

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **THE TOPSHAM SCHOOL**

Topsham, Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 131108

Headteacher: Mr K Wild

Acting Headteacher: Mrs V Lineham

Reporting inspector: Miss J Moxon  
23584

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 March 2003

Inspection number: 248824

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 12
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Orchard Way Topsham Exeter
Postcode:	EX3 0DN
Telephone number:	01392 874498
Fax number:	01395 876924
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Williams
Date of previous inspection:	29 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23584	Josephine Moxon	Registered inspector	Music Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed What should the school do to improve further?
15522	Bernard Morgan	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
32359	Alan James	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32097	Jenny Clement	Team inspector	English Art and design Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
22806	Ann Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Foundation Stage	
11720	Philip Winch	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The Topsham Community School is an average size primary school with 220 pupils who come from private and local authority housing in the town of Topsham and the surrounding area. The school is deemed a primary school, but takes children from the ages of four to 12. When children start school in the September or January before their fifth birthday their levels of ability are broadly average. Almost all the pupils (95%) are of white UK heritage. There are below average numbers of pupils receiving free school meals (8.1%), and only two pupils for whom English is an additional language. Fifteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs (SEN), which is just below the national average. There are eight pupils receiving support from statements and Early Years School Action Plus. The nature of SEN includes physical impairments, behavioural needs and learning difficulties. The building provides a well-designed, attractive, high quality environment for learning and social activities. Parents and members of the local community are proud of the school and the education it provides for all pupils. Town groups use the building regularly and there is a popular after school club. The school has average levels of attendance, below average numbers of unauthorised absence, and no exclusions. At the time of the inspection the school was under the leadership of the acting headteacher who is the substantive deputy headteacher.

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

This is a good school with very many strengths and some outstanding features. After a period of significant change when two schools became one under new leadership and moved into a new building with new staff, the school has grown in strength and provides good value for money. Excellent relationships, strong leadership and high quality teaching ensure that pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects and thoroughly enjoy their learning. The excellent school ethos creates a climate for learning which enables pupils to behave very well, care for each other and enjoy respectful relationships with adults and their peers. The school makes very good provision for pupils with SEN and promotes equal opportunities including racial equality. The outstanding team work of the teaching and non-teaching staff is helping the school to raise achievement.

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

- There is very good teaching overall throughout the school. Staff are very skilful, enthusiastic and committed to making learning fun.
- Relationships are excellent. Pupils learn how to relate to each other from the exceptional example set by the staff. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior managers and the systems for administration are very effective.
- The school provides excellent opportunities for personal and social development. Pupils are very aware of the need to care for others, show respect and behave responsibly.
- The governors support the work of the school well.
- The new building and the way in which it is used makes a significant difference to the quality of education the school is now able to provide.

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

- Attainment in mathematics; it is satisfactory, but not as good as it is in English and science.
- The involvement of subject managers and governors in using information to determine and monitor the school's priorities for development.
- The assessment and recording of learning in religious education, physical education, music, art and design, history and geography.
- The use of day-to-day assessment by teachers to ensure all pupils have work that suits their needs.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997 when it had been in existence a matter of weeks. Since then, it has shown very good improvement because:

- it has a brand new building, providing excellent accommodation and much improved provision for health and safety;
- leadership by the headteacher and senior staff is very strong and development planning is good;
- governors now fulfil their duties well;
- the school has aims which it revises regularly and upholds in all its work;
- the curriculum is well planned;
- teaching is much improved and is now very good throughout the school.

Although the school has implemented an assessment policy, there are still some improvements to be made to assessment procedures.

## STANDARDS

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

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

<b>Key</b>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In 2002, standards by the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics when compared with all schools nationally and those in similar circumstances.

Standards in science were below the national average. Standards by the end of Year 6 were average in English compared with schools nationally and similar schools. In mathematics standards were average compared with schools nationally, but below average compared with similar schools. Standards in science were above average compared with schools nationally and similar schools.

Children enter the school with broadly average levels of ability. By the time they reach Year 1, the majority of pupils are achieving the Early Learning Goals, showing satisfactory progress in all areas.

By the age of seven, pupils are attaining good standards in reading, writing, religious education, science, music, and art and design. Standards in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), history and geography are in line with national expectation. Standards in speaking and listening and design and technology are very good, well above those expected by age seven.

Standards by age 11 are well above those expected nationally in speaking and listening and design and technology, they are now above average in English, science, music, religious education, physical education and art and design. Standards are average in ICT, history, geography and mathematics.

Standards in Year 7 are above the national expectation in English, science, ICT, design and technology, religious education, music, and art and design. They are in line with those expected nationally in mathematics, history, geography and French. Standards in speaking and listening are well above those expected nationally. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in physical education at age seven and age 12.

Trends over time for pupils aged seven have remained at least in line with the national average. For pupils aged 11, trends have been more erratic, but are now improving in mathematics and English and are stable in science. Overall standards have remained in line with the national average and are now showing improvement. The school sets targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science. In the past these have lacked sufficient challenge. Since the school has improved its use of data analysis the targets are much more challenging. Consequently the school exceeded its targets last year and is set to do so again in 2003. Pupils throughout the school with SEN make very good progress, as do those who are identified as gifted and talented. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls compared to the national picture. Pupils achieve well across a range of areas and subjects.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Excellent: pupils respond exceptionally well to praise and advice from staff. They are very keen to be involved in a range of activities and want to succeed in their learning. In lessons, pupils' attitudes are very good throughout the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: in lessons and around the school pupils behave very well. They co-operate very well with each other and treat other pupils and adults with respect.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent: personal development opportunities result in excellent relationships throughout the school. The oldest pupils are provided with many opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of school life with skill and pride.
Attendance	Satisfactory: attendance levels are now similar to those found nationally for primary schools.

There are excellent relationships which have a positive impact on the attitudes pupils show towards others and their work. Older pupils demonstrate particularly mature attitudes and enjoy helping and

supporting the school in day-to-day activities. Attendance has improved. The school does all it can to encourage good attendance but the majority of absence is due to pupils accompanying their parents on holidays during school time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

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

Pupils are organised in eight classes according to their age. There are 12 teachers including four part-time staff and the acting headteacher. Part-time specialist teaching takes place in science and French. At the time of the inspection there was one supply teacher in the school. During the inspection, 51 lessons were seen in all classes and in a wide range of subjects. Teaching is good in Reception with some very good and excellent teaching. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching is never less than good and sometimes very good. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is mostly very good, frequently good and sometimes excellent. Teaching in Year 7 is never less than good, frequently very good and sometimes excellent. Teaching in English is very good overall. Standards of speaking and listening are very well developed. The National Literacy Strategy has been well implemented due to the strong leadership of the co-ordinator. Teaching in mathematics is generally good in all year groups. The high standards of behaviour shown by pupils and the excellent relationships they enjoy with adults and their peers contribute much to the pace of learning. Teaching supports the needs of all pupils, including those who are gifted and talented and those with SEN.

### Teaching in the school is very good overall because:

- teachers plan their lessons well with interesting activities, making learning fun;
- pupils are well managed and treated with respect;
- relationships are excellent;
- pace is kept up and there is no wasted time;
- teachers use resources and methods well to hold the interest of pupils;
- learning support assistants are very well used to help pupils make progress;
- pupils are told what they are going to learn and asked to comment on how well they think they have done;
- teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach;
- homework is used to develop learning;
- teachers enjoy their work and are committed to doing the very best for their pupils.

### What needs to improve?

Teachers need to use day-to-day assessments to give some pupils activities which are more precisely matched to what they need to learn next.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: a broad curriculum, enriched exciting activities, visits and visitors result in good standards in a wide range of subjects. Extracurricular activities enrich the curriculum, especially in music.
Provision for pupils with SEN	Very good: teaching staff, non-teaching staff and other pupils support pupils with SEN very well to make very good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very small numbers of pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall: the school has excellent provision for pupils' social development. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to learn about their own culture and that of others. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well: the school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Race equality is promoted well. Child protection procedures are very good. There are good procedures in place for assessing standards and progress in English and mathematics.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. Parents know that staff care for their children and help them develop good attitudes to learning and each other. They feel comfortable about approaching the school on any matter and are very supportive of both the headteacher and acting headteacher.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: the headteacher, acting headteacher and small senior management team provide very strong leadership and very efficient management. Subject co-ordinators support their colleagues well, but need to improve their monitoring of standards achieved by pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: governors are very supportive of the school. They know the priorities for development and fulfil their statutory duties well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good: the school has very effective systems for analysing data and setting targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good: the school uses all the available resources very well to provide high quality teaching and learning.

The headteacher has brought two schools together very successfully. The aims and values of the school are reflected extremely well in all its work. The acting headteacher has sustained and developed the commitment to improvement. Standards are rising because of strong leadership. The new building provides an excellent environment for learning. It is a high-quality, attractive, well-

designed space that brings enjoyment to all who work in it. Indoor and outdoor facilities make teaching a pleasure and learning an even bigger one.

The school makes very good provision for and use of staffing and resources. A high performing team of staff has benefited from very strong leadership and are ready to take on more responsibility for influencing school improvement. They are not yet sufficiently involved in the formulation of the school development plan and the role of monitoring standards in subjects. The lack of available assessment information in some subjects makes their job more difficult.

The governing body provides good support to the school. Governors take their role very seriously and fulfil their duties well. A number of committees undertake appropriate duties and report to the full governing body, but are not involved enough in the school's development planning process. The strength of the staff team and their enthusiasm for their work has resulted in a school which has excellent commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school and are keen to learn.</li> <li>• The school encourages good behaviour. Children understand the difference between right and wrong.</li> <li>• Children are encouraged to work hard and do their best. Children are helped to mature.</li> <li>• Most parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The headteacher is providing effective leadership.</li> <li>• The school is a caring place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like to see a wider range of activities provided outside school.</li> </ul>

Parents returned 84 questionnaires and 37 parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector. The evidence gathered during the inspection supports the positive views expressed by parents.

Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that extracurricular activities are similar to those found in similar schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. At the time of the inspection, March 2003, pupils were half way through the school year. There had been a new intake into Reception in January. In order to come to judgements about standards, the inspection team looked at pupils' work in all year groups, 51 lessons were observed, discussions took place with teachers and subject co-ordinators and some inspectors talked to groups of pupils about their work. National data was available as well as the school's own information and the local education authority's analysis of the 2002 test results.
2. Children enter the school with broadly average levels of ability. Tests on entry support this judgement, although levels of speaking and listening are generally above average. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of pupils are achieving the Early Learning Goals, showing satisfactory progress in all areas of learning.
3. By the age of seven pupils are attaining good standards in reading, writing, science, music, and art and design. Standards in mathematics, ICT, history and geography are in line with national expectation. Standards in speaking and listening and design and technology are very good, well above those expected by age seven. No judgement was possible in physical education. Standards in reading and writing are similar overall to those shown in the 2002 test results, where they were good. Standards in mathematics are in line with those expected nationally. There was no difference in 2002 results when compared with schools nationally and those with similar free school meals allocation. However, the points scores in 2002 tests showed good standards because of the attainment of higher achieving pupils. The judgement of the inspection team is that attainment is now higher overall with more pupils attaining in line with national expectation.
4. Standards by age 11 are well above those expected nationally in speaking and listening and design and technology, they are above average in English, science, religious education, and art and design. Standards are average in ICT, physical education, history, geography and mathematics. The inspection team judged that standards in English are now higher than in the 2002 tests, with the majority of pupils achieving standards above the national expectation. Standards in science are above average and in mathematics they remain in line with national expectation, but are still not as high as in English. The school has improved standards in English due to the work that has been put into setting targets and improving teaching. Similar work in mathematics is at an earlier stage and the improvements in standards are just beginning to show. As in Years 3 to 6 the points gained by the significant number of higher attainers influenced the grades given for the school's overall attainment. The findings of the inspection team are that attainment is better for the average and lower attaining pupils than in 2002 and progress is more even for pupils of all abilities. Local education authority data proves that the school adds more value to pupils' achievements in

Years 3 to 6 than shown in the national data report which does not take account of the significant number of pupils who left or entered the school between 1998 and 2002.

5. The overall standards in 2002 in English, mathematics and science together were the same when compared to schools nationally and in similar circumstances.
6. Standards in Year 7 are above the national expectation in English, Science, ICT, design and technology, religious education and music. They are in line with those expected nationally in mathematics, history, geography, art and design and French. Standards in speaking and listening are well above those expected nationally.
7. The school sets targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science. In the past these have lacked sufficient challenge. Since the school has improved its use of data analysis and is now making realistic predictions about what pupils should achieve, given their prior attainment, the targets are much more challenging. Consequently the school exceeded its targets last year and is set to do so again in 2003. The use of test results from Reception to Year 7 to set targets for groups and individuals has been instrumental in improving standards, but teaching skills in designing different tasks for pupils to be more precisely in line with their targets are inconsistent.
8. Trends over time in Years 1 and 2 have remained in line or above the national average. Years 3 to 6 trends have been more erratic, but are now improving in mathematics and English and are stable in science. Overall they have remained in line with the national average and are now showing improvement.
9. Pupils throughout the school with SEN make very good progress, as do those who are identified as gifted and talented. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls compared to the national picture. Previous test results for pupils age seven and 11 indicated that higher attaining pupils made better progress than those of average ability when compared with other schools. The inspection team found that this is no longer the case. The school has recognised it as an issue and the approach to setting targets for all pupils has made progress more even across the ability range.
10. Literacy skills in all subjects are well developed. Subject co-ordinators have taken the school's priority for raising standards in reading and writing very seriously with regard to their subjects, and there is evidence of good use of writing in a range of subjects. For example, letter writing has been used to good effect in religious education. The use of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory.
11. Pupils achieve well across a range of areas and subjects. The outstanding quality of relationships and attitudes to school enable pupils of all abilities to achieve well and fulfil the aims of the school. Pupils are independent, curious and supportive of each other. They frequently ask questions of their teachers without being prompted; for example, in a science lesson a pupil enquired if the use of pesticides on the red cabbage would alter its effectiveness as a pH indicator. Pupils bring many skills and positive qualities to their learning which are celebrated and built upon by their teachers.



