smaller. They are extending their knowledge of the natural world by looking closely at the differences and similarities of living things. They talk about the care of living things such as trees and animals and show curiosity for living things in their environment. They learn how to look after their bodies by washing their hands and eating food that is good for them. They talk about and identify mothers and babies of various living things such as hens, ducks, cats, dogs, pigs, and notice the similarities and differences between them. They have a good awareness of where they live and the different members of their family.
65. Most of the children are well on course to meet the early learning goals and many will exceed them by the time they reach the end of their reception year.

Physical development

66. Most of the children are well co-ordinated and agile. They take part in regular physical education lessons inside and daily activities outside. When taking part in practical mathematical activities outside they show control of their bodies by hopping to a square to indicate a number and they confidently and safely climb up and over and under the structures on the 'Trim Trail.' Most children hold a pencil properly and they make good attempts at writing over and under the words written by the teacher. The children point and touch objects carefully in order to count accurately. The children develop fine physical skills and gain confidence when using the equipment, such as bikes and tractors in the outside area.
67. The provision overall is satisfactory and most children are on course to achieve the standards that are expected for this area of learning by the time they are ready to start Year 1.

Creative development

68. The provision is satisfactory and good planning ensures that children experience a range of stimulating activities. The children enjoy using different mediums such as paint, charcoal, crayon, pencil, collage and they are fascinated by the patterns that can be made when painting with their hands. They work together on large-scale pictures forming a background to a frieze to illustrate interesting facts about themselves. They also enjoy using large and small construction toys making recognisable structures. They are learning to express their feelings through exploring music and imaginative play. During a music lesson, they happily sing in tune with the class or on their own when requested to do so. They are beginning to learn the names of musical instruments and to explore the sounds various instruments can make. They are building up a large repertoire of songs they know by heart. As a result of the good teaching and the variety of activities provided, children are expected to achieve this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

ENGLISH

69. Evidence collected during the inspection suggests that a higher than average proportion of pupils at age seven are above their expected levels in speaking and listening, in reading and in writing. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress towards their learning targets. At age eleven the pupils are found to be at the level expected for their age in speaking and listening, in reading and in writing and progress continues to be good for most pupils. The pupils with special educational needs, because they are well supported by teachers and support staff, make satisfactory progress towards their learning targets. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is significantly higher in the junior part of the school compared with the infants.
70. The pupils are developing speaking and listening skills well. They express themselves confidently and well, as was observed in a Year 1 / 2 lesson, where pupils were discussing ideas for a series of 'adventures' about a Big Book character, to be made into a class book. The pupils were enthusiastic and keen to take part in the discussion and were able to share ideas with each other and with the inspector whilst they were writing their stories. A number of well-chosen ideas prepared by the teacher were expanded on and 'Frog's' interesting adventures ranged from visiting a dentist to having a day out or going to the cinema. Speaking and listening skills in Year 6 are above expected levels and this was evident when the pupils were discussing the features of a report. There are effective links here with their geography topic on mountains and the pupils discuss sensibly, listening well to each other and the teacher and expressing themselves well.
71. The teachers work hard to develop pupils' reading skills. The pupils are encouraged to read with expression and there is a developing emphasis upon learning the phonic sounds properly. Considerable thought has been given to this since the 'jolly phonics' work has been introduced. One effective session of the teaching of phonics was observed in Years 1 and 2. The pupils are encouraged to read Quentin Blake's 'All Join In' together and they do so with obvious enjoyment and with attention to expression. Two or three pupils are tending to mime and are lacking confidence but the overall levels are above those expected for the age. In Year 4 the pupils' standards are in line with the expected levels. However, the pupils in Year 3 are above the expected level for their age. Almost all pupils in Year 6 read fluently and confidently from a range of texts, including the teacher's instructions on the board, fiction and non-fiction books. They use phonics to help decode new words and are able to make inferences when reading, for example, from a Harry Potter book. Almost all pupils are at the expected level for Year 6 pupils with two or three of them reaching standards that are above the expected level.
72. The school has made the improvement of writing a priority and this has helped to raise standards. Every pupil in a Year 1 / 2 class is able to produce an interesting story, with at least three separate events and a conclusion. Less able pupils are well supported by the classroom assistants and the teacher but the work they produce is their own. Some pupils are writing a whole page with complex sentences and a clear sequence of events. Their writing is generally well formed and neat. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 can amend given prose to create a play script, complete with stage directions and the more able pupils in Year 4 further extend the script from their own knowledge of the 'Rumpelstiltskin' fairy tale.

