

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITLEIGH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 132215

Headteacher: Mr J Butcher

Reporting inspector: Philip Gadsby
5281

Dates of inspection: 18-22 November 2002

Inspection number: 248946

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lancaster Gardens Whiteleigh Plymouth
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Telephone number:	01752 706383
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Barbara Miller
Date of previous inspection:	19-22 January 1998 Infants 11-13 October 1999 Juniors

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5281	Phil Gadsby	Registered Inspector	Music Religious education Special educational needs Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9009	Valerie Bradley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for it's pupils
29380	Sally Noble	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27710	Susan Guy	Team inspector	Science Geography History Foundation Stage	
32088	Margaret Carter	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Whiteleigh Primary is a new community school for boys and girls between three and eleven years old. It opened in September 2000, the amalgamation of previously separate infant and junior schools, both of which were found to have serious weaknesses in previous inspections. There are currently 291 pupils on roll, with an even balance between boys and girls. Fifty-two children are in the nursery class on a part-time basis, and fourteen children under six years old are in the reception class. There is a further intake of children in January 2003. The school serves an area on the north-western edge of the City of Plymouth. It experiences a high level of social and economic difficulty. The proportion of its pupils who are eligible to receive free school meals is above the national average and other indicators, such as the national index of child poverty, confirm that on the whole the local community is needy. Families are supportive of their children. The number of pupils with special educational needs, mostly learning difficulties, is above the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need, which is average. There are three pupils for whom English is an additional language, which is below average. One of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. When children enter the nursery class their attainment is well below average, especially in the development of their language. The school and its predecessors have experienced a great deal of instability over the past four years. There has been some loss of pupils, many changes in the school's leadership and a very high turnover of teaching staff. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and well over half the teachers have only been at the school since September 2002. Only four of the present teachers have been at the school since it opened. Children are taught in nursery and reception classes; in the infants in classes some of which are mixed-age some of which are single age groups; and in the juniors in six classes three with pupils from Years 3 and 4 and three from Years 5 and 6. In the infants and juniors pupils are taught in groups formed according to their levels of attainment in English and mathematics lessons. The school has received significant support, including financial support, from Plymouth local education authority.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is improving and gives its pupils a satisfactory education. The proportions of pupils reaching and exceeding nationally expected levels in national tests at the age of 11 in English, mathematics and science remain well below average but have improved. The performance of pupils in national tests for seven year olds has improved significantly, especially in mathematics and reading where they achieve the nationally expected levels. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved dramatically and are now good. Relationships are very good and a positive ethos permeates the school. The school promotes equal opportunities and all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning, which is good in many areas. The leadership and management of the school, by the headteacher, senior staff and the governing body, are very good. Everyone in the school is committed to its further improvement. Systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school are now in place; principles of best value are applied to decision-making and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Leadership provides a clear focus on improvement which is shared by everyone in the school.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and they behave well.
- Pupils are now making good progress in most subjects.
- Relationships are very good: a positive ethos and culture pervades the school.
- The school cares for its pupils well: they are safe and secure.
- Good quality support staff make a significant contribution to the effectiveness of the school.
- Pupils social development is good; they speak and listen well.
- Good support is given for pupils with special educational needs.
- Increasingly good relationships with parents, who have a growing confidence in the school.

What could be improved

- Standards of achievement for all pupils in English (especially writing) mathematics and science.
- Standards of achievement for more able pupils.
- The organisation of the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the first inspection of the school.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	n/a	E*	E*	E*	well above average A
mathematics	n/a	E*	E*	E*	above average B
science	n/a	E*	E	E	average C
					below average D
					well below average E
					very low E*

Standards achieved in national test results in 2002 remain well below average. In English and mathematics they are in the lowest 5% nationally. However, within this pattern of low standards there is improvement from 2001, with results in all three subjects showing an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving nationally expected levels: in English by 20%; in mathematics by 10%; in science by 17%. These results slightly exceeded the school's targets for 2002. The school's

targets for attainment in 2003, if achieved, continue this trend of improvement. Inspection evidence indicates that the targets are realistic, given the quality of teaching pupils now receive. The school's results in national tests for seven year olds in 2002 show an even more marked improvement, with standards for pupils achieving expected levels in reading and mathematics now at the national average, although too few achieve levels higher than the expectation, when compared with national figures and those for similar schools. Writing is the weakest area of attainment, well below the national average, and with the average for similar schools. With all of the test results taken into account, standards in English are unsatisfactory overall. In science, teacher's own assessments indicated that pupils attainment in science was above the national average for pupils achieving the nationally expected standard. In English, mathematics and science, and in other subjects, except design and technology, inspection evidence shows that most pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with the national expectations for eleven and seven year olds. In design and technology, standards achieved by pupils at eleven is above average.