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

12. The attitudes displayed by pupils to the school are excellent. In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning were very good throughout the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school was also very good. Pupils know what is expected of them and are developing independence and self-confidence. They are responding positively to the environment offered both by the new buildings and the care and interest shown in them by all staff. Attendance levels are now broadly similar to those seen in similar schools.
13. Pupils' attitudes to the school are excellent. In lessons their attitudes are very good and they are keen to learn and are enthusiastic about the many opportunities offered to them, particularly those arising from the excellent and very good teaching. Examples of this positive response were seen throughout the school. A notable example was seen in a Year 7 history session where pupils were developing their understanding and empathy with people living in medieval times. They responded well to a challenging task requiring them to barter with their peers in order to obtain sufficient goods to survive a winter. They quickly responded and showed clearly their understanding of the nature and complexity of the situation and were able to give particularly sensitive and imaginative responses to good incisive questions from the teacher. Another example was seen in a Year 3 music lesson where the teacher was introducing the pentatonic scale. All pupils were engaged in the activity immediately. They worked very hard, in co-operation with their peers and showed a growing understanding of the topic as the lesson progressed. They also brought their own experiences to the discussion demonstrating clearly their grasp of the subject. A particular feature seen in this school was the pupils' attitude and care for others and the level of self-awareness shown. Many examples of this were to be seen in lessons, and discussions with pupils also provided clear evidence of it. For example, discussions with members of the school council and pupils who are involved in developing the school's new environmental area showed their enthusiasm and commitment to helping bring about improvements for the benefit of all.
14. In the reception class the children's personal, social and emotional development are well provided for. The teaching and support staff take opportunity to develop these aspects of the children's needs. As a result they made good progress and quickly took on school routines well.
15. The school places much emphasis on the promotion of good behaviour at all times. It is succeeding very well in these aims. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. This has a very positive influence on the very high standards of behaviour seen.
16. Staff operate the behaviour policy in a consistent and positive manner. Overall behaviour seen in lessons was very good. In no lesson observed was unsatisfactory behaviour seen. Examples of excellent and very good behaviour were seen in all areas of the school. For example, in a Year 4 physical education lesson, pupils were being introduced to hockey. Pupils were enthusiastic and worked hard to acquire new skills, and contributed useful comments when asked about how they could improve their own skills and technique. In a

Year 5 design and technology lesson, pupils were introduced to product analysis. They worked with enthusiasm and concentration and contributed ideas well in response to the teacher's good questions. This resulted in very good learning.

17. Behaviour in and around the school was very good. Pupils are polite, friendly and articulate. They display growing self-confidence and self-awareness and respond openly to adults and have the confidence to give thoughtful answers to questions when asked. They play well together at break and lunchtime. In the dining room they behave very well, talking sensibly with friends. The school provides pupils with an environment free of bullying, sexism and racism. The impact of staff as role models is notable. Led by the excellent example of the acting headteacher, all staff consistently respond to pupils with respect and concern for their welfare. Pupils respond very well and know that staff are working very hard for their benefit.
18. The personal development of pupils of all abilities is excellent. The school's programme of personal, social and health education enables pupils to learn about important health matters including sex education and drug awareness. The use of circle time (the opportunity for pupils to discuss personal, moral and social topics) also contributes very well to this area. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher successfully used this time to develop pupils' recognition of the worth of individuals and linked this to differences in people on a regional and national basis. This led to some good responses from pupils, who quickly developed their thinking and talked maturely about potential difficulties and differences resulting from colour, religion and nationality. Pupils' personal development is also well supported by the opportunities provided for them to take responsibility. Among the many opportunities are: pupils acting as monitors in class, as library assistants and on the school council. Older pupils help younger pupils by acting as redcaps, a school scheme where they are linked at break and lunchtime. They take all these responsibilities very seriously, and as a result contribute greatly to the success of the school. A feature of the increasing maturity displayed by the pupils is to be seen in the way they automatically take actions on their own initiative, whether it be by helping in class, by supporting a fellow pupil or contributing to some wider project. It is, put simply, the expected way of life in this school.
19. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and are similar to those found in similar schools nationally. Levels of unauthorised absence are slightly better than those typically seen. Pupils are punctual and sessions and lessons begin on time. Registration procedures are efficient and no time is wasted. Parents and pupils are aware of the school's standards and requirements in this area.
20. All pupils are involved in all the school's activities. Staff are very aware of the need to plan work taking into account all pupils.
21. These judgements show further improvement over the high standards found at the time of the last inspection, in particular in relation to pupil attitudes and relationships. This aspect is an outstanding feature of the school and is a result of the infectious adult role modelling and consistent high expectations to which pupils respond with enthusiasm and hard work.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. Pupils are organised in eight classes according to their age. There are 12 teachers including four part-time staff and the acting headteacher. Part-time specialist teaching takes place in science and French. At the time of the inspection there was one supply teacher in the school. Teaching has made very good improvement since the last inspection.
23. **Teaching in the school is very good overall because:**
- teachers plan their lessons well with interesting activities, making learning fun;
  - pupils are well managed and treated with respect;
  - relationships are excellent;
  - pace is kept up and there is no wasted time;
  - teachers use resources and methods well to hold the interest of pupils;
  - learning support assistants are very well used to help pupils make progress;
  - pupils are told what they are going to learn and asked to comment on how well they think they have done;
  - teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach;
  - homework is used to develop learning;
  - teachers enjoy their work and are committed to doing the very best for their pupils;
  - gifted and talented pupils and those with SEN are well catered for.
24. **What needs to improve?**
- Teachers need to use day-to-day assessments to give some pupils activities which are more precisely matched to what they need to learn next.
25. Teaching in the school is almost always good, with many lessons being very good and some excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and a very small amount which is only satisfactory. The strengths in teaching result in high standards in personal development, behaviour, attitudes and achievement in a wide range of subjects. The quality of teaching is gradually improving standards in English, mathematics and science, but has not been sustained at its present level for long enough to see a dramatic rise in results. Where leadership has recently influenced the teaching, for example, in literacy, the school is exceeding its targets and standards are much higher than the 2002 test results indicate.
26. During the inspection, 51 lessons were seen in all classes and in a wide range of subjects. Teaching is good in Reception with some very good and excellent teaching. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching is never less than good and sometimes very good. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is mostly very good, frequently good and sometimes excellent. Teaching in Year 7 is never less than good, frequently very good and sometimes excellent.
27. The quality of teaching for pupils under five is good overall and on occasion very good and excellent. Teachers know pupils well and plan interesting and motivating activities that are well structured. There are high levels of teacher-pupil interaction, together with lively input and enthusiastic teaching. For example, in a science activity to see if wet or dry soap works better the teacher made the activity fun by timing how many times pupils could pass the soap around the group, first dry and then wet, and timing this against the egg timer. In some

lessons however, activities are not always planned at an appropriate level for some pupils and this leads to a loss of attention. All planning is detailed and covers all areas of learning and the Early Learning Goals and stepping stones. The teacher gives good support to learning support assistants to enable them to handle activities appropriately and this ensures that all pupils receive an entitlement to the activities offered.

28. Teaching in English is good overall. Teachers are skilled in teaching reading and writing and make learning interesting. In the best lessons teachers bring language alive by using drama and music. Standards of speaking and listening are very well developed because teachers include key vocabulary in their planning and teaching. They introduce new words every lesson and use paired talk to help pupils discuss and explore their ideas before they offer answers. The National Literacy Strategy has been well implemented due to the strong leadership of the co-ordinator. Phonics (sounds and letters) are well taught and the development of speaking and listening is a strength, demonstrated by the very high standards achieved.
29. Teaching in mathematics is generally good in all year groups. Recent support from the local education authority is having a positive effect, but progress reflects the fact that the teaching is not yet as good as it is in literacy. The school is implementing the numeracy strategy with enthusiasm, but the additional training is still being undertaken and teaching methods and the design of different tasks to meet pupils' needs are not as secure as they are in other areas.
30. Teaching in science is excellent in Year 7 and good elsewhere. The use of the specialist teacher and the purpose built classroom has resulted in improved standards. In the best lessons pupils were fully involved in planning and carrying out investigations working co-operatively, using equipment safely and making excellent progress.
31. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good in ICT and good in religious education, music, art, history and geography. There were too few lessons seen in design and technology to judge teaching. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is very good in design and technology and good in all other subjects. For pupils in Year 7 teaching is very good in ICT and history, good in French, geography, music, and religious education. Not enough teaching was seen in design and technology, physical education and art and design to make a judgement. Some excellent teaching was seen in music, English, science and in the areas of learning for the under fives. ICT makes a valuable contribution to learning in a wide range of subjects.
32. Teaching has many strengths and very few weaknesses. Planning is very thorough and outlines very clearly what pupils are going to learn. What is going to be taught is shared with even the youngest children so that they know what they are doing and why. Relationships are excellent and result in very positive attitudes to work. Pupils want to do their best, stay on task and enjoy the learning as a result. Teaching methods are very effective. Teachers use computers, projectors, music and drama to make lessons exciting and memorable. Pupils comment quite spontaneously to each other with good reason: '*I really enjoyed that lesson*'. Lessons start on time and not a moment is wasted, support staff are well trained and deployed and share the planning for lessons. Resources contribute well to learning. For example, the laboratory equipment in the science room enabled older pupils to experiment

with pH indicators in a way that would not otherwise have been possible. Homework is used well to enrich the teaching in school. For example, pupils in the science lesson then went on to classify household products into acids and alkalis. The only weakness in teaching relates to assessment and the use of it to create sharp differences in the design of activities for some pupils. In a significant number of lessons across a range of age groups a small number of pupils had work that was not challenging enough or in some cases too difficult. Very often pupils were given the same starting task, which was supported by adult help for lower attainers or extended by an additional task for those of higher ability. Pupils did not always apply themselves to these tasks in ways which resulted in successful learning. Sometimes more able pupils were not challenged enough and some less able pupils struggled to achieve. In lessons where tasks were more appropriately designed and matched, very good progress for pupils of all abilities was the outcome.

33. The high standards of behaviour shown by pupils and the excellent relationships they enjoy with adults and their peers contribute much to the pace of learning. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 6, boys and girls worked very co-operatively to bring poetry to life and empathise with the characters by designing their own presentation of a section of a poem about Gargoyles. They used drama, choral speaking and movement to create atmosphere and presented their ideas to the class. Presentations were then praised and evaluated by their peers. Having set up the activity so skilfully, the teacher was then virtually redundant as pupils took charge of their own learning and applied outstanding levels of creative and intellectual effort.
34. Pupils give each other feedback and are used to working co-operatively. Even the youngest pupils can organise themselves into groups and work on a task given by their teacher. Throughout the school pupils bring high levels of concentration and interest to their work. They are given constant praise for what they do well and their good behaviour contributes much to their learning. Although teachers tell pupils constantly how well they are doing, not all teachers mark work in ways which leave pupils in no doubt about what they have done well and need to do next.
35. The teaching of pupils with SEN is good overall. Teachers plan well to meet pupils' needs. They know what a pupil's individual education plan is and use this information to ensure activities are appropriately matched to ability during lessons. ICT is becoming a regular feature of teaching and learning. Contact books are produced. These give information about a pupil's needs and suggest ways that activities can be developed and consolidated. Learning support assistants are very good at helping individuals and groups of pupils. Consequently, the majority of pupils make very good progress.

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

36. The school offers a good range of curriculum opportunities in the majority of subjects.
37. **Strengths**
- A broad and balanced curriculum enriched with exciting learning opportunities in some subjects.
  - Provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is a strength in all year groups.
  - An appropriate and well resourced curriculum for Year 7.
  - Provision for pupils with SEN and gifted and talented pupils.
  - A wide range of interesting learning opportunities is provided for pupils.
  - Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills.
38. **Areas for improvement**
- Better use of the outdoor environment for children in the Reception class.
39. The broad and balanced curriculum offered by the school shows considerable improvement since the last inspection. It now provides a coherent and effective learning programme for pupils across the full age range of the school, including Year 7, covering all statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The needs of all pupils are well supported by staff.
40. The subject co-ordinators and teachers make good use of nationally accredited schemes of work. They add to and amend these in order to tailor the curriculum more closely to the needs of pupils. Policies and plans are in place for all statutory subjects and the allocation of time to different subjects is broadly in line with national guidelines overall. The high quality of teachers' planning contributes to the effectiveness of teaching and the continuity and progression of pupils' learning. An appropriate statutory curriculum is in place for Year 7, including French and Citizenship. Parents value the provision of a wide range of subjects and opportunities for pupils. The school has allocated additional teaching time to music, which is a priority for the school.
41. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been fully implemented and provides a good range of opportunities for the children under five years. However, the outdoor learning environment is underused.
42. The school has fully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers and learning support assistants use effective strategies to teach literacy and numeracy skills. The needs of additional groups and individuals are well provided for by learning support assistants. This helps pupils to access the full curriculum and also benefit from specific national initiatives to support learning in literacy and numeracy.
43. The school provides a range of extracurricular activities for pupils both in and out of school. These enhance the opportunities for pupils and are appreciated by parents. Within and after the school day there is additional music tuition for a wide range of instruments, singing and orchestra. At lunchtime, Year 7 pupils run an Internet Club, and after school clubs, mainly

for older pupils, are provided by teachers. The school has been successful in attracting additional funding to support the development of out of school learning. The range of activities on offer includes: recorders, drama, sports, sailing and circus skills. An Ofsted accredited after school club for pupils is offered to parents in the community. This is well-staffed and provides appropriate and interesting activities including art, games and themed discussions, for example on pets. Groups of pupils undertake visits out of school including residential opportunities for Years 3, 5 and 7.