73. The pupils have a very positive attitude and approach to learning. These attitudes are the result of good relationships and high expectations of behaviour. They work independently or in groups, with or without an adult.
74. All teaching in English lessons seen during the inspection was at least good and some was very good. The teachers plan well and have clear learning objectives that are well focused on what they want the pupils to learn. This clear focus will help to raise the standards in the school because it means that everyone, including the pupil, knows what needs to be done to improve. The pupils have targets for improvement, usually at the front of their books. These are reviewed each term and these give each pupil a clear aim. However, some of the targets need to be more specific, especially for the pupils with special educational needs. In the better lessons there is a good, brisk pace, which keeps pupils motivated and makes good use of time. The teachers manage pupils well and have high expectations of behaviour, which the pupils know and understand. The teachers use a range of questions to stimulate and challenge pupils during whole class and plenary sessions often targeting these to individual pupils to re-focus attention. The learning support staff are well deployed to help the pupils.
75. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through literacy. The teachers look for opportunities to encourage pupils to explore feelings, emotions and relationships and there is a good range of cultural and multi-cultural books. Information communication technology is being used increasingly to support the development of literacy.
76. The English subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. The checking of teachers' planning and teaching of the subject is not as well developed as it could be. The teachers know their pupils well and day-to-day assessment is good. On-going assessment includes regular tests and all staff have been involved in checking and standardising the levels of pupils' work in portfolios. However, the school does not analyse the assessments and standardised tests effectively in order to predict and set appropriate targets for the pupils.
77. The literacy strategy has been well implemented in the school and there has been a good improvement since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

78. Since the last inspection the school has been committed to improving the pupils' standards throughout the school. This is proving to be successful. The present standards are above what is expected in Year 2. From the scrutiny of work, discussions and observations of lessons, it is evident that the majority of pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of number operations and can use the strategies and number facts they have learned to do quick re-call calculations. By the age of seven most pupils understand place value and can successfully add and subtract two digit numbers. They order numbers on a number line accurately using large numbers and can divide simple numbers such as 12 by 2. They know at least their two, three and five times multiplication tables and can use this knowledge to solve problems. The pupils with special educational needs sometimes experience difficulties dealing with larger numbers but are successful when using smaller numbers using the same operation.