Most children are on track to achieve the goals for early learning by the end of the reception class in the areas of mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. The majority will not reach expected standards in personal and social development and communication, language and literacy, although they make at least satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show very positive attitudes, are courteous and well-mannered and work well together. Pupils like their school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in response to teaching, which has high expectations in this regard.
Personal development and relationships	Good. When given the opportunity, pupils take responsibility, and work well, collaboratively and independently. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory with effective measures to improve attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning was at least satisfactory in all of the 52 lessons observed. Eight out of ten lessons were good or better, with thirteen very good and one excellent, a science lesson to a Year 3 and 4 class.

The overall quality of teaching is weakened because the teaching of writing needs to be improved. Throughout the school, teaching, including the teaching of English, including literacy and mathematics, including numeracy, is characterised by good, positive management of pupils' behaviour, good collaborative planning, good questioning and a range of effective teaching approaches. Support staff are used very well to support pupils' learning and pupils are interested and motivated by their teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language are taught well.

To raise the quality of teaching further, improvements need to be made in the use of time in some lessons, the expectations teachers have of what the most able can achieve and the work all pupils can produce in lessons, and subject knowledge in writing. On the whole, pupils learn well and are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects. They work hard and are becoming more aware of their own learning and how they can improve. They would benefit from being given more opportunities to work independently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is a need to review some aspects of the timings and organisation of subjects in order to improve teaching and learning opportunities, particularly in writing.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils make good progress, with an effective contribution made by classroom support staff. They have full access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Classroom support staff support these pupils well. They are fully included in all lessons
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' social development and a strong emphasis on moral development and their understanding of right and wrong. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. They feel and are safe and secure. The school effectively promotes race equality.

The school now works very well in partnership with parents, who confirm that relationships have improved recently. They are supportive of the school, feel welcome and comfortable in it and appreciate how the school is improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Clear and decisive leadership from the headteacher has been critical in creating what is now a very strong team, committed to improving the quality of education the school provides and the achievements of its pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its duties well. It is aware of how the school has improved and weaknesses which have still to be addressed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Clear procedures for school self-evaluation are in place and are beginning to impact on the quality of teaching and the standards of pupils' attainment.
The strategic use of resources	The school has deployed resources well to achieve its educational aims. It is clear about and beginning to implement the principles of best value in its decision-making processes.

Accommodation, resources and staffing are satisfactory. The nature of the buildings does cause some difficulties, in particular the provision of outdoor activities for the children in the Foundation Stage. Resources are generally good, although the range and quality of books, particularly in the library, need improving. There are far reaching plans to incorporate the school into a 0-16 educational campus, which are due to begin in 2003.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The good teaching. • The progress their children make. • Their children's behaviour in school. • The approachability of the school. • The school's leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with what pleases the parents most about the school. The inspection judged that the school has worked hard to provide a growing range of activities outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The inspection took place in the first term of the school year and evidence at this time gained through observing lessons, analysing pupils' work, hearing them read and talking to them indicates that standards overall are low in English, mathematics and science. This is particularly true for pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, the standards seen at present show improvement. The inspection judgement is that the very focused leadership of the school and the good and very good teaching that was seen in most subjects, will build on and accelerate the progress pupils are making. The school is making good progress towards achieving the attainment targets for 2003 that it has set in English and mathematics. Achieving these targets will continue the trend of improvement identified in national test results and through inspection. Progress towards achieving targets in English is slowed because standards in writing are not so good.
2. Initial assessments of children's attainment when they enter the reception class show that they are below average, especially in the development of their language. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of children when they enter the nursery class is very low and well below average. A significant number have poor language development, especially in speaking and listening. Many have poor social and emotional development. About a third of the children who enter the nursery class have already been identified by care and support agencies as having some kind of special need.
3. Children are on course to achieve the nationally recommended learning goals in the areas of mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. The majority will not reach expected standards in personal and social development and communication, language and literacy, although they make at least satisfactory progress.
4. The results of national tests taken by seven year olds in 2002 show that the school's standards are well below the national average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics when taking account of attainment at all levels of the National Curriculum. When compared with schools in similar contexts the results are average for reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. Overall, standards are depressed because a very small number of pupils achieve beyond the expected levels of attainment for seven year olds. The school's attainment in reading and mathematics is above the average for schools in similar contexts in terms of pupils reaching the expected levels. However, it remains below average for writing. Nevertheless, however the 2002 results are analysed, they show a very marked improvement over the 2001 results. Inspection evidence indicates that this improvement will be maintained. Further improvement will require more pupils to achieve the higher attainment levels, beyond the national expectation and particularly in writing. In science teachers' own assessment of the attainment of seven year olds in 2002, shows it to be above average, a significant improvement from 2001.