44. The school is currently engaged in an ambitious environmental project. This aims to enhance the outdoor environment and to provide additional experiences to support the curriculum. Two Year 7 pupils are members of the committee, which is planning and obtaining funds for this project. They are very proud of their achievements. An environmental area and tree planting are already under way. Also planned are a sensory garden, solar powered water feature and recycling schemes. School classes are to be re-named using names of trees planted in the grounds. The school entered a competition offered by the 'International Tree Foundation'. A pupil in the school won this award and the organisation has used the picture on the front cover of their publication.
45. Parents are proud of the school's strong commitment to educating all pupils, regardless of ability. All pupils are accepted into the school and the school is determined to ensure that equal opportunities are applied throughout. The new school building allows very good access for wheelchairs. Learning support assistants are employed to work with specific groups and individuals to assist access for all to a full curriculum. All extra-curricular activities are open to boys and girls. A minor issue needs to be resolved in Year 6, where girls were given less encouragement to participate in one lesson than were boys. Gifted and talented pupils are well supported with access to residential enrichment courses, and by teachers providing challenging extension activities both in the classroom and at home.
46. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. Very good relationships are a feature of lessons. A co-ordinator is in post and is providing support for teachers in delivering the national guidance. A full scheme of work is being developed. All year groups have timetabled lessons. Teachers make very good use of circle time as a focus for in-depth thoughtful discussions to which pupils bring maturity and sensitivity. This contributes substantially to their very good attitudes and standards of behaviour. Pupils are confident in discussing issues related to bullying, racism, self-worth and friendship. Teachers manage lessons in an ethos of trust and confidentiality, which allows all pupils to become fully involved. Provision is made for drug education and sex and relationships education. Teachers also develop personal, social and health education across the curriculum. Year 6 pupils in a science lesson discussed healthy options with good understanding. All pupils and staff have access to drinking water.
47. Provision for pupils with SEN is very good.
48. **Strengths**
  - Pupils with SEN make very good progress.

- The role of the SEN co-ordinator in monitoring pupils' progress.
  - Good use is made of data and information from tests to evaluate curriculum provision.
  - The support for pupils provided by learning support assistants.
49. The school uses a number of strategies to support pupils with SEN. These include booster classes and targeted support from classroom assistants. A nurture group has been set up which includes pupils from different year groups. Consequently, pupils with SEN make good and often very good progress during their time in school. The majority of pupils who are identified as being at the stage of needing help in school are likely to achieve Level 2 by the time they are seven. By the time they are eleven, most pupils on "School action" will achieve Level 4.
50. The school has a good understanding of what it means to care for and educate all pupils. Learning support assistants play a very important part in the support pupils' receive and the progress they make. Whenever possible, support for pupils is provided in the classroom. This means that for a large part of the time all pupils learn together. The school is proud of its links with Vranck House special school. The weekly visit of a pupil has a positive impact on everyone. The school has carried out an accessibility audit and its design makes it accessible to current and future pupils with a range of SEN.
51. The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school benefits from a good range of visitors into school, which broadens and extends learning opportunities and contributes to school assemblies. Parents are keen to support pupils in their work at home and in participating in some of the extracurricular activities. Much use is made of the networked computer suite allowing pupils to access the Internet. This is providing good support for a number of subjects in most classes.
52. There are good links with outside agencies and institutions, which benefit both the school and the partner organisation. A pre-school playgroup makes visits prior to transfer, and older pupils are well supported in transfer to their chosen high school education. A good range of information regarding pupil attainment is passed on to the receiving school. The school accepts teacher training placements and, for other career options, from local colleges and universities. International projects have enabled foreign teachers to be hosted by the school.

### **Personal Development**

53. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal development is very good, with some outstanding features in moral and social development. This is a strength of the school and shows good improvement since the last inspection.
54. **Strengths**
- The use of circle time and personal and social education make a very valuable contribution to pupils' personal development.
  - The development of outstanding relationships and adult role models provide an excellent climate for moral and social development.



- Pupils are encouraged to be fully involved in the life of the school and community and in supporting each other.

55. **Areas for improvement**

- The provision for spiritual development is not as strong as other areas of personal development.
56. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to develop their own values and beliefs. Appropriate and carefully planned acts of daily worship take place, either collectively as a whole school or within the classroom. Pupils join in with worship and enjoy and participate in music together. They show respect and empathy for others in circle time and in collective worship. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect in religious education and personal, social and health education lessons where they are able to share their thoughts and feelings. In Year 1, pupils empathised with the feelings of Jonah. In some lessons a sense of awe and wonder is fostered, in, for example, ‘what a marvellous piece of writing...’ and in admiring beauty in natural and manufactured creations related to faiths, art and design and music. Year 2 pupils gasped with delight as patterns emerged from rubbings of table tops and radiator grills during their art lesson. The opportunities provided for pupils to reflect need to be further developed to bring this more regularly into teachers’ lessons across the curriculum. Pupils need to be given time to develop a sense of beauty, wonder, harmony, love and empathy in all contexts. Some teachers incorporate this into their teaching, but it is not consistently applied.
57. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are gaining strong individual and collective positive values. A group of Year 7 pupils has been trained in peer mentoring skills and is active in supporting others. The examples set by adults, together with teachers’ very effective behaviour management strategies, make very good contributions to pupils’ values and their sense of right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to discuss moral issues in circle time, such as the consequences of their own actions, Children’s Rights, and a responsibility to the environment and other people. In a Year 4 class assembly, pupils discussed what it means to be honest and being honest to themselves. Year 6 and 7 pupils demonstrate a particularly well developed understanding and are prepared, within a climate of trust, to express their views about their own personal morality and values.
58. The provision for the development of pupils’ social skills across the school is outstanding. It is central to the school’s values and ethos. Staff and pupils work together in harmony to develop excellent relationships and standards of behaviour. The school has been instrumental in giving responsibility to pupils in a number of exciting and innovative ways. A very active school council consults with pupils and develops clear priorities for action. Minutes of meetings are displayed and a budget is allocated. The council has discussed the outdoor environment, use of computers, a newsletter, presentations to the school, recycling and consultation with Year 1 and 2 pupils. A very effective ‘buddy’ scheme pairs pupils from Year 4 to Year 7 with those from Reception to Year 3. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils buddied Year 1 in shared ICT and personal, social and health education lessons. A number of Year 7 pupils (Redcaps), spend time with younger pupils at lunchtime to help

organise games. Year 7 pupils also run a popular Internet Club during one lunchtime each week.

59. The school has developed a very effective behaviour policy, which promotes positive rewards. Teachers organise class systems and rules supporting personal values such as 'being a good friend' and 'how we treat our friends'. Playground and Whole School Golden Rules are displayed in classrooms and elsewhere. Residential visits also make a good contribution to social development. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and exercise leadership skills. This is so embedded that pupils take it upon themselves to organise activities, put things away and look after others. A whole school assembly is very supportive of pupils' achievements. These are also recorded in the School Achievements book and include many personal achievements, for example, 'responsible member of the class', 'helping others' and 'for trying hard'. Reception children are encouraged to choose others in the class for awards. All pupils chosen are clearly very proud of their achievements.
60. Provision for cultural development is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to explore their own values and to extend their knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity. Displays around the school provide good evidence of cultural awareness. Year 2 have studied Christian and Sikh symbols and Year 7 have painted scenes relating to Islam illustrating peace and submission. International students have been placed in the school and a number of artists and musicians visit. Music, productions and art make a good contribution to cultural development. Pupils explore and celebrate their own cultural traditions. Pancake Day assemblies and exciting races took place during the inspection. The governors of the school are committed to multi-cultural education and value the experiences that the school offers pupils. The school enriches pupils' experiences and values related to life in current society.

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

61. The school provides its pupils with very good levels of care. Teachers and support staff are accessible, caring and thoughtful. The acting headteacher provides an outstanding role model.
62. The arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The excellent relationships seen throughout the school help to ensure that members of staff know the pupils very well and use this knowledge to promote their learning and development. This promotes a very high standard of care for all pupils. The acting headteacher and governors are well aware of the need to provide access for all, the new school buildings have been designed with this very much in mind .
63. The procedures for child protection are very good. The acting headteacher is the designated person responsible and she has received appropriate training; this is regularly updated. The school's health and safety policy is thorough and includes safe use of the Internet. Teachers' practice reflects the school's agreed procedures in lessons and when pupils go on school visits. Regular checks relating to health and safety matters are carried

out, including external assessments. Findings are acted upon speedily. There are regular fire drills. Clear procedures are in place for any pupil who becomes ill in school. Arrangements for first aid are in place, the school has trained personnel to deal with such matters and facilities are found throughout the school. Staff are aware of these arrangements. Staff are also aware of the medical needs of particular pupils. The school has very good administrative procedures to support staff and pupils in this area.

64. Throughout the school there is very good support for pupils with SEN. Their needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate individual support provided. Pupils are enabled to make good progress throughout the school. The school also works actively to identify those who are gifted and talented in some way. They too receive support.
65. Good policies and well understood procedures encourage high quality behaviour from pupils. The school, following the acting headteacher's excellent example, promotes a positive approach to behaviour, encouraging and rewarding success. The result is that behaviour in and around the school and in lessons is very good. All staff use the policy in a consistent way. The same positive approach has been adopted towards bullying, no evidence to indicate that bullying takes place was found nor that there is any sexism or racism in the school. The school operates a satisfactory race equality policy and reports incidents, including nil returns to the local education authority.
66. The school has a range of policies and procedures in place to monitor and promote pupils' personal development. The programme of personal, social and health education plays a significant role in this. The school has successfully begun to extend this into the area of citizenship. This is of particular importance in relation to pupils in Years 3 to 7. Evidence from inspection shows that pupils are responding positively to these new approaches. The school also makes very effective use of circle time across the school. This helps promote the pupils' increasing self-awareness and self-confidence. The school makes use of visiting specialists to help deliver these programmes. Pupils' experiences are also enhanced by opportunities to take part in educational visits, including residential visits. Pupils take opportunities to take responsibility around the school by acting as monitors and in such areas as the library. The school council plays an important role in the school and those involved take their responsibilities very seriously. They were keen to describe the significant role they were playing in the current planning for developing the school grounds. Similarly those pupils who work as Redcaps in supporting younger pupils are committed to the task they have been asked to undertake.
67. The school's systems for recording and promoting attendance have recently been reviewed and improved. This follows a recognition that the school's system has, in effect, been providing inaccurate data. The school's record as shown in published data indicates that attendance levels overall are below those seen in similar schools nationally. Similarly levels of authorised absence are shown as above those seen elsewhere. As a result of detailed analysis by the school it is clear that raw data from registers has been recorded in error on the computer system. This has been mainly in relation to pupils who attend part time, mainly but not exclusively amongst the youngest pupils. The school is now in the process of changing its system. Evidence from inspection shows that the school's attendance record

currently is in fact broadly in line with that seen elsewhere. The school responds promptly to absence by phone and in writing, including when necessary involving the education welfare officer. The school records show that the school takes attendance issues seriously. Parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector were very clear about the school's requirements. Registers are maintained efficiently and promptly.

68. Overall, however, these judgements represent an improvement in those reported following the last inspection. This area of its work is now a strength.
69. There are some significant strengths and some weaknesses in assessment procedures, but the provision is good overall. Assessment procedures for pupils with SEN are very good. Assessment procedures in personal development, English, and mathematics are good. They are satisfactory for children under five and in ICT, science and modern foreign languages. Assessment information from test analysis is very well used to set targets for pupils at all stages. The weaknesses lie in the use of ongoing assessment by teachers to plan the next stage of learning for pupils of differing abilities, and in the provision of assessment in some subjects. There are currently insufficient procedures for assessing progress in history, geography, music, religious education, physical education, design and technology and art and design. The lack of ongoing assessment in these areas makes it difficult to ensure that pupils receive appropriate feedback, support and challenge. The role of the co-ordinators and governors in monitoring standards is also made more difficult as they do not readily have access to the information they need. Some pupils receive good feedback about their learning through teachers' marking, but not all marking plays such a significant part in ongoing assessment.
70. There are appropriate arrangements in place for statutory teacher assessments at ages seven and 11. Teacher assessments are similar to the test results. The school monitors the progress of groups of pupils and individuals. Achievement is measured by gender, ability and, where appropriate, ethnic group and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Where any form of under-achievement is identified, there are good measures in place to support and challenge pupils.
71. There has been satisfactory progress in this area since the last inspection, when it was a key issue, but some areas of assessment are still in need of improvement.

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

72. The parents who returned the questionnaire or attended the parents' meeting were very supportive of the school. They expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children. Parents are very clear that children enjoy life in school, staff care for them well and help them develop good attitudes to learning and each other. They feel comfortable about approaching the school on any matter. They see the school as an integral part of the community and are clear about the ways in which it has improved since the last inspection. Parents are very supportive of both the headteacher and acting headteacher. They consider pupils' behaviour to be very good.