79. Most pupils give the correct change when shopping with amounts up to and over £2 and record their answers correctly. They can read scales on weighing scales in order to weigh collections of objects. Investigative activities are planned so pupils can draw on the skills they have learned and they use operations successfully to solve problems. The majority are on course to exceed national expectations at the end of Year 2 and all pupils make good progress.
80. From the scrutiny of the Year 6 pupils' work and through discussion, it is evident that most of them are on course to achieve the standards expected for their age in all aspects of mathematics: number, algebra, shape, space and measures and data handling. The pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of place value in numbers up to a million. Most pupils add and subtract amounts of money such as £2.97 add £4.96 and they record using the correct notation. Investigative work is carried out which requires pupils to draw on knowledge and processes they have learned. They are beginning to use decimal notation, and correctly work out the area and perimeter of given regular shapes. When learning about shape, they can draw shapes such as a rhombus, square and hexagon, on a graph using co-ordinates. They work successfully with fractions working out the relationship between them and whole numbers.
81. The higher attaining pupils are on course to reach their expected Level 4 or above at the end of Year 6, while at the end of Year 2 most pupils are on course to exceed the expected Level 2.
82. The lower attaining pupils are well supported in their learning by the learning support assistants and they usually complete the tasks satisfactorily with help. However, there is a lack of opportunity for them to explain their thinking and to contribute to the discussions and evaluations, which take place in the class. This limits their progress. The progress of the higher attaining pupils is usually good, while for those with special educational needs it is satisfactory.
83. The quality of teaching overall is good, and it is very good in the infant classes. Where lessons are very good the learning objectives are very clear and the teachers are very knowledgeable about the subject. They use creative and imaginative activities and methods of teaching, which inspired pupils and encouraged them to give of their best. The lower attaining pupils are given a significant amount of extra support from the learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. These factors together with very high expectations of involvement by pupils ensure that they are very well behaved and make good progress. Where pupils are not encouraged to explain their thinking, they make less progress.
84. The teachers' long term and short term planning, which is securely based in the national numeracy strategy, is now good. More effective planning and improved quality of teaching is helping to raise the pupils' standards in mathematics. The introduction and implementation of the national numeracy strategy have helped teachers ensure sufficient coverage of the various areas of the curriculum and the progression of skills and concepts through the school. Well-focussed plenary sessions are also making a significant contribution to raising standards for all pupils.
85. The pace of lessons is good and as a result pupils enjoy mathematics and concentrate very well. Most persevere for reasonable lengths of time and are unafraid to ask for help when they need it because they enjoy the tasks they are doing. They enjoy good relationships with their teachers. These factors contribute to them making good progress. The teachers in the infant classes, in particular, use

very good strategies for ensuring that pupils know what they have learned by encouraging them to explain their thinking. The pupils have a very good attitude to mathematics and bubble with enthusiasm when asked to explain an investigation they were carrying out. The pupils are keen to do well and the established homework club allows pupils to identify their perceived problems and obtain help to improve. Homework is sent home regularly and pupils are required to undertake quick re-call tasks, which relate to what they have learned in school and practised at home. These activities help them to develop confidence and skills.

86. An analysis of pupils' work and teachers' documents reveal that individual teachers assess pupils regularly throughout the term and year. It is evident that in their day-to-day tasks their work is regularly marked. The amount of work completed during the year covers all areas of the curriculum and is sufficient. Although teachers know their pupils well, they do not consider, as a whole staff, what is working well and what could be improved. There is no whole school procedure in place to enable staff to check upon the progress of groups of pupils across the school and take steps to identify and teach the precise gaps in their learning. The school analyses data from the SATS results but insufficient action is taken to remedy any weakness.
87. Information and communication technology is available to pupils in the newly acquired information technology suite and there are a variety of programs available in the school for use in mathematics lessons. For instance, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 used the LOGO program very effectively to explore two-dimensional shapes.
88. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and organised and has worked hard to ensure that all necessary documentation is up to date and that the staff are aware of new initiatives. The co-ordinator's role has developed well since the last inspection resulting in the improvement of the policy, planning and assessment. However, the strategies for checking up on the teaching, and the pupils' work to ensure that tasks become more demanding throughout the school are not yet in place.

SCIENCE

89. The pupils' standards are in line with the national expectations by the end of Years 6 and 2, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. They particularly enjoy scientific investigations, applying their knowledge well. For example, in Years 5 and 6 pupils are developing a clear understanding that gases have weight. They know that inflated balloons are heavier than when collapsed and talk about the effects of air and water on the weight of sponges and sand. The pupils' knowledge of the skeletal bones, major organs and muscles in the human body is good. The higher attaining pupils achieve well and are able to describe the human heart, stomach and intestines, as well as the skull, pelvis and shoulder. Most have a good grasp of ecosystems and know about food chains. For example, they know that rabbits eat carrots and that animals such as foxes eat rabbits. Most pupils understand the difference between pollination and fertilisation and the functions of plants. They know about flowering shrubs describing the stigma, stamen and petals as well as seed dispersal. The work benefits significantly from pupils' excellent attitudes to learning and the good use of artwork and literacy skills. Written work is presented well, correctly set out and neatly written, with particularly good use of symbols when recording diagrams of batteries and circuits.
90. Adults, who all act as good role models, actively encourage good speaking and listening skills in lessons and this makes a noticeable impact on the quality of learning. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to

devise experiments to test theories, such as those for separating water and sand. They understand the effects of temperature and exercise on the human body and devise experiments to measure pulse rates. They make good use of numeracy skills to help them draw conclusions. With careful guidance from teachers and classroom assistants many pupils talk about healthy foods and the influence of drugs such as alcohol, caffeine and medicines. They know that some substances are helpful to humans and others are harmful.