5. The overall attainment of eleven year olds in 2002 was very low in English, mathematics and science. For English and mathematics, the school's results are in the bottom 5% nationally. This poor performance is also reflected in comparison of the results for schools in similar contexts. Nevertheless, the 2002 results show improvement from those in 2001. Also, the school performed relatively well when its 2002 results for eleven year olds are compared with those for seven year olds in 1998. Its performance against this prior attainment measure was above average for reading and mathematics and just below average for writing. A continuing issue for the school is the small number of pupils who achieve the higher levels in the tests.
6. For both seven and eleven year olds, the most recent test results show encouraging signs of improvement in most subjects. Inspection evidence confirms this trend. Pupils are making good progress in speaking and listening. They are developing the ability to speak confidently and fluently, expressing their ideas clearly. They can extend their responses and are aware of the audience for and context of their speaking. In reading, pupils' understanding and use of their knowledge of letter sounds is improving as a more systematic teaching approach is adopted. Most eleven year olds read with reasonable fluency and show good basic understanding of content, but are less secure when asked to infer or deduct meaning from a text. Writing is the weakest area and too many pupils are not making good enough progress. Spelling is poor; punctuation is incorrect; handwriting is inconsistent with much of it not joined up. Pupils' writing style has not developed as they have got older because opportunities for extended writing have been too limited and writing has not been systematically taught. However, the school is now beginning to put more emphasis on these issues, with a subject co-ordinator who has the skills and knowledge to lead improvement. In mathematics, seven year old pupils are using mathematical vocabulary correctly. They know addition and multiplication facts, can add and subtract and are starting to use them in simple problem solving tasks with money. They know odd and even numbers and fractions. They identify two- and three-dimensional shapes, and can classify them according to different attributes. They can use standard measures. Overall, attainment in numeracy is now close to the national average for seven year olds. Higher attaining eleven year olds are proficient in a range of calculations, using different strategies. They can add and subtract decimals, find perimeters, understand fractions and use percentages. They understand when it is appropriate to use a calculator. However, lower attaining pupils are operating at levels below those expected for eleven year olds and many are unlikely to achieve the average standards. In science, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing secure knowledge and understanding about life and growth processes, including the connection between diet and health. They are beginning to use ideas of comparison, similarity and difference in their investigations and their skills of scientific enquiry are about average. Eleven year olds are developing knowledge and understanding of physical processes, electricity and the solar system. Concepts of fair testing and variability are beginning to be understood but pupils' skills of scientific enquiry remain under developed.
7. Pupils with special educational needs, the three from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language achieve at least satisfactorily in all subjects. All groups participate fully in all of the work in lessons. Pupils capable of higher attainment are not achieving as well as they should. This is a key issue for the school. They need more challenge, higher expectations of what they can do and more opportunities for extended, independent and

investigative work. The relative achievement of boys and girls is unclear, with variations between the different age groups. In English, for example, seven year old girls have done better in writing than boys; but eleven year old boys have performed better than girls in the writing tests. What is clear from inspection evidence is that the school is responding by the use of a range of teaching styles and strategies to include all pupils, and gender imbalance is not a feature of the teaching and learning seen.

8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory for seven and eleven year olds. Pupils' acquisition of ICT skills is good. They make consistent progress throughout the school. The use of ICT in other subjects is variable and in general is under developed. Pupils are, therefore, not able to apply and develop their skills sufficiently in a range of contexts.
9. Standards in religious education, art and design, history, geography, music and physical education are broadly in line with those expected for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. They achieve well in all of these subjects, and in design and technology, where standards of eleven year olds are above average, and in physical education, where progress is good.
10. Standards in all subjects, but particularly in English, are affected by some weaknesses in the way that curriculum time is organised and used. Some lessons are over-long. Pupils sometimes experience a lesson which is too similar in content and style to the previous one, for example a half-hour spelling session immediately following a literacy hour. In these circumstances the quality of teaching and learning and the pace of lessons drops. Also, in some lessons, the whole class sessions are too long. This squeezes the amount of time pupils have for group and individual work. They do not then have enough time to produce the amount of work necessary to consolidate and extend their learning. The school should carry out an urgent review of how its curriculum organisation and structure impacts on how well pupils achieve and the standards they attain.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school. All of the evidence given by parents and classroom staff who have been at the school a long time indicates that the behaviour of pupils has improved dramatically over the past twelve months. During the inspection it was good in nearly all lessons, and often very good.
12. Pupils enjoy coming to school, show a high degree of interest in their work, and persevere well with the tasks set. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors, and to each other. A strength of the school is the excellent relationships evident between pupils, and between pupils and adults in the school. These provide a very positive learning environment.
13. In lessons pupils try hard to please their teachers, and work well together. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour, and pupils respond very well to the praise and encouragement freely offered. They take pride in their new school uniform. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to present good work to others during assemblies. Their collaborative work in pairs is very good, and pupils show good standards of teamwork in games and physical education lessons.