73. Arrangements for the induction of pupils are good and parents are involved in this process. The parents of the youngest pupils receive very good quality documentation about routine administrative and educational matters. The prospectus provides parents with useful information about the school and meets requirements. The annual report to parents made by governors also gives a useful insight into the school's work and it meets requirements. The school produces a newsletter to parents, usually fortnightly. The quality of this has been improved recently and it is now a well-written informative document which gives a good insight into school life. Routine administrative matters are communicated in an efficient and effective manner. Parents also receive from each class teacher information about the work to be undertaken in each subject of the curriculum.
74. Annual written reports are made to parents about their children's progress; they meet requirements. Parents also have the opportunity to meet teachers formally on a termly basis to discuss progress. During the spring term meeting staff discuss the targets they have identified for individual pupils. The school also reports the outcomes achieved by individual pupils in the required national tests as well as those it uses on an elective basis. Care has been taken to indicate to parents what these results mean. This information is in addition to the overall results achieved by the school, which are contained as required in the prospectus and governors' report. Many parents also take opportunity to contact the school on an informal basis, usually at the beginning or end of the school day. During the inspection, many examples of this were seen. Parents value these opportunities. The school is beginning to review the access of parents to the school now that it has settled in to its new location. Parents' views of the school are welcomed and the school conducts regular surveys of opinion. These are considered formally by the school and parents are kept informed of these.
75. Parents of pupils with SEN are fully involved in the reviews of progress with staff and are offered advice on how their children can be supported to make further progress. Parents of pupils with statements of SEN are also fully involved in reviews of progress as required. They receive effective support to enable them to support their children's learning.
76. The school has a clear policy for homework. Parents are generally satisfied with the amount of homework set for pupils. The school policy is consistent with the guidelines issued nationally. Inspection evidence shows that homework is generally set regularly and that it is completed and marked. Pupils, when asked, know what is expected of them. The school could, however, consider how it can help parents be more aware of what is being set and when so that they can take opportunity to be aware of and support pupils' work more closely.
77. The school receives very good support from parents in a number of ways. The school Parent Teacher Association has provided valuable support in both fund raising and providing social events, particularly for pupils. The school has, as a result, been able to provide new playground equipment for younger pupils, provide additional music and other books and is helping to develop a web site. Social events for pupils have included discos and Christmas celebrations. The school also benefits from parental help in classrooms, where parents support pupils' learning well as a result of close working arrangements with staff.

78. The last inspection found areas of concern in this aspect of the school's work. Significant improvements have been made, including the quality of information provided to parents and the esteem in which the school is held as part of the community. The school now fulfils its statutory obligations in relation to the prospectus and annual governors' report to parents. This area is now a strength of the school.

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

79. At the time of the inspection the headteacher was seconded to work for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the deputy headteacher was in the role of acting headteacher. Evidence was gathered from meetings with the seconded headteacher, the acting headteacher, the acting senior teacher, the administrative officer, subject co-ordinators and the governors. Inspectors also saw a wide range of documentation.
80. At the time of the last inspection, there were significant shortcomings in some aspects of leadership and management due to the newness of the school and the lack of time available to put policies, plans and systems in place. Many of the shortcomings were linked to the governing body, which was incomplete. All the weaknesses have been addressed and leadership and management is now a strength of the school.
81. Strong leadership given by the headteacher, acting headteacher and the small senior management team ensures that staff, governors and parents know the educational direction the school needs to take and the priorities for development. The headteacher has brought two schools together very successfully and established a very high quality team of staff who are all strongly committed to giving the best education to all the pupils in their care. The aims and values of the school are reflected extremely well in all its work. The acting headteacher has sustained and developed the commitment to improvement. Standards are rising because of strong leadership; the use of data analysis systems designed by the acting headteacher are having an effective impact on raising attainment, particularly in English. There is a strong commitment to raising achievement across many areas of school life through the promotion of high self-esteem and mature attitudes. Priority has been given to establishing and nurturing a high performing team of staff who have benefited from very strong leadership and who are ready to take on more responsibility for influencing school improvement. Management systems in the school are very efficient. The administrative officer has been empowered by the headteacher and is a very valuable member of the senior management team. As a result, there are exemplary systems in place to support the day-to-day management of the school, including the management of finance. The work of subject co-ordinators is supported by the headteacher and senior management team. They produce appropriate development plans for their subject and support colleagues in order to ensure good teaching. However, the role of monitoring standards in subjects is not well enough developed. The majority of staff are unsure of how to make best use of non-contact time to measure standards in their subject effectively. The lack of available assessment information in some subjects makes their job more difficult. Too often the success criteria for the actions in each subject are insufficiently linked to improved learning outcomes for pupils.

82. Special educational needs is very well managed by the co-ordinator. She has produced a draft policy, which has challenging success criteria. Release time ensures she is able to meet with staff, individually and as a whole school. She observes lessons, looks at teachers' planning and examines pupils' work. The co-ordinator provides staff training. This has increased staff confidence in supporting a wider range of SEN. These now include pupils with medical conditions. The school governor responsible for SEN meets regularly with the co-ordinator to discuss pupils' progress. She is well informed about how the school is meeting its statutory duties.
83. The school improvement and development plans are useful tools for raising standards. Although lengthy, they provide a manageable number of important priorities and actions to secure school improvement. The priorities are known to staff and governors and are the outcome of effective data analysis. Training is linked appropriately to the named priorities and is having an effect on raising attainment. For example, the focus on writing resulted in effective whole school training and target setting; standards have risen as a result. Success in some areas is measured by the results achieved by pupils in tests and assessment. Staff performance management targets are appropriately linked to the major priorities. Co-ordinators are committed to developing the priorities within their subjects wherever possible. For example, there has been a focus on writing in subjects other than English in order to raise standards. However, staff are not yet sufficiently involved in the formulation of the school development plan and the measurement of success in terms of pupils' learning.
84. The strength of the staff team and their enthusiasm for their work has resulted in a school with excellent commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. All staff are keen to learn how to improve their performance and achieve high standards. They welcome constructive advice and support from a range of sources and thrive on challenge. There is an atmosphere of professional trust and respect. Staff are willing to share successes and failures and learn from each other.
85. Curriculum and other responsibilities are well matched to skills and interests of staff. The acting position of senior teacher has brought additional expertise onto the senior management team from the staff, but the temporary situation places a heavy workload and responsibility onto a small team, including the acting headteacher. The school is aware that some staff have the capacity to develop further through increased responsibility.
86. The governing body provides good support to the school and there is a waiting list to become a school governor. Governors take their role very seriously and fulfil their duties well. A number of committees undertake appropriate duties and report to the full governing body. All governors are aware of the challenges being faced by the school and promote the school in the community. Subject governors and those linked to year groups of pupils visit the school and monitor progress in their given area. Co-ordinators report progress to governors and enable them to assess the work of the school. Although the governors are aware of the areas for development in the school, they are not sufficiently involved in setting the priorities in the school development plan. They are aware of the work that is taking place, but their formal monitoring and evaluation of the school development plan is currently

insufficient. The work of governors is much better than it was at the last inspection and is now a strength of the school.

87. All the weaknesses in teaching identified at the last inspection have been addressed through strong leadership. High standards and expectations are set. Staff are supported and monitored by senior management. School self-evaluation has identified areas where teaching needed to be more effective, for example, in mathematics, and training has been put in place to good effect.
88. The school has very rigorous systems in place to analyse its performance in English, mathematics and science. The acting headteacher has used assessment information very well to set targets in every year group. All teachers know the improvements that need to take place for all pupils in the time they spend in their class. Targets are also shared with pupils and parents. Careful monitoring of test results takes place and any apparent under-achievement is discussed. Learning support assistants are well deployed to target under-achieving groups and individuals. As a result, the school has taken very effective action to meet its targets and is now set to exceed them.
89. New staff are well supported and trained. Some of the existing staff came to the school as newly qualified teachers and have benefited from very effective mentoring. The school could be a very effective provider of initial teacher training.
90. Performance management is well established. The governors have adequate arrangements for the appraisal, pay and performance management of all staff, including non-teaching staff. Targets are set for the headteacher and there is appropriate use of external consultancy to enable the governors to fulfil their role.
91. The school identifies educational priorities and matches funding in order to achieve them. Spending is prioritised to match the actions in the school development plan. Prudent use of funds has resulted in the provision of high quality resources to match the standards of the new building. Spending has been prioritised in subject areas. Excellent support for financial planning has resulted in the provision of very high quality learning resources in a wide range of subject areas.
92. The systems in place for financial management and control are exemplary and have been used by the local education authority to train other schools. Day-to-day systems for monitoring income and expenditure are very efficient and there is very good use of ICT to support as many areas of school administration as possible. Administrative staff are very well managed and deployed to enable teachers to devote as much time as possible to their pupils. They form a high quality team who promote the school very well and are committed to its aims. Specific grants are put to good use to support pupils with SEN, to provide training and to raise attainment. Principles of best value are applied consistently. Governors understand fully the meaning of best value and challenge the school to use all the available resources to best effect in order to raise standards.



93. Staff are generally well qualified to carry out their responsibilities and in some areas expertise is exceptional, for example, in the co-ordination of English, music and art and design. The work of learning support assistants is particularly valuable. They have received appropriate training to increase their skills when working with groups and individuals and show great commitment and versatility in their work. For example, they support the least able in some lessons and challenge the gifted and talented in others.
94. The new building provides an excellent environment for learning. It is a high-quality, attractive, well-designed space that brings pleasure to all who work in it. Indoor and outdoor facilities make teaching a pleasure and learning an even bigger one. Pupils enjoy and value the attractive resources, high quality facilities and stimulating displays. The outdoor areas and the specialist facilities for teaching science and design and technology are particularly valuable. The new building and the way in which it is used has a very positive effect on the school's ethos and makes an excellent contribution to achievement in a wide range of areas. Learning resources are generally of high quality. The library is a very attractive and stimulating place to learn. Attractive displays and seating, and a well-organised cataloguing system enable pupils to carry out research and enjoy reading for pleasure. The ICT suite provides very good facilities to enable pupils and staff to increase their skills and access information from the Internet.

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

95. Since the last inspection the school has made very good improvement overall. The headteacher has provided the strong leadership necessary to bring two schools together, move into a new building and appoint a high performing, enthusiastic and committed staff team. The school is now poised and ready to rise to even greater success. In order to improve the school further the headteacher, staff and governors should work together to:

**(1) Raise standards beyond satisfactory in mathematics.**

(The school has actions in place in the school development plan to support this).

Paras 3 and 138.

**(2) Increase the involvement of staff and governors in the process of school improvement by:**

- increasing the opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor standards consistently in their subjects and training them to do it;
- enabling staff to share in the use of assessment information and contribute to the setting of whole school priorities for development;
- involving governors more fully at the stage of setting development priorities and in the monitoring process.

Paras 69, 86, 81, 118, 162, 187, 198, 236, 241.

(3) **Further improve assessment procedures and their use by:**

- introducing manageable, ongoing, assessment and recording procedures in art and design, religious education, music, history, geography and physical education and sharing the information with co-ordinators.
- ensuring the use of day-to-day judgements about progress in matching teaching activities more precisely to the needs of all pupils.

Paras: 112, 116, 136, 151, 158, 173, 183, 187, 193, 198, 207, 213, 222, 231, 236, 247, 251, 257, 24.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	14	30	3	0	0	0
Percentage	8	27	59	6	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 one percentage point.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	220
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	28

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	17	10	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	16
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	21	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (87)	89 (100)	93 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	9	9	8
	Total	24	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (100)	93 (97)	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)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	11	17	28

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	7	9
	Girls	12	12	14
	Total	22	19	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (75)	70 (68)	85 (71)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	10	12	13
	Total	18	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (71)	74 (71)	81 (71)
	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*

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No. of pupils on roll</b>	<b>No. of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>No. of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	194	-	-
White – Irish	-	-	-
White – any other White background	8	-	-
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	-	-	-
Mixed – White and Black African	3	-	-
Mixed – White and Asian	-	-	-
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Indian	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	-	-	-
Black or Black British – Caribbean	-	-	-
Black or Black British – African	-	-	-
Black or Black British – any other Black background	-	-	-
Chinese	-	-	-
Any other ethnic group	-	-	-
No ethnic group recorded	2	-	-

*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 – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	186

### *Financial information*

Financial year	2001/02
Total income	547,097
Total expenditure	517,958
Expenditure per pupil	2,354
Balance brought forward from previous year	48,143
Balance carried forward to next year	29,139

### *Recruitment of teachers*

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.1
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

209

Number of questionnaires returned

84

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	35	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	36	2	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	48	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	55	11	0	0
The teaching is good.	52	39	5	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	51	11	7	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	31	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	43	10	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	50	43	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	42	4	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	43	15	1	5

### **Other issues raised by parents**

- Some parents would like to see a wider range of activities provided outside school.



## **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**

96. The provision for Foundation Stage children in the school is good.
97. **Strengths**
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall.
  - The learning environment in the reception classroom is very well organised and managed.
  - The provision of a wide range of interesting and motivating activities.
  - Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to learning and all children are included effectively.
98. **Areas for improvement**
- Assessment and record-keeping for all six areas of learning.
  - Ensuring a more equal balance between teacher directed and child chosen activities during the day.
  - The regular use of the outdoor area for play activities related to different areas of the curriculum.
  - Provision of suitable equipment for outdoor play and physical activity.
99. During the week of the inspection, a sample of work from the reception class and work displayed on classroom walls and around the school was examined. Six lessons and parts of lessons were observed. School documentation was read and a discussion was carried out with the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, who is also the reception class teacher.
100. Standards by the end of the reception class are in line with national expectations in all the six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. At the time of the inspection there were 26 children in the reception class, 16 older children who were admitted in September 2002 and 10 younger children (who will turn five after 1<sup>st</sup> March 2003) who were admitted in January. These younger children have already successfully settled into the routines and expectations of the school and there is no noticeable difference in behaviour between the two groups.
101. Attainment on entry to school is in line with national expectations, but there is a wide variation in attainment in the class, with a significant group of higher ability children, as well as a significant number of children of lower ability and with SEN. Children of all abilities make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. The provision of learning support assistants ensures that all children, including those with SEN, are well integrated into the class and are able to participate fully in all the activities offered. There is a well structured induction programme in place which includes home visits by the teacher, visits to school, helpful information for parents and good liaison with the feeder pre-schools in the area.

102. The provision for the Foundation Stage children is much improved since the last inspection. At that time the younger four year olds were part of a mixed age class with older Year 1 pupils and were taught in unsatisfactory accommodation, without access to a safe and secure play area. The present classroom is well designed and well organised with appropriate learning resources that are well deployed, so that children can access them effectively. The reception staff provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment for these children, enhanced by carefully displayed examples of children's work. The classroom has convenient access onto the playground and there is a suitably equipped and safe play area to one side. At the last inspection the quality of teaching was judged to be sound. Teaching is now good overall, with some very good and excellent teaching.