91. As a direct consequence of the good teaching in Years 1 and 2 all girls and boys make good progress in their learning and the higher attaining pupils attain well. The teachers' good emphasis on the development of the pupils' scientific enquiry skills is clearly a strength of the teaching and this has helped the pupils to increase their knowledge. They understand the five human senses and link their knowledge well to their own experiences such as, 'I can smell bonfire smoke', 'I can touch a duckling' and 'I can see my teacher'. They know that animals and humans produce young that grow and mature at different rates, and describe observable features of animals, knowing that ducks, birds and bats have wings. The pupils with special educational needs work hard because they are supported well and given specific targets for learning to help them. They know that some creatures are hatched from eggs whilst others are born from the parent. The most capable pupils know that frogs lay eggs known as 'spawn' and that human babies grow up to look like their parents. The work is linked well to pupils' spiritual development as they appreciate the unique quality of humans in relation to Christian beliefs and they understand that God cares for all creatures. The recent discovery of a large hawk moth caterpillar in the school grounds was a particularly exciting find that pupils and staff treasured!
92. The pupils use computers very well and are particularly proficient at labelling diagrams of the human body. The pupils in Year 1 understand the push and pull forces involved in toys and are able to suggest ways in which results can be presented, recording their observations in simple tabular form on a computer. A few pupils are developing a secure understanding of how to construct a fair test.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is sound in the junior classes. It is good overall in the infants, with occasionally very good and excellent teaching. The lesson planning is based on good coverage of the curriculum and the teaching of basic skills is secure. The adults manage the pupils effectively. The good inclusive practice throughout the school leads to work being pitched well to suit the needs of less capable and pupils with special educational needs, whilst extension activities are often set for more capable pupils.
94. In the best lessons, teachers take great care to provide pupils with lively opportunities to form scientific questions and to use first-hand observations to test simple predictions, as well as to increase a strong sense of spiritual awareness of the world around them. For example, a lovely sense of awe and wonder was developed when the teacher described her own experience of finding a nest of wild kittens, snuggling and rubbing up against their mother in a garage. Some excellent links with literacy were forged in role-play activities when the teaching helped pupils to identify and classify animals such as dogs and puppies, cows and calves, swans and cygnets. These features have a positive effect on the standards attained because pupils learn new vocabulary quickly and extend their understanding well. In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of the pupils and they pose challenging questions to extend pupils' understanding. The learning support assistants work very closely with teachers to provide suitable challenges for all groups of pupils.

95. The subject is managed appropriately by the co-ordinator who has improved the curricular guidelines for staff since the last inspection by introducing suitable schemes of work and study units throughout the school. An appropriate assessment framework is available that includes effective termly assessments and mid-term reviews of pupils' work. The co-ordinator checks the curriculum and teachers' marking through informal discussions with them but has insufficient release time to monitor teaching and learning formally. Nevertheless, strong features include the careful use of good resources to support pupils' learning, such as posters, reference books and digital computer photography.