Some excellent collaborative work was observed in the booster Year 5/6 English literacy classes.

14. Pupils listen with interest, sometimes over long periods of time. All pupils, even the very youngest, listened with great interest to the class assembly, which told the story of Anne Frank and her family during the Second World War.
15. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils throughout the school show that they think carefully about their actions and are very conscious of the impact these have on others. They wait patiently for other pupils to make their contributions in lessons, and listen to each other well.
16. During the last school year there were four fixed period exclusions, involving three boys. These boys were successfully re-integrated back into the school. During this school year there has been one fixed-period exclusion.
17. Pupils' personal development is good. The youngest children respond well to the teachers and support staff in the Foundation Stage. They settle well into the routines of the school, and steadily gain in confidence, self-esteem and language skills. Pupils enjoy carrying out tasks within the classroom. When given the opportunity to take additional responsibility, for example answering the telephone at lunchtime and when older girls help in the nursery during the lunchtime break, they respond very well. In general, however, opportunities for independent learning and for pupils to take responsibility are too limited.
18. Pupils of all ages elect class representatives to attend the School Council, when they are able to put forward their views. In addition, the headteacher has provided opportunities for pupils to give him their views on a variety of issues. A number of pupils were recently effectively involved in helping to judge a preliminary round of a national competition.
19. Pupils are enjoying taking part in, and responding well to, the increased number of extra-curricular activities available to them.
20. Attendance has improved during the last two academic years, and is now just below the average nationally. There was no unauthorised absence recorded in the last academic year. Most pupils arrive at school punctually, enabling a prompt and effective start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The overall quality of the teaching observed during the inspection was good with many strengths that far outweighed the areas for development. Fifty-two lessons were observed and good teaching was seen at all three stages of education. Eight out of every ten lessons were good or better, including one, which was particularly outstanding, and thirteen, which were very good. None of the lessons observed were unsatisfactory. Evidence collected from the teachers' planning records and from the pupils' books indicates that the teaching observed during the inspection is typical of that usually found in the school.
22. There are twelve classes in the school. The nursery and reception classes make up the Foundation Stage. There are three classes in the infants and six in the juniors. There are

mixed age classes in both key stages. For English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 the three classes are made into four by the use of an extra teacher. Pupils are selected on the basis of assessments and teacher knowledge into higher ability and mixed middle and lower ability bands.

23. Common strengths that were identified in the lessons observed where teaching was judged to be at its best were: good management of pupils, particularly their behaviour; good questioning skills; a good range of interactive teaching methods; very good use of support staff; interesting and motivating pupils; good quality team planning. These strengths play a major part in the good progress made by the pupils.
24. In the lessons where teaching was only satisfactory, the weaknesses were: poor use of time resulting in some lesson being too long; expectations of some pupils were too low; subject knowledge in writing; achieving insufficient pace and productivity of working in lessons; a lack of knowledge of how best to teach investigative and experimental science. The use of homework to develop and reinforce the learning in lessons varies. It is at its best in mathematics.
25. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage was good overall. In total eight lessons or part lessons were observed. In four lessons the teaching was judged to be good and in the other four lessons teaching was judged to be satisfactory. In a lesson in the reception class, teaching was good, requiring the children to taste different kinds of orange drinks and then systematically record their favourites. In a good lesson in the nursery the teacher was using real objects to teach children the letter sounds. Teachers in the Foundation Stage were well supported by a nursery nurse and learning assistants who were clear about their roles and had a positive impact on the progress made by the children.
26. Overall, the quality of teaching in the infant classes was good. In total thirteen lessons or part lessons were observed. In four lessons teaching was judged to be very good; in six lessons it was good and in three lessons teaching was judged to be satisfactory.
27. Very good teaching was observed in the Year 1/2 classes when teachers were developing the pupils' skills in numeracy. In each lesson the teachers made very effective use of the national guidance for the subject. The lessons were well planned and the clear structure