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

103. Children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development is in line with national expectations. Children are keen to learn and concentrate well, for example, in an independent activities session the children were quietly occupied with activities that were open-ended and they showed independence within their chosen tasks. Children are confident to have a go, for example, at registration time children are asked estimate and to show hands "who thinks it is 10, who thinks 12?" and all children are involved in thinking out responses. Children have good relationships with one another. They work well together. Children can show their feelings, for example in a physical education lesson they respond to picture cards to move in a variety of ways such as afraid, sad, tired and happy. Behaviour is very good.
104. Children have very good attitudes to learning taking turns and working together when appropriate.

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

105. Children's attainment in communication, language and literacy is in line with national expectations by the end of the Reception Year. Most children are able to express themselves effectively and are eager to join in the discussion, for example the teacher introduced a story involving a moral dilemma and children contributed their own ideas about how they would feel and what they would do. Children are developing appropriate understanding of letter and sound relationships. They can make simple words by changing the initial and final letters to make new words, and higher ability children can write these words down accurately. The teacher uses a puppet called Ricky to elicit responses and children respond quickly and enthusiastically, making up simple three letter words. Some children in the class are already achieving above expectations. These children have developed a sight vocabulary of known words and are beginning to write simple sentences using their knowledge of letter sounds to write a postcard to Mousie. Others are on track to achieve these by the end of the Reception Year, for example middle ability children can "read" a simple repetitive story using picture clues and have developed a satisfactory knowledge about how books work.

## **Mathematical development**

106. Children's attainment in mathematical development is in line with national expectations by the end of Reception. They are developing a good understanding of number through practical and oral activities, for example the teacher gives children questions of different difficulty related to 'more' and 'less'. Some children can manage numbers above 20, while the majority answer questions about numbers between 1 and 10. The teacher gives children good opportunities to think if they agree with the answer and deals sensitively with misconceptions and this encourages children to try again and self-correct. Some children are already achieving better than expected and can solve problems with numbers between 9 and 20 such as 9+14. Some children can use simple mathematical language appropriately, such as which object is heavy and which is light, and can name shapes such as triangle, square, circle and rectangle. Children are encouraged to record their understanding of number in different ways, for example children have recorded the register in their own way using a variety of symbols and marks. Some draw people, others record food, some make marks like a tally system. This very good teaching ensures that children are developing a sound understanding of number in the reception class.

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

107. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is in line with national expectations by the end of Reception. Children can carry out a simple investigation using their senses. For example, the teacher supports them to plan an investigation to find out if wet or dry soap work better, and children offer appropriate ideas about what they will need. They can design an apron for Bob the builder and suggest ideas about what is required and produce basic drawings with appropriate pockets for Bob's tools. Children can join materials in a variety of ways, for example using sellotape, treasury tags, paper fasteners and string to make caterpillars. Children have good ICT skills. They can use the mouse to move pictures and text and type in their own names. Children show an understanding of time and place and are beginning to identify with cultural traditions.

## **Physical development**

108. Children' attainment in physical development is in line with national expectations. Children can move in a variety of ways and control their bodies with growing confidence, for example in a physical education lesson they move quickly and slowly in response to the tambourine and are aware of the space around them. They are able to move to music and interpret it with appropriate movement, responding thoughtfully to excerpts from the *Carnival of the Animals*, swimming in and out like fish, or slowly like a tortoise, or quickly like a lion to catch something. Children have developed satisfactory skills in using equipment such as pencils, paintbrushes and scissors.

## **Creative development**

109. Children's attainment in creative development is in line with national expectations by the end of Reception. Children use a suitable range of materials such as paint, collage, pastels and chalks to create representative pictures. They have learned techniques such as printing and finger painting and successfully mix primary colours together to see how many other colours they can make. Children use their imagination well to respond to music and to make up their own stories and participate in role-play in the travel agents.
110. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and on occasion very good and excellent. Teachers know children well and plan interesting and motivating activities that are well structured. There are high levels of teacher-pupil interaction, together with lively input and enthusiastic teaching. For example, in a science activity to see if wet or dry soap works better the teacher made the activity fun by timing how many times children could pass the soap around the group, first dry and then wet, and timing this against the egg timer. In some lessons however, activities are not always planned at an appropriate level for some children and this leads to a loss of attention by children. All planning is detailed and covers all areas of learning and the Early Learning Goals and stepping stones. The teacher gives good support to learning support assistants to enable them to handle activities appropriately and this ensures that all children receive an entitlement to the activities offered.
111. There is a clear emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and these are very well taught. There are limited opportunities however, for children to choose activities and access equipment and resources. The balance between teacher directed activities and child chosen activities is unequal and this limits the amount of autonomy and independence that reception children have and the amount of initiative they are able to take.
112. The current system for assessing children's attainment does not cover all areas of learning. Records are not systematic, or comprehensive enough, though there are some good examples of assessments recorded in relation to some activities and useful comments on work in children's profiles.
113. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides good leadership for the staff working in the reception class and has clear ideas about the priorities for development in the Foundation Stage and has produced an appropriately costed action plan to address these. This includes the development of the outside area which is currently under used for regular play and physical activity.

## ENGLISH

114. Provision for English in the school is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
115. **Strengths**
- Standards in speaking and listening are very high.
  - The quality of teaching in English is consistently good and sometimes very good.
  - The role of the subject co-ordinator in monitoring standards.
  - Good use is made of data and information from tests to evaluate curriculum provision.

- Pupil progress in English is monitored carefully via a good assessment system, pupils are set individual targets for development and additional support is provided for those pupils who do not make as much progress as expected.
- The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented consistently in the school.

116. **Areas for improvement**

- The use of the comprehensive assessment information to inform the planning of tasks in lessons to meet the needs of all pupils, including challenging those of higher ability.
  - Handwriting and presentation of some pupils which lowers the standard of their written work.
117. During the week of the inspection, a sample of pupils' work from each age group and work around the school was examined. Eight literacy lessons were observed covering each year group. School documentation was read and a discussion was carried out with the co-ordinator for English.
118. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are above the national average. This is the same at the end of Year 6 and Year 7. In the 2002 tests for seven year olds results in reading show both boys and girls performing above the national average. Attainment in reading declined dramatically in 2001 after a steady rise over the previous three years. The percentage of pupils attaining at Level 3 in 2002 was very high but the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2b and above was below the average nationally and for similar schools. In writing, pupils' attainment was above the national average. Attainment in writing also declined in 2001, but not so dramatically as in reading. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in writing was better than the national average.
119. In the 2002 tests for 11 year olds, attainment in English was in line with the national average, for pupils achieving at Level 4. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was above national expectations. However, during the inspection, pupils' work showed standards to be better than national tests suggest. In all lessons observed pupils' attainment overall was judged to be above national expectation.
120. In all classes, standards in speaking and listening are well above the national expectation. This is a strength of the school.
121. Inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils enter school with levels of attainment in line with those found nationally. Within classes, however, there is a wide range of ability. All pupils make good progress during their time in school. Pupils with SEN make very good progress.
122. Pupils are on course to attain above average standards in reading and writing by the age of seven. Most pupils have a good understanding of initial sounds and use this to help them read unfamiliar words. Pupils read a wide selection of books and can correctly identify fiction and non-fiction. They express their preferences for books and explain why certain characters are their favourite. Younger pupils benefit from lunch-time story sessions, which are very well led by play leaders. They ensure pupils join in, using appropriate expression

and predicting what might come next in the story. All pupils throughout the school enjoy reading and regularly take books home. By the time they are seven most pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly in their writing. They check their letters are an appropriate size, leave spaces between words and are developing good handwriting styles. They know they have to read their finished work to check that it makes sense.

123. By the time they are 11, most pupils are on course to attain at least Level 4, with higher attainers attaining Level 5. Pupils can identify key points in poems, stories and non-fiction accounts and use the information in their written work. They understand and use clauses and connectives to make their writing more effective.
124. By the time they are 12 pupils are becoming increasingly competent in producing pieces of extended writing. Attainment in English is good. They choose and use vocabulary very effectively and understand how to make their written work appeal to the reader.
125. The school has very good procedures in place to track pupils' progress in English. Information is used to set individual and school targets. All pupils make good progress. Pupils who make most progress are those with SEN and higher attainers.
126. Overall the quality of teaching in English during the inspection was good, with four lessons being judged to be very good. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. During the inspection, no teaching was unsatisfactory.
127. The National Literacy Strategy has been very effectively implemented throughout the school. This has ensured a consistent approach to planning and teaching. Lessons have clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils. This means they know what it is intended they will learn and what is expected of them. For example, pupils in Year 1 had a lively debate about a story. They commented on the effective use of capital letters on the cover which 'make the title really stand out!'. During a Year 5 lesson, pupils identified the features of formal and informal letters. They used words such as 'powerful' when talking about formal letters and noted the use of "yours sincerely". Year 6 pupils used their speaking and listening skills very effectively in staged arguments. Under the guidance of the teacher, they modified their language to present more logical, persuasive points of view. Teachers are skilful in ensuring that all parts of the lesson are allocated appropriate time before moving on. At the end of lessons, they draw together the key points through very good questioning, checking understanding and progress. Learning support assistants are used very effectively during lessons. They are particularly good when supporting pupils with SEN. Consequently, this has a very positive effect on pupils' progress. However, some teachers do not always ensure higher attainers are sufficiently challenged.
128. Pupils' work is conscientiously marked. Teachers' comments are usually very helpful in informing pupils about what they are doing well and what they need to do next in order to improve. Most pupils present their work to a high standard. Occasionally, however, the presentation of some work does not reach the standard it should.

129. During English lessons pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They are consistently well behaved. They are attentive and eager to join in discussions. They are particularly good at asking and answering questions appropriately. Pupils work alone, in pairs and as part of a group very well. They remain on task and work at a good pace. Teachers' relationships with pupils are very good.
130. During the inspection there were few examples seen of teachers using ICT to support teaching and learning.
131. The school library has a range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils of all ages. Year 6 pupils act as librarians. They carry out their role with great enthusiasm and efficiency.
132. The school uses the Devon School Library service to increase the number and range of books available. The school library provision has improved significantly since the last inspection.
133. English is very well managed. The co-ordinator closely monitors pupils' progress in English across the school. She examines the results of national tests so that strengths and weaknesses can be identified. The school has focused attention on the raising of standards in English. The current school target is challenging but achievable. There is an emphasis on guided reading and writing sessions and developing teachers' confidence in using literacy lessons imaginatively. During the inspection, there was evidence that this is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. The co-ordinator has produced a curriculum map, which sets out what is to be covered by each year group. She monitors teachers' planning to check continuity and progression across the curriculum. English continues to be a focus for development in the school and is featured in the school development plan.

## **MATHEMATICS**

134. Provision for mathematics in the school is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
135. **Strengths**
- The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented consistently in the school.
  - Good use is made of data and information from tests to evaluate curriculum provision.
  - Pupil progress in mathematics is monitored carefully, pupils are set individual targets for development, and additional support is provided for those pupils who do not make as much progress as expected.
  - The quality of teaching in mathematics is consistently good and on occasion, very good.
  - Attainment is rising in some year groups.
136. **Areas for improvement**
- The use of assessment information to inform the planning of tasks to meet the needs of all pupils, including challenging those of higher ability.
  - A greater emphasis on mental mathematics and rapid recall of number facts.
  - The quality and range of resources.

137. During the week of the inspection, a sample of pupils' work from each age group and work on display around the school was examined. Eight numeracy lessons were observed covering each year group in the school. School documentation was read and a discussion was carried out with the mathematics co-ordinator.
138. By the end of Year 2, Year 6 and Year 7, standards in mathematics are in line with national expectations. In the 2002 tests for seven year olds results were in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining at the higher Level 3 was very high, but the percentage of pupils achieving 2B and above was below the average for similar schools. By age 11, results in mathematics have improved year on year since 1998, except for 2001, mirroring the national trend, but mathematics has remained below the national average and below the results for English and science. In the 2002 tests for 11 year olds, the school's results were broadly in line with those obtained by schools nationally and below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5 was in line with the average for schools nationally but below the average for similar schools. Evidence in the work sample shows attainment to be only in line with national expectations. This is because pupils of all ability levels are given similar work and higher ability pupils are not given challenging enough tasks to develop their understanding. However, during the inspection teachers had planned work more closely matched to the pupils' prior attainment and in half the lessons observed attainment was judged to be above national expectations for a significant number of pupils in the class. There are signs that the measures put in place by the school to raise attainment in mathematics are beginning to have an impact on standards across the school, for example all teachers now plan work for three levels of ability in the class. At the last inspection pupils were judged to attain average standards in most aspects of mathematics with the exception of problem solving and investigations, which were judged to be unsatisfactory. Work in lessons and in the work sample confirms that standards in these aspects of mathematics have improved and are now satisfactory. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN make satisfactory progress over time.
139. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve the expected Level 4 by the end of the year and a large group of higher ability pupils are on track to achieve the higher Level 5. These pupils can solve multiplication and division problems using long and short methods and are confident about explaining their strategies. Pupils use a good range of strategies to make calculations and most can explain accurately the method they have used, for example in Year 6, pupils can multiply bigger numbers by 9 and 11 and explain the method used. Higher attaining pupils are able to apply mental and oral skills in a very confident way and used these skills well when undertaking mathematical problem solving. Pupils of middle ability are less confident however about selecting from the range of strategies available to them. Pupils of lower ability still have difficulty with the place value, for example, in a lesson on measures these pupils had difficulty converting units of measure and needed additional support from the teacher. By age 12 pupils achieve the standards expected for their age.
140. Inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils enter school with levels of attainment typical of those found nationally. Within classes however, there is a very wide range of ability. During their time in school pupils make satisfactory progress. There are good procedures in place to enable the school to track pupils' progress in mathematics and to set



school targets. The school is committed to raising attainment in mathematics and this has been a focus for development. The school targets for 2003 and 2004 are achievable and current tracking information indicates that the school may well exceed the targets set for 2004.