ART AND DESIGN

96. The quality of the pupils' work matches the expected levels at the end of Years 6 and 2. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection and the good improvements to curricular planning over the last four years have had a positive effect on pupils' learning. The work displayed shows that the pupils are given a wide range of experiences in the materials available to them. In Year 6, pupils' sketchbooks show work that is drawn and shaded carefully from shapes in nature, such as starfish and daffodils. They make satisfactory progress in their ability to work in two and three dimensions. For example, strong attention is given to shape and form in sketches for abstract collages of musical instruments and designs for carnival masks. There are clear indications for the possibilities of making three-dimensional models.
97. By using viewfinders to look at plants, the pupils produce good detail of parts of flowers, linking their work well with scientific observations. They experiment with charcoal and pastels, and produce intricate designs for Japanese kimonos, using repeating patterns. Sketches of modern landscapes and machinery, and mosaics based on Roman themes show careful work that links well to geography and history topics, as well as numeracy skills. All pupils are given good opportunities to experience work in clay, weaving, tie and dye, collage and puppet making.
98. Displays based on the seasons of the year are linked well to literacy work, as shown in the colourful autumn and winter scenes to illustrate written texts. Most pupils show excellent attitudes and very good interest in their work, and they draw and sketch with accuracy in the junior classes, with many younger pupils showing competence in their use of paint and other materials. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have produced a sound standard of work based on topics such as 'Fantasy Island' and 'Doodle Art'.
99. The pupils use computers very effectively, thus developing their ability to apply their artistic knowledge. Good displays of pupils' work often depict the very Christian ethos of the school, such as in the sponge print pictures of 'Thank God for Our Trees' and these help to increase pupils' spiritual and moral awareness.
100. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils make satisfactory progress and use a combination of art and design techniques appropriately. Displays of their finished pieces show that a wide variety of materials are available and pupils achieve a consistently sound standard of work over an extended period. Finger paintings and sponge printing are completed with an imaginative use of colour to represent autumn leaves and winter scenes. Completed clay figures of creatures such as owls are given suitable finishes for beaks, eyes and feet in appropriate colours. Good classroom displays include careful pencil drawings of items observed on walks around the school, such as spiders and aeroplanes, with exciting digital photographs taken by adults.

101. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection due to timetabling arrangements but an analysis of teachers' plans, discussions with them and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are planned appropriately according to a two-year cycle of topics. Teachers have high expectations and the pupils respond well to the stimulus that they provide. The good teaching in art club activities, which are well attended, has encouraged pupils to experiment successfully with fabric design. This has had a good effect on learning, leading to successful projects such as the banner for the Bath and West Show.
102. The subject is linked very well to other areas of the curriculum and pupils use art skills confidently to illustrate their work in literacy. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have produced a well-designed collage picture in response to a story of 'Snow White'. The subject is managed appropriately but the co-ordinator does not have sufficient opportunities during the school day to monitor artwork in progress during lessons and there are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. The school has improved its provision for the subject well since the last inspection when it was a key issue and the quality of the pupils' work now matches those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. The pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of design skills and making-up processes. This is a marked improvement on the situation noted in 1998 when both standards and progress were judged to be unsatisfactory. The oldest pupils in Years 5 and 6 are accustomed to working from designs that specify the tools and materials needed and they have sound knowledge of a variety of methods to fasten materials together, which include clips, glue and string.
104. By Year 6 pupils measure, cut and join a variety of materials accurately and assemble simple mechanical models carefully from construction kits, introducing movement by using cams and axles. They use saws and dowel rods safely when making models and work together very well when using fabric dyes to produce colourful banners. The pupils' hand-made slippers are of a sound standard, neatly blanket-stitched with suitable features incorporated, such as fur edging, appliquéd motifs and plastic soles.
105. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 apply finishing techniques carefully, such as painting, to enhance the quality of their models. They particularly enjoy projects with visiting artists and have taken part willingly in designing and making willow structures for the school grounds. The pupils make satisfactory progress in their awareness of how materials change when processed and this links well with science topics. For example, when the pupils in Years 5 and 6 make biscuits and cakes, pupils know how the ingredients change by mixing and cooking.
106. The pupils in the infant classes understand the properties of common materials so that by Year 2 they make good choices when selecting shapes and textures independently. Good activities for designing triangular sections of pizzas and the consideration of the best materials and components for model cars result in the pupils' paying good attention to detail. Their ability to join materials in a number of different ways is developing well. The pupils also use glue and paper folding to good effect when making moving structures for soft toys. They show good initiative by devising ways of keeping wheels in place with elastic bands and making hubcaps out of pliable materials.