141. Overall, the quality of teaching observed in mathematics was good, with two lessons being judged to be very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics has improved since the last inspection and work is now more closely matched to pupils with different abilities. In some classes, however, work set is still not challenging enough.
142. Teachers throughout the school are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. Each class has a daily mathematics lesson which focuses appropriately on developing pupils' numeracy skills and there is consistent use of the recommended sections for each lesson. The mental oral starter to each lesson is effective, for example in Year 3, pupils can explain the difference between odd and even numbers and are confident with large numbers such as 1003 and 992. In Year 1, pupils are confident about coming up with number facts about the number 20, however, opportunities to challenge pupils and to develop their ability to rapidly recall mental number facts are not always planned into this part of the lesson. In the main part of the lesson, pupils are set appropriate tasks planned to match their varying abilities, but these are not always sufficiently challenging, particularly for the higher ability pupils. The summing up part of the lesson is used to good effect to check gains in knowledge and understanding. In the best lessons this session is used well to extend pupils' learning and to advise them about the next stage of learning.
143. Lessons in mathematics are well planned, pupils are clear about what they are going to learn, activities are appropriate and varied and resources are well selected. For example, in Year 4, pupils use white boards to record their answers, and in Year 5 pupils use two dice with varying numbers on to multiply and find the answer by using strategies such as doubling, partitioning and rounding up. Pupils are well managed and learning support assistants are deployed effectively. For example, in a lesson in Year 6 the learning support assistant worked outside the classroom with one pupil on a mental maths program while the rest of the class participated in the start of the lesson, and then joined the class to support a group of lower ability pupils very effectively for the introduction to the main part of the lesson, ensuring that they were able to participate fully in the session. In all classes in the school, teachers effectively reinforce appropriate mathematical vocabulary. There is explicit teaching of strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and high levels of teacher-pupil interaction. Most lessons have good pace, teachers are confident, lively and enthusiastic about teaching mathematics. The use of visualisation was successfully incorporated into some lessons. For example, in Year 2, pupils were encouraged to close their eyes and listen to a number problem to imagine it in their minds and to visualise the number line and count on, or back, to solve simple addition and subtraction problems.
144. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously. At its best, marking informs pupils of their success and challenges them to improve further and written comments indicate how the work can be

improved. In most classes work is presented neatly, however, in some classes presentation and neatness could be improved.

145. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes in mathematic lessons and are consistently very well behaved. Pupils are attentive and eager to answer questions from the teacher. They respond well to a challenge, for example in Year 5, where higher ability pupils use their knowledge about how to calculate area to successfully find the areas of irregular shapes. Pupils work well together, remain on task and share ideas. Good relationships and effective co-operation is a feature of most lessons.
146. ICT has started to have a positive impact on pupils' work in mathematics, for example in Year 7, pupils move from using paper and pencil methods to using a spreadsheet to record and analyse information, and in Year 1 pupils independently enter their requirements for home, school, or packed lunches, on the computer and check the totals against the number of pupils in school that day, before displaying the information as a pie chart on the screen. There is also evidence of pupils presenting their results in science and in geography in charts and graphs. All these experiences help pupils to view mathematics in its wider context.
147. Mathematics is a focus for development in the school. The acting headteacher has provided good leadership for the subject recently and has established good systems for analysing test results and for tracking pupils' progress across the school. Planning is thorough and consistent, and teachers keep accurate records of work completed and understood, as well as aspects that need further reinforcement. Planning is monitored by the co-ordinator each term to ensure coverage of the scheme of work. The quality of teaching has improved as a result of monitoring in all year groups. Local education authority resources and expertise have been accessed appropriately and the numeracy consultant has also been involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Effective in-service training has raised teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and increased their confidence and competence. There is a well developed action plan in place which sets out clear priorities for the subject and this places an appropriate emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics lessons.
148. The co-ordinator has carried out an audit of resources to support the teaching of mathematics and has recently purchased additional equipment and teaching materials to improve the quality and range of resources available in the classrooms. Resources are now adequate, but more are needed. The planned development of a 'maths' library to support homework is intended to provide an additional useful additional resource in the school.

## **SCIENCE**

149. Overall, the quality of provision in science is good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection.
150. **Strengths**
- Improvement in standards across the school.
  - The high quality of teaching and the effectiveness of teachers' planning.

- Very good use of time and resources for learning.
- Attitudes, behaviour and consistent interest and involvement of pupils.
- Very good breadth, balance and coverage of the curriculum.
- Staffing, accommodation and resources for learning.

151. **Areas for improvement**

- The quality and use of on-going assessments and different learning opportunities.
  - Equality of opportunity for girls in Year 6.
  - Further development of the monitoring and evaluation of science in all year groups.
152. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in science are rising and are now consistently above national expectations. Standards by age seven, 11 and 12 are above expectation. In 2002 tests, attainment of Year 6 pupils was above the national average and above the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 was well above the average for schools nationally and also for similar schools. This shows an improvement since the school was last inspected. Standards of work, seen during the inspection in the three lessons observed and in the scrutiny of work in books and displays, confirms that standards have risen. Standards in science are now good. The school has set targets for attainment, which lacked challenge initially. Evidence suggests that they are likely to be exceeded.
153. In Year 1 and 2 teacher assessments in 2002, pupil attainment was below the national average and that of similar schools. Evidence during the inspection indicates that this has now improved. A good range of work was viewed and one lesson observed. A high level of scientific enquiry is built into a wide range of very interesting investigational activities. Year 1 pupils were germinating seeds in different conditions using a control. Year 2 pupils are encouraged to explore, hypothesise and undertake fair testing procedures. They are able to raise their own questions, record and interpret data accurately in graphs and tables and draw good conclusions. They know what plants and animals need and can do, can build simple electrical circuits and produce accurately labelled diagrams. Higher achieving pupils are particularly good at raising their own questions and can recall high levels of knowledge, for example that ferns and fungi reproduce through making spores.
154. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge and understanding of electrical circuits and their application in domestic situations. They are able to construct and interrogate data in graphs and charts. They are clearly able to undertake quality scientific enquiries using hypothesis, prediction and fair testing techniques and can draw appropriate conclusions which raise further questions. The majority of pupils are on track to attain the expected Level 4 by the end of the current school year. Higher achieving pupils are on track to attain Level 5, for example: “the better the conductor, the higher the current”. Year 7 pupils are able to undertake advanced investigations such as a study of igneous and metamorphic rocks and erosion. Their books provided evidence of high level enquiries into saturation and friction. All pupils are able to raise their own questions and provide reasoned conclusions.
155. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good overall. In Year 7 it was outstanding. Teachers’ planning is always very effective and clearly identifies

the learning objectives, which are also shared with pupils. Teachers have good and sometimes excellent subject knowledge in science. Lessons are packed with well prepared and interesting activities, which challenge the pupils to achieve well. Pupils rise to this challenge with enthusiasm and commitment. Very good open-ended questioning and discussion enables pupils to apply good skills, knowledge and understanding to develop reasoned answers. Year 2 pupils were engaged in an appropriate sorting activity which consolidated and extended their knowledge and understanding of plants and animals. Higher ability pupils were able to decide their own groupings, and SEN pupils were well supported. In Year 6 a specialist teacher is employed in order to raise standards in science. Pupils built on their good understanding of circuits to apply this to an investigation of conductors and insulators. The majority were clearly able to undertake the investigation with little assistance from the teacher, who provided good support as required and particularly to the lower ability pupils. In an excellent Year 7 lesson, pupils were absorbed in an investigation of acids and alkalis using a variety of indicators. This was particularly successful due to the design and organisation of the task, the quality and range of resources provided and the expectation and support for pupils of differing abilities. ICT data logging was used very effectively. Pupils were able to share accurate evaluations of a range of indicators. Teachers make very good use of homework to support pupils' work in school. Very good support is provided for lower achieving pupils.

156. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons is almost always very good and sometimes excellent. They show great enthusiasm and a very high degree of independence, particularly in Years 6 and 7. In Year 6 a bias towards directing questions at boys resulted in a group of girls becoming uninterested and less involved. This may contribute to the position where boys have recently overtaken girls in standards of attainment. The school needs to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity in science. All pupils work very co-operatively together and support each other in the learning process.
157. Learning opportunities provide pupils with a very broad and balanced science curriculum of good quality, covering all of the programme of study. In Year 3, pupils investigated a best mat linked to 'The Mousehole Cat', a book used in literacy. Year 6 produced some very high quality leaflets using ICT to present their work on micro-organisms.
158. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management in science, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and in Year 7. This has improved since the last inspection. Monitoring of teachers' planning is undertaken regularly and some staff training and support has been provided, for instance in the use of planning boards. Teachers are encouraged to use and adapt the nationally recognised schemes of work. Much emphasis has been placed on developing scientific enquiry skills across the school. This has been very effective and teachers have been committed to developing their own expertise. The co-ordinator has worked with the Year 6 teacher to analyse test results in order to target priorities for learning. A governor has also been allocated to science and has worked with the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and pupils' work. Assessment by teachers of pupils' learning is targeted for development. This should remain a priority for the school. The provision of different learning opportunities is developing, but is not yet consistent across the

school. Written feedback to pupils is appropriate, but inconsistent, and too infrequently suggests next steps for pupils.

159. The accommodation and provision of resources in science have considerably improved since the last inspection and are now very good. The specialist science room is very well equipped and in regular use.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

160. Provision for art and design in the school is very good.

161. **Strengths**

- The quality and range of pupils' work.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject.
- Good links with other subjects.
- Pupils' work is very sensitively and attractively displayed.

162. **Areas for improvement**

- The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring standards in art and design.
- Increased opportunities for pupils to work with textiles.
- Assessment and recording procedures

163. During the inspection, samples of work from each year group and work on display around the school were examined. Two lessons were observed. School documentation was read and a discussion was carried out with the art and design co-ordinator.

164. At the end of Year 2, standards in art and design are higher than national expectations, but in Year 6 they are much higher. Standards in Year 7 are in line with those expected. By the time they are in Year 2, the majority of pupils are working at Level 3. Many pupils working in Years 6 and 7 are working at Level 5. This reflects the standards reported at the last inspection. Pupils with SEN make very good progress, as do all pupils.

165. By the time they are seven, pupils use a very good range of materials and techniques to communicate their ideas in art and design. Often their work is linked to that of other subjects. This means that pupils develop a good understanding of the different ways they can record their thoughts and ideas. For example, the finger puppets produced by Year 2 pupils were displayed next to their design instructions. Moving picture books made by Year 4 pupils show very good links with design and technology. By the time they are 11, pupils display confidence and skill in using a range of media to express their ideas. For example, Year 5 pupils produced paintings in the style of Picasso as part of a project which looked at the work of twentieth century artists. The results show a very good understanding of the artist's use of colour and form, which the pupils have used in their own work. By the time they are 12, pupils are confident and competent in using a very good range of techniques. For example, work by Year 7 pupils on self-image uses distortion, split-image, digital photography, painting on acetate and computer generated pictures. This is very successful in bringing individuality to a common theme.

166. The quality of teaching observed in art and design was good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This means that they are able to offer pupils a wide experience of techniques. Teachers are very successful in encouraging pupils to be observant. This means that they are eager to capture many and varied examples of shape, form and pattern. For example, Year 2 pupils worked enthusiastically to take rubbings from a variety of surfaces. They worked inside and outside, using a good range of materials. All pupils were trusted to work in pairs to find patterns and surfaces, without the close supervision of the teacher. They did so very successfully. During their exploration, pupils showed genuine delight as patterns emerged from knotted wood and the tops of radiators. In the discussion at the end of the lesson, pupils could talk with confidence, describing the patterns they had reproduced. Pupils went on to show very good levels of independence in organising their samples into their personal sketch books and making notes on them for future reference. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher used a child's chair as a stimulus for discussing design. This was very successful in encouraging pupils to consider what makes an object fit for its purpose. Pupils used words such as 'stable', 'unbreakable', 'resistant' before going on to draw the chair in their sketch books. They also talked about Van Gogh's painting of a bedroom chair. The lesson was very successful in linking art work with literacy.
167. Pupils have very good attitudes to art and design. They behave very well during lessons and are very proud of their work and the displays around the school.
168. The art club, which operates during lunch time, is run very successfully by Year 7 pupils. They encourage younger pupils to talk about what they like in art and design and why. They encourage them to draw on a range of resources to help them in their work. For example, when a Year 1 pupil admired the drawing of a flower on display, she was encouraged to produce her own version. Another Year 1 pupil was shown how to use photographs in a non-fiction book to help draw a guinea pig's face. At all times, older and younger pupils worked side by side with obvious enjoyment and mutual respect.
169. The quality of display around the school is very high. For example, Year 5 pupils have produced pots in the style of Clarice Cliff. These capture the vigour, colour and shape of the art deco period very well and make an immediate impression in the school's entrance. Photography is used effectively to enhance pupils' work, for example alongside pictures produced by Year 7 pupils, illustrating the Islamic themes of peace and submission. Work in art and design is used to illustrate events such as educational visits. Following a visit to Paignton Zoo, pupils produced an impressive work in acrylics on wood. Vibrant colours are used very effectively to produce an impressive composition. This hangs in the library area and is another example of the very good range and quality of work displayed around the school.
170. The art and design co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. She has improved schemes of work, based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines. These include appropriate guidance for Year 7 pupils, which builds on the skills established in Year 6. Visiting artists come into school during 'Big Art' week. This gives pupils opportunities to experience art in the real world.

171. There is now an agreed whole school approach to the teaching of basic skills such as drawing and painting. There are more links with ICT. Art and design appears in the school development plan.
172. Resources and artefacts are more extensive and include multi-cultural elements. Together, these developments mean that art and design has improved since the last inspection.
173. A governor is responsible for working with the co-ordinator to monitor standards. This is done during a day's visit when pupils are observed around the school. Teachers produce end of year reports on pupils' work. However, the procedures for assessing and recording pupils' knowledge and skills are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has insufficient information to judge standards.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

174. Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is very good and has made good improvement since the last inspection.
175. **Strengths**
- Standards of work in Years 1 to 6 are very good.
  - The quality and effectiveness of teaching in Years 3 to 6.
  - The quality, range and breadth of the learning opportunities provided.
  - Pupils' interest, enthusiasm and attitudes to work.
  - The quality of accommodation and resources for learning.
176. **Areas for improvement**
- Procedures for assessing and recording pupil progress and achievement.
  - The time allowed for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning.
177. It was only possible to see two lessons in design and technology, both of these in Years 3 to 6. However, scrutiny of a good range of pupils' work in books, portfolios and displays around the school provided good evidence that standards are very high, particularly for pupils aged eight to 11.
178. In Year 1, pupils explored levers and pivots then designed and made high quality moving pictures linked to work in literacy. Year 2 pupils made lovely finger puppets following detailed evaluated plans and mock-ups. Year 4 pupils designed and made hot water bottle covers and Year 5 made a cam toy. Year 5 pupils thoroughly enjoyed an evaluation of biscuits leading to designs for making their own biscuits. Very specific criteria were set and a novel format for recording their evaluations was introduced. In Year 6, pupils eagerly set about drawing and cutting out accurate templates for making their own slippers following a previous careful evaluation of fitness for purpose. In Year 7, pupils have worked collectively to design and make mobile phone covers and sketches, and Internet research shows some good exploratory work in building design.

179. Pupils' books show consistently high quality planning, development of ideas using specific criteria and thorough evaluation of each stage including the high quality product. This process is thoroughly embedded and all pupils are able to use appropriate techniques and equipment at every level of the design process. This has considerably improved since the last inspection.
180. The quality of teaching and learning observed in Years 5 and 6 was very good. Teachers use very supportive open questioning to engage pupils in high level discussion and evaluation of their work. Very clear learning objectives, explanations and effective strategies are built into very well planned and organised lessons. Learning support assistants provide very good support for pupils, which makes a considerable contribution to their progress and attainment. The quality of teaching has improved since the school was last inspected.
181. Attitudes and behaviour of all pupils are consistently high and excellent in Year 7. Pupils clearly enjoy their design and technology lessons. Year 5 pupils were keen to share their evaluations: "we've had lots of fun", "a very good lesson" and, "challenging". Pupils work together very co-operatively in pairs and groups. They are very supportive of each other, showing respect for pupils and adults. This makes a very good contribution to their learning and the development of personal and social skills.
182. The management of design and technology is now good. This has improved since the school was last inspected and has the capacity to improve still further. The subject co-ordinator is rightly proud of the quality of work in design and technology across the school. Good long and medium term plans are in place based on accepted national schemes of work with local additions and adaptations. Teachers' planning is regularly monitored to ensure good coverage, continuity and progression across the school. Insufficient time is currently available for the co-ordinator to be involved in more in-depth monitoring of teaching and learning. Portfolios showing the quality and very good range of work are developing well in mechanisms, textiles and food technology. Good links are made to other curriculum areas such as in ICT and numeracy through graphing and charting results. Year 4 pupils made high quality story books with moving parts based on an evaluation of published books.
183. An end of year assessment is completed for each pupil in design and technology. However, procedures for on-going assessment and record keeping by teachers are unsatisfactory. Pupils are involved well in evaluating outcomes, but could be further involved in assessing their own learning and next steps. Feedback to pupils in their books is supportive and some pointers indicating improvements are used, but this needs to be further developed and more universally applied.
184. The accommodation and resources to support learning have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now very good. Within the design of the new school is a separate science and technology room, which is put to very good use including food technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

185. Provision for geography in the school is sound. Overall progress in provision since the last inspection is satisfactory.



186. **Strengths**
- Teaching is good overall.
  - Good use is made of the immediate locality.
  - The long term planning ensures that good use is made of the limited time allocated to the subject.
187. **Areas for improvement**
- The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring standards.
  - Assessment and recording of pupils' knowledge and skill development in geography.
  - The quality and range of resources.
188. During the week of the inspection a sample of work was examined from each year group and work on display in classrooms and around the school was evaluated. Three geography lessons were observed and pupils' work was discussed with them. School documents were read and a discussion was carried out with the geography co-ordinator.
189. At the end of Years 2 and 6 and in Year 7, standards in geography are in line with national expectations. In the lessons observed and in the work sample, attainment was in line with national expectations.
190. By age seven, pupils can identify different means of transport for a journey. At age six, they have analysed the different ways they travel to school and used a suitable software program to present their data appropriately. Pupils in Year 2 have some knowledge of the town in which they live and have evaluated, in simple terms, what they like about it. Pupils can draw simple maps and routes. In Year 2, they are studying the contrasting location of the Isle of Struay described in the Katie Morag Stories, listing the physical and human features of the island and successfully comparing them with those found in Topsham. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils wrote postcards home describing either Topsham or Struay. Pupils have acquired subject specific vocabulary and can describe features such as river, jetty, mountain and coast.
191. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are acquiring sound mapping skills. They can understand maps of different scales, use grid references and interpret a key. In Year 4, pupils have studied maps to evaluate the geographical reasons why villages are sited where they are. Pupils can interpret plans and make up their own keys for a plan of the classroom, and in Year 5, pupils have located the drainage system on a plan of the school.
192. Pupils in Year 3 successfully analysed the climate and leisure activities using two postcards from contrasting holiday destinations and in Year 4, pupils interpret photographs of Chembakolli well and make comparisons between life in an Indian village and life in Topsham. Pupils understand about different types of weather and about climates in different parts of the world. In Year 3, pupils have researched different places around the world and produced interesting slide shows of the sites to visit and data about the temperatures tourists might experience. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils studied articles in newspapers and used maps and atlases effectively to find the location of the stories and correctly identified a range

of places locally, nationally and internationally. Pupils have researched their own topics for example, pupils in Year 5 have produced very informative leaflets about water pollution, and in Year 7, higher ability pupils have produced some good quality projects about volcanoes and earthquakes using their ICT skills well to publish them.

193. The quality of teaching in the three lessons observed during the inspection was good overall, ranging from satisfactory to very good. In these lessons there was a clear structure, activities were well planned and resources appropriately chosen. Teachers emphasised the appropriate geographical vocabulary and used effective questioning skills to elicit responses from the pupils. In the lessons observed however, and in the work sample from Years 1 to 6, pupils in each class have completed the same tasks. This sometimes means that higher ability pupils are not stretched enough and lower ability pupils are disadvantaged because of their limited writing skills. The school has identified opportunities in geography for pupils to practise the skills learned in literacy lessons, this is good, however the geographical content is sometimes limited. Assessment and recording procedures in geography are unsatisfactory. Insufficient evidence could be provided of ongoing assessments or judgements made after units of work are complete.
194. Pupils enjoy geography. They are eager to answer questions and to contribute ideas. Pupils work well independently, on paired activities and co-operate well on group tasks. Behaviour is very good. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
195. The geography co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership for the subject. She is new to the school and has had insufficient time to make a significant impact. She monitors planning to ensure coverage and has recently looked at pupils' books and has identified some areas for improvement and development, for example in the sequence for teaching mapping skills through the school. She has clear priorities for the development of the subject and the enthusiasm to carry them out. The co-ordinator does not yet have a secure view of standards in geography, but she has started to put together a portfolio of levelled work and this is a step in the right direction. The current system for identifying subjects for inclusion in the school development plan on a year rolling programme means that geography has not been a focus for development and will not become a focus until 2003-2004. The current action plan identifies appropriately the need to improve the resources available to deliver the agreed scheme of work. Resources such as maps, atlases, videos, CD-ROMs and library books are limited and this is having a negative impact on standards in geography.

## HISTORY

196. Provision for history in the school is sound. There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection.
197. **Strengths**
- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good.
  - Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching history.
  - Pupils enjoy learning about the past.
  - The small amount of time allocated to the subject is well used to provide an appropriate range of interesting and motivating activities related to the periods studied.
198. **Areas for improvement**
- The role of the subject co-ordinator in monitoring standards in history.
  - Assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills in history.
  - Quality and range of resources.
  - Opportunities for visits to places of historic interest.
199. During the inspection, a sample of pupils' work from each year group and work on display around the school was examined. Three history lessons were observed in Years 3, 4 and 7 and pupils' work discussed with them. School documentation was read and a discussion was carried out with the history co-ordinator.
200. At the end of Year 2, Year 6 and in Year 7, standards in history are in line with national expectations. In the lessons observed during the week of the inspection attainment was above national expectations, however. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills, they are articulate and enjoy talking about their history activities, but their ability to record information and write about the past is less well developed. Pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress in history because the school has a good scheme of work in place that ensures the small amount of time devoted to history is used effectively.
201. Pupils have gained a good knowledge of life in times past. In Year 1, pupils have examined domestic equipment such as a kettle, an iron, a milk bottle and a bed warmer for similarities and differences between things then and now and they have drawn pictures of these items. Pupils are developing a good understanding of how people lived in the past. This will be further developed in a planned visit to Tiverton Museum to experience a wash day. Pupils can sequence events appropriately, for example in Year 2, pupils have made a time line of events in their own lives and have sequenced the events leading up to the Great Fire of London. They have studied famous people in the past such as Louis Braille and know why he lost his sight and how he came to invent Braille, and they have had a go at writing their own messages. Pupils are able to use a variety of sources to find out about the past, such as portraits, artefacts, photographs and written accounts. They have had a good range of opportunities to communicate what they have learned in a variety of ways, through pictures, accounts, diary excerpts and stories. Pupils are developing historical skills well through the activities covered and gaining appropriate knowledge about the past.

202. In Years 3 to 6 pupils study a range of topics and are developing the vocabulary well to describe different periods in the past such as Victorian, medieval and Tudor. Time lines in classrooms enable pupils to follow the sequence of events over time, and in Year 5, pupils have created an informative time line from 1900 to the present day including not only events nationally but events in their own lives. The topic on the Vikings in Year 3 has enabled pupils to develop skills in using evidence to find out about the past using artefacts and photographs of items from the Sutton Hoo burial. In Year 4, pupils have been studying the Victorians and good use has been made of the locality, which has many buildings and features from the period. They have used their ICT skills well to find out about different aspects of Victorian life such as schools, games, transport, homes and work and have printed these out to share with one another. In a lesson on housing, pupils showed a good understanding of Victorian life and were able to compare houses and identify the differences and attributes of Victorian buildings and compare them with other eras, noting style changes in the buildings.
203. In Year 5, pupils have studied life in Britain since 1930. Learning in this class has been greatly enhanced by a wonderful collection of artefacts from the Second World War including a uniform and home guard equipment and domestic items such as a radio and a ration book. These pupils can explain why things happened such as the outbreak of war and have made links to the present day by visiting two local air raid shelters in Topsham. They have learned to ask questions about the past and have interviewed grandparents about what life was like in the war in Topsham and in Exeter and how it differed in these two places.
204. In Year 6, pupils have studied the Tudors and compared life then and now by carrying out an inventory of their bedrooms and comparing it with one from the period. They studied famous people of the period such as Henry VIII and his six wives, finding out about them from portraits and pictures of the time and presenting the descriptions on antiqued paper. Pupils have developed a good understanding of and empathy for the people who lived in Elizabethan times. They have found out about the reasons for the defeat of the Armada and have imagined themselves to be a sailor from a defeated Spanish ship writing a letter home.
205. In Year 7, pupils have developed good analytical skills through their work about the abandoned village of Elton. They have investigated the evidence for the layout of the village and the archaeologist's role in reconstructing this. The higher ability pupils in this class have produced well researched and nicely presented projects on the medieval period using clip art, photographs and publishing skills to present them. In a lesson they imagined themselves to be a character from the past taking on their social position and successfully acting out the roles. These pupils were able to empathise and show a good understanding of how people bartered for goods and services in medieval times.
206. The quality of teaching in the history lessons observed was good and in one lesson very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge are enthusiastic and interact well with the class using very effective questioning skills. Lessons are interesting, resources are well chosen and teachers use a wide range of approaches to help to bring the past alive. In a good lesson about the Sutton Hoo burial the teacher modelled the process of being an

archaeologist for them using an appropriate modern day object to illustrate “what does a mobile phone tell us about a person and who might use one?” Pupils examined photographs of the different finds using skills of enquiry to decide “what does it tell us about the person?” demonstrating good skills of observation, deduction and inference from the evidence available and then justifying their opinions in discussion with a partner. These pupils enjoyed the activity, and all pupils including those with SEN, learned a lot from the session in relation to knowledge about the burial and skills of historic enquiry.

207. In all the lessons observed however, and in the work sample, pupils are all given the same task and sometimes this is not appropriate for the lower ability pupils, especially if the task involves recording information in writing. Assessment procedures in History are unsatisfactory. Teachers carry out insufficient assessment and recording of what pupils have learned through the topics studied.
208. Pupils enjoy history, make thoughtful and perceptive comments and contribute well to discussions. They co-operate very well in paired and group work, behaviour is very good and pupils display very good attitudes to learning. History makes a good contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
209. The history co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership for the subject in the limited time available to her. Planning is monitored for coverage and pupils’ work is sampled for content. However, the co-ordinator does not monitor standards in history and this aspect of her role needs to be developed further. The development of a portfolio of examples of pupils’ work would provide useful support for teachers and would contribute to raising standards across the school.
210. There are limited historical resources such as artefacts and source materials available in school and few library books videos and CD-ROMs for pupils to research information about the units taught, though good use is made of the locality and of the museums in Topsham and Exeter. However, the school should extend the opportunities currently available for pupils to visit places of historic interest linked to the topics studied.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

211. The overall provision for ICT is good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection in a number of key areas. The school now has the capacity and commitment to improve standards.
212. **Strengths**
  - Quality of accommodation and resources for learning.
  - Effectiveness of teaching methods.
  - Pupils’ behaviour and attitudes.
  - Pupils’ commitment to learning and supporting others.
  - Contribution to pupils’ personal and social development.