107. The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory, and is now good overall. It is occasionally very good in the junior classes and excellent in the infants. This is because most teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan their lessons well to give pupils a broad range of experiences. The subject is managed appropriately and is linked well with other areas, such as literacy, numeracy, art and science. Very good use of computers aids the pupils' learning, especially when they use them to produce designs of vehicles and when the staff photograph finished products digitally, using a web camera. The co-ordinator promotes consistently high standards of displays in classrooms and corridors. This means that pupils' work is mounted well, labelled clearly and colourful. Since the last inspection, the school has increased its resources to include food and fabric technology as part of the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

108. It was only possible to observe one geography lesson during this inspection. This lesson, a review of pupils' work and discussions with pupils, indicates that the quality of the pupils' work is broadly in line with what is expected nationally at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to what was reported in the previous inspection in 1998.
109. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are looking at the school and its surroundings. Early work during the term included a walk round the school and the trim trail and the pupils learned to follow a simple map through a treasure trail. They are beginning to look at the school as part of Wincanton. Some interesting work includes a land use survey and the pupils, who have produced a leaflet about the school, have done some good work.
110. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 are looking at water. They show awareness of world oceans, the water cycle, the various 'stages' of a river on its 'journey'. Useful local links have been made and they too have had a field trip, to Ashford Reservoir. Some good cross-curricular work has been done, for example in information and communication technology and in mathematics, as pupils have produced bar charts on water usage and rainfall.
111. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils have been looking at a world overview and a range of work covers the environment, mountains, rivers, coasts etc. They show some understanding of the main processes shaping the landscape. There has been some good individual work and research done on the topic of mountains, including the use of a CD Rom and the Internet. In the one lesson observed most pupils were able to explain that when we think of climate we are looking at the pattern of the weather in a certain area. They know about temperate and tropical climates and can talk with understanding about the weather in Britain compared to other parts of the world.
112. The planning documents show that all elements of the national curriculum are covered. The work seen indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress through the school. There is insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement about the standard of teaching in geography, though the work seen indicates that it is at least satisfactory. Because classes are mixed aged, the school follows a two-year cycle to ensure continuity. However, there needs to be more careful monitoring of the planning. The pupils are assessed at the end of each topic covered but most of the assessments seem to be concerned with knowledge rather than development of skills and there are no formal procedures to use assessment information to help teachers to plan what to do next.

113. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

HISTORY

114. In the 1998 inspection standards were found to be in line with national expectations at ages seven and eleven. Because of timetable constraints it was only possible to observe one history lesson during this inspection. The lesson seen, together with an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, shows that standards through the school remain broadly in line with national expectations and progress remains satisfactory for all pupils.
115. A Year 1 / 2 lesson was observed where pupils were looking at the life and work of Florence Nightingale. The quality of teaching in this lesson was good. They reviewed work already covered on Guy Fawkes and Louis Braille and discussions with the pupils showed that they had a good knowledge of and recollection of what they had learned. Effective use of class discussion, a video and drama enabled pupils to show understanding of life and conditions in hospitals in the time of Miss Nightingale and they are able to make relevant comparisons with hospitals today.
116. The pupils in Year 3 / 4 have an interesting display of the ship the Mary Rose in their classroom and work covered includes looking at Victorian life, with some emphasis upon links with the local area and a visit to a Wincanton exhibition. The work seen shows an awareness of some of the similarities and differences between family and school life then and now and pupils are developing skills of historical research. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 show some interesting work on Ancient Greece in their books. They are further developing historical language and also their investigating and research skills. The planning documents show that all elements of the National Curriculum are covered over a two-year cycle.
117. The teachers know their pupils well, the day-to-day assessment is good and there are regular assessments of the topics covered. However, the checking of the teachers' planning is somewhat informal and the recording of assessment of skills development is not done in such a way as to make it easy for teachers to use it to help plan what to do next.
118. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Since the last inspection the school has invested very effectively in the provision it makes for the development of information and communication technology throughout the school. It has:
- i established a computer suite with 18 computers, which are networked;
 - ii the teachers have commenced a training course in the uses of ICT to support learning and teaching in other subjects;
 - iii each class has at least one weekly ICT lesson, and
 - iv the teachers' planning is now good.