213. **Areas for improvement**
- Assessment procedures and monitoring of standards, including sampling pupils' work to check on progress.
  - Further improvement to standards of work to ensure consistent progress.
214. Attainment is in line with national expectations by age seven and age 11. Pupils in Year 7 achieve at the expected level. Four lessons were observed and pupils' work scrutinised in displays and on computer files. This also showed a good range of work across the curriculum. It was not possible during the inspection to view all of the work in pupils' folders saved on the school network. The school should consider ways in which pupils, teachers and parents are able to more easily access work samples, to check on progress and achievements.
215. Year 1 pupils are gaining confidence in keyboard and mouse operation. In Year 2, pupils show good word processing skills, for example in re-writing the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Year 3 pupils used PowerPoint to display information in geography researched from the Internet, and Year 5 pupils researched Picasso prints to support work in art. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are able to undertake all basic operations, including good quality word processing, presentational skills and gathering information from web-based sources. Year 7 have enhanced digital images and made effective use of a number of ICT applications in developing much of their work in history and literacy. They show good understanding of spreadsheets and application of formulae.
216. There is very high level attainment from some pupils, particularly in Years 5, 6 and 7. This can be partly attributed to skills developed at home. Examples include extended PowerPoint presentations on disk and CD using imported pictures, animation and sound. Year 7 pupils run an Internet Club and Year 5 pupils 'buddy' Year 1 pupils in redrafting word processed files. Pupils with SEN make good progress.
217. Computer control technology is available but its application was not observed during the inspection other than simple floor turtle operation by Year 5 pupils when working with Year 1. Year 3 pupils benefited in pairs from a lesson centred on emails which used the school network to message each other and the teacher. Models made by Year 6 pupils at home using circuitry are intended for computer control. Year 6 pupils can use database software on the school network. Year 7 are beginning to apply data logging opportunities across the curriculum. The school is now meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum. This is an improvement since the school was last inspected.
218. Pupils' attitudes to ICT are very positive and their standard of behaviour is very good across the school. This is achieved through teachers' very successful management of pupils and very good relationships with them.
219. The quality of teaching in ICT is very good in Years 1 and 2, good in Years 3, to 6 and very good in Year 7. Teachers' planning is very detailed and effective. They have high expectations of pupils' achievements and behaviour, which lead to very productive lessons and effective use of time. In a Year 6 lesson focussed on databases, the teacher provided

very clear demonstrations, explanations and support sheets for pupils. Humour and very good relationships contributed to the success of the lesson. An excellent strategy using 'post-its' for pupils to record their questions for others to answer, fully engaged and extended those who had completed the task set.

220. The pupils themselves make a very valuable contribution to the achievements of others. Year 7 pupils trained in peer mentoring skills run an Internet club at lunchtime for pupils from Years 3 to 6. Year 5 pupils 'buddy' Year 1 pupils such as in operating a Floor Turtle and re-drafting text linked to literacy. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
221. The management of ICT in the school is now proving effective in meeting the requirements of the statutory National Curriculum, by encouraging the use and application of ICT across the curriculum and in the considerably improved accommodation, computer suite and other ICT resources. Occasionally pupils are unable to gain assistance quickly due to the linear nature of the computer suite. Monitoring of the ICT curriculum offered is now good and a governor with linked responsibility is working with the subject co-ordinator. The school is clear about its priorities and what it needs to do to further improve provision. Several teachers are now competent in presentational skills and are using the school's data projector as a teaching aid, for example to support a music lesson. The majority of teachers have completed New Opportunities Fund training in ICT and have become more confident in using and teaching ICT across the curriculum.
222. Assessment of pupil achievements in ICT is underdeveloped. Self-assessment files are saved on the network for all pupils and some have begun using this. Pupils with SEN have been well supported in this process. As a tool for assessing and recording pupil achievement, it is not yet fully in place and will need reviewing in order to enhance its effectiveness. The school co-ordinator has recognised this. The storage of all pupil files on the network makes it very difficult for teachers to sample work to assess progress and to share this with pupils and parents.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

223. Provision for the teaching of modern foreign languages (French) is good.
224. **Strengths**
- There is good teaching.
  - Written work is good.
  - Behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good.
  - The subject is well managed.
225. **Areas for development**
- Improve pronunciation and oral work.
  - Improve record keeping.
226. Pupils in Year 7 study French for two lessons a week. Overall, standards are in line with national expectations. However, in writing, pupils do better than expected. Achievement is

good. Pupils answer questions about themselves with confidence, can name colours and count to 30. They are less sure about months of the year. Pronunciation is a weakness. While higher attainers are developing a clear French accent, other pupils speak French as if the words were English. In group work, pupils listen courteously to one another and respond willingly. They read aloud words or short sentences with approximate pronunciation, but can be understood. Written work is a strength. Most pupils copy accurately and use familiar words to make up a short paragraph, for example, when saying what they carry in their schoolbags. Lower attaining pupils make errors, though they still reach average standards in writing. Pupils with SEN, and those who are gifted and talented, do well in relation to their capabilities.

227. Teaching and learning in French are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well. They include a variety of activities to help pupils concentrate. As a result, attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils want to learn and try very hard to do well. For example, in a lesson on describing people, pupils enjoyed a starter activity revising 'être' and 'avoir' because the teacher presented it as a noughts and crosses game. She gave different work to pupils so that all ability levels were suitably challenged. As a result, pupils' learning was good. Books are well marked and details kept of pupils' achievement, but the two teachers have different systems of recording, so it is more difficult than it should be to track a pupil's progress.
228. Leadership and management are good. Schemes of work give good coverage of the National Curriculum and there is a wide variety of resources to help learning, for example, tapes, computers and text books. It is not possible to comment on improvement since the last inspection since pupils began French in Year 6 then.

## MUSIC

229. Provision for music is good with some very good features.
230. **Strengths**
- Lessons are well planned and delivered using interesting activities that make learning fun.
  - The music co-ordinator has excellent subject knowledge.
  - Extracurricular music activities enable pupils to perform to a very high standard.
  - Standards in music are good throughout the school.
231. **Areas for improvement**
- There are insufficient ongoing assessments and records of what pupils can do in music and need to do next.
  - The co-ordinator needs time and training in order to assess standards more accurately.
232. During the inspection, four music lessons were seen, pupils were heard performing in orchestra and at recorder clubs and discussions took place with the co-ordinator. Other documentation was also seen, including teachers' planning.



233. Standards in music are good in all year groups. By age seven, 11 and 12 pupils achieve above expectation. Pupils with SEN make very good progress and those who are gifted and talented have many opportunities to develop their musical talents in lessons and in music clubs. Standards are similar to those found at the last inspection in lessons. By age seven, pupils can sing in tune with good diction and expression. They follow instructions given by their teacher and can clap in time to a beat. Recorder players are beginning to understand musical notation. By age 12, pupils can compose and perform raps using a range of skills and evaluate the performance of others with sensitivity. The choir and the orchestra achieve very high standards and have won awards recently in local competitions. The curriculum for music is well planned and supported by the co-ordinator. It is enriched by school musical performances.
234. Attitudes to music in the school are good overall and sometimes excellent. Pupils really enjoy learning and performing. They sing with enthusiasm and listen attentively when others are performing.
235. Teaching is good overall and sometimes excellent. The use of the co-ordinator to teach in a range of year groups ensures that pupils have expert teaching. Peripatetic teachers make a very good contribution to the teaching of music and liaise well with the school. Teaching contains very interesting activities and lively songs. ICT is used to present ideas and teach pupils about the pentatonic scale, including how it is used in other cultures. Pupils are encouraged to learn from each other as they work in groups and perform to the class. Teaching has improved since the last inspection.
236. The co-ordinator has only been in post a short time and is already beginning to make an impact. She has excellent subject knowledge and supports her colleagues very well. Management of the subject is good overall. An action plan for music indicates that some relevant priorities have been identified for development. The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring standards is not yet secure enough. She has insufficient information from class teachers about pupils' attainment because the assessment and recording of pupils' knowledge and skills in music are unsatisfactory. Guidance is needed in how to use the time available for monitoring to best effect. The development of extracurricular activities such as choir and orchestra raises the profile of music in the school and the community.
237. Resources for music are good. A helpful scheme of work has been purchased and there are good quality instruments for pupils to use. The new school building offers excellent accommodation and plenty of space for tuition and rehearsals.
238. Overall there has been good progress since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

239. Provision for PE in the school is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
240. **Strengths**
- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good.

- Teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm.
  - Pupils enjoy PE and have good attitudes to learning.
  - Provision both indoors and outdoors.
241. **Areas for improvement**
- The role of the subject co-ordinator in monitoring standards in PE.
  - The assessment and recording of pupils skills and knowledge
242. During the inspection, four lessons were seen. The inspector talked with pupils from Year 2. School documentation was read and a discussion took place with the subject leader for PE. It was not possible to make judgements about standards for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 7.
243. By age 11 standards in PE are above national expectations. Pupils with SEN are very well supported during lessons. Learning support assistants ensure they take a full and active part in all aspects of the lesson. Consequently, they make very good progress, as do most other pupils. Standards in swimming are above the national expectation by age 11. All pupils are able to swim 25 metres. High standards in swimming are a result of the additional lessons funded from a community trust for pupils aged eight to 11.
244. Pupils gain a good understanding, from an early age, of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Year 2 pupils were able to explain the need to warm up before taking vigorous exercise 'so we don't pull a ligament'. By the time they are in Year 5, pupils are proficient in a whole range of gymnastic skills. They show good control when demonstrating a variety of balances. They vary pace when creating sequences and use technical vocabulary such as rotate, pivot and axis. Pupils are regularly encouraged to comment on their own and others' performances. They do this very well, clearly demonstrating an increasing awareness of what makes a performance good.
245. The quality of teaching in the PE lessons observed was good overall with some very good and excellent teaching. Teachers are enthusiastic and interact very well with pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge. For example, in a very good Year 4 games lesson, the teacher used her knowledge of hockey to demonstrate how to hold and use the stick correctly. By the end of the lesson, pupils could dribble, pass and stop the ball with increasing accuracy and control. They were also using terms such as 'dribble' and 'push past' with understanding. Teachers ensure that lessons are well planned to include all elements. Lessons have good pace and time is used appropriately to ensure pupils can practise and demonstrate skills and techniques.
246. Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to PE. They work with enthusiasm throughout lessons, behaving very well.
247. The PE co-ordinator provides good leadership and management for the subject. An award scheme has been implemented and the 'Fit to succeed' programme is in place. There has been an increase in the range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils. The co-ordinator has carried out a review of PE across the school. This has helped identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. However, he has limited opportunities to

observe lessons. The procedures for assessing and recording in PE are unsatisfactory. Some information is passed from one teacher to the next on an annual basis, but this is insufficient. The information does not clearly identify pupils' levels of attainment in each area of PE. As a result, the Co-ordinator is not in receipt of sufficient information to enable him to judge standards well enough.

248. PE has been developed throughout the school since the last inspection. There is now greater depth to the curriculum. A progressive structure is in place, based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work. Pupils experience dance, gymnastics, swimming and athletics. There are also opportunities for pupils to attend a residential centre to develop orienteering skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

249. Provision for religious education is good.

### **250. Strengths**

- Standards in RE are good throughout the school.
- Attitudes to RE are very positive.
- Teaching is good.

### **251. Areas for improvement**

- There are insufficient assessments and records of pupils' knowledge and skills in RE.
- The co-ordinator needs to be able to monitor standards more effectively.

252. During the inspection, four lessons were seen and some assemblies taken by pupils. Work was seen from every year group. Discussions took place with the co-ordinator and a range of other documents were seen, including teachers' planning.

253. Standards in religious education are good. Pupils age seven, 11 and 12 achieve above the expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. By age seven, pupils have good knowledge of stories from Christianity and some other faiths. They can empathise with characters in Bible stories. They know about Christian rites of passage such as baptism and can describe what happens. They also know about ceremonies in other faiths such as Shabbat in Judaism and can talk about important occasions in their own lives. By age 11, pupils have increased their knowledge of Christianity and other faiths. They can express feelings about the different terms Christians use for Jesus and begin to explore what they mean, for example, Lamb of God and Light of the World. They can describe what happens at a Hindu Wedding and why. In Year 7, pupils are able to use a range of sources to present facts about religion to their peers. They use the Internet to research religion and present using overhead projectors and PowerPoint. They can discuss and prioritise their own values compared to those of a Christian.

254. All pupils make good progress in religious education, including those with SEN and gifted and talented pupils. Standards are similar to those found at the last inspection.

255. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and use resources well. Reflection and response is particularly well taught because relationships are so good. Pupils are keen to share their thoughts and ideas and are comfortable talking about beliefs and values of their own. Teachers prepare interesting activities and there are very good links with literacy. For example, pupils in Year 2 were helped to understand the story of Noah by writing a letter from God giving instructions. One seven year old wrote: 'Dear Noah, make an ark to save your family. Please let the animals out when you come back to land. You won't have to teach them sums. Save your rubbish and don't waste food. Love from God.' Pupils are taught to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings in order to understand the beliefs and practices of believers. For example: after learning about Shabbat, pupils were invited to experience a sweet fragrance and think of something nice they were going to do for someone else to make the week ahead more enjoyable.
256. Attitudes in religious education are very good. Pupils enjoy learning and show respect for the views and feelings of others. They work well together in pairs and groups. RE contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are many opportunities to reflect and appreciate the views of others. Moral dilemmas often arise for discussion and pupils learn about celebrations in their own and other cultures. For example, Shrove Tuesday was used to teach about Christianity and about the importance of forgiveness in daily life. Hindu belief and practice is brought to life by a visit from a Hindu priest.
257. Leadership and management in RE are good. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge of the subject and has contributed to the local education authority's schemes of work. She guides colleagues very effectively and gives the subject a high profile in the school. An appropriate action plan is prepared for the subject and funding is well used to provide resources. The monitoring of standards is still at a very early stage and is not yet good enough. This is due to lack of time and unsatisfactory assessment and recording systems she has insufficient about standards.
258. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in terms of the curriculum provision and the quality of teaching.