These developments have had a significant impact and have helped to raise the quality of teaching. Consequently the quality of the pupils' work has improved substantially.

120. The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good in the infant classes. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the uses of ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection. The national guidelines are now used effectively to plan what is taught. The teachers have a secure understanding of the requirements of the subject.
121. At the time of the last inspection the standards reached at the end of Year 6 were below the expected standards for pupils of this age. It is now evident that the quality of work at the end of Year 6 is in line with the expected level and by the end of Year 2 it is above. Nearly all pupils make good progress. Each one has a record book in which they note down the skills which they have mastered. This record also provides the teachers with a clear indication of what each child has learned and what needs to be taught next.
122. From the time the children enter the school they are encouraged to use programs such as 'My World' and 'Dazzle'. This develops their skills of controlling the mouse. By the time they reach the end of Year 2 most of them exceed the expected levels for their age. They can draw shapes and colour them. They can drag labels onto diagrams and they can use many advanced skills on the word processor to write their ideas and thoughts. Nearly all can log onto the computer and access their chosen program. They can import pictures to enhance their writing in their diaries and can resize fonts, text boxes and use tools such as spellchecker to improve their work.
123. It is evident from the work seen that most pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach the expected level by the time they leave the school. They are competent in their use of computers and follow instruction carefully. The majority of the pupils read well and this enables them to work quickly to absorb instructions and information on the screen. Most use spreadsheets to plot the results of investigations such as recording their heart rate before and after exercise. They have also created a front page of a newspaper using two columns and appropriate fonts to make headlines. They use software programs to help them create designs, using the toolboxes to spray colours and draw lines to represent maps. During the inspection they were observed using LOGO to draw two-dimensional shapes such as a square. The higher attaining pupils extended this work by exploring different angles and some were able to write instructions to draw a regular hexagon.
124. The teachers use the computers effectively to support the pupils' learning in many other subjects. For example, one boy in Year 2 took photographs around the school and then added word-processed comments to these scenes to make a small brochure about the school. The quality of this work was above expected levels for his age. Other facilities such as the use of graphics and the Internet are used effectively to support the pupils' learning in mathematics, science, history and geography.
125. The co-ordinator provides very good support to the rest of the staff. She has recently put the national guidelines for a scheme of work onto every one's laptop computer. This document includes a checklist of skills to be taught in each year group. This enables the teachers to prepare their lessons more easily. The school employs a technician to ensure that the computers are all operating satisfactorily; this expenditure is an efficient use of the budget set aside for the development of information and communication technology.

MUSIC

126. Since the last inspection the quality of the pupils' work has improved at the end of Year 2 and is now above the expected level for this age group. The quality of work by the end of Year 6 is in line with the expected level and is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection.
127. However, the quality of singing throughout the school is well above average. The children sing in tune with good clarity of voice and a real sense of enjoyment. The Years 5 and 6 pupils sing competently in unison and in two parts.
128. The quality of the music making by the end of Year 2 is above expected level and almost all pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 2 nearly all pupils listen well. The music teacher carefully nurtures this skill through the reception and Year 1 age group. Consequently by the time they are seven years old they are able to concentrate and listen with rapt attention. Most pupils are able to repeat a clapped rhythm accurately and sing a short phrase in tune.
129. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 were observed developing the skills of playing rhythms on percussion instruments. Nearly all the pupils in the class are able to read the conventional written notation and clap out the different rhythms. They are aware of the need for a pulse beat and small groups of pupils are competent in maintaining a steady beat, whilst other groups around them tap out rhythms to key words such as 'grasshopper' and 'butterfly'. They have good skills when playing the wide range of instruments and make careful choices when selecting an instrument to portray a specific feeling or mood.
130. The work of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 builds very well upon this earlier work. The quality of the pupils' music work by the end of Year 6 is in line with the expected levels for their age and their progress is satisfactory. They compose melodies and percussion parts confidently and play instruments whilst carefully listening to others playing around them to ensure a harmony. The pupils record their compositions using words like 'octopus' and some begin to write the rhythms in a conventional way.
131. The singing in assemblies is very good and gives an indication of the standards of performances that the pupils give to senior citizens in the town. The pupils also join with other schools to perform in a massed choir event at the local show ground. Nearly all pupils have a strong confidence to sing and perform. When the teacher asked for volunteers to lead the school in the singing and actions for a new song, nearly all the pupils in Year 6 volunteered and gave a very confident show at the front of the hall. A few pupils learn to play the guitar and recorder and join in lunchtime groups for tuition by the teachers in the school. There are moves to expand this tuition to other instruments by using the teachers employed by the local music service.
132. The quality of teaching is very good and often excellent. This has a marked impact upon the pupils' standards of music making and upon their enthusiasm. The lessons have very clear objectives and the pace of work is very brisk. It is because of this high quality of teaching that the music making throughout the school is vibrant and strong. The specialist teacher leads and organises the subject very well. She is energetic and conscientious. She has high expectations, which the pupils understand. Consequently, they give their very best at all times and have an excellent attitude. Many visitors help to inspire the pupils and an African drummer group and medieval musicians have played their instruments for the school. This is one aspect where the school fosters an appreciation of music from other cultures and times.

Recorded music in assemblies and classrooms enhances this element of the pupils' musical development effectively.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. The quality of the pupils' work is in line with that expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. The picture was much the same as the last inspection. The school promotes physical education in all its elements throughout the year. Only one lesson in dance in Years 3 and 4 was observed. However, evidence was gathered from talking to pupils, discussions with teachers, and an analysis of the teachers' planning and information.
134. The pupils enjoy physical activity and adopt a positive and enthusiastic approach. They listen well to instructions, which enables them to improve their performance and work well together. For example, the pupils in a Year 3 / 4 class, when learning a Tudor dance, linked it to their project work in the classroom. The pupils skip forwards, backwards, on the spot and round in a circle while moving in time to the music. They are becoming more aware of the importance of pace and accuracy of the steps they make as they develop the different moves. They respond to constructive praise by concentrating and refining their movements and are developing control of their bodies through practice by dancing in time to the music. The pupils learn to negotiate, take turns, consider others and keep themselves safe when playing on the 'Trim Trail' at playtime.
135. The teaching is generally good. The teachers provide pupils with well-structured sequential lessons based on the national Programmes of Study enabling them to improve their skills over time. The lessons begin with an appropriate warm-up and end with a cool-down exercise and attention is drawn to the necessity of preparing the body for further activity. The teachers effectively assess the pupils' performances through ongoing observations and make evaluative comments to ensure that pupils are aware of the progress they make during the lesson. However, they are not given the opportunity to reflect and offer views on their own and others' performance to move the work forward. The effect of this is that they do not reach their full potential. This aspect was criticised in the last inspection.
136. From the scrutiny of swimming records and by talking to teachers, it is evident that most pupils in Year 6 have mastered the techniques of the crawl, breaststroke and backstroke and a minority are beginning to use the butterfly stroke with some success. Most can already swim more than 25 metres and a number much further. Very useful records are maintained which enables teachers to effectively teach the pupils at different levels of competency. The attainment and progress of pupils in swimming by the end of Years 2 and 6 are judged to be average and the same as during the last inspection.
137. The co-ordinator ensures that all pupils experience the required aspects of the curriculum and the pupils experience a well-organised program of activities on a regular basis. In addition, they have the opportunity to take part in activities outside the school, which will benefit them socially and physically. Activities such as football, netball, tag rugby, hockey, badminton, short tennis, golf and country dancing are available. These activities enable them to sharpen their skills as they play and compete against pupils from local schools. On alternate years, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given the opportunity to go on a residential activity week. They benefit from effective personal education as they learn to look after themselves away from home. The available resources are of a good quality. However, the school lacking a playing field uses a public park, which is close by. This results in limited use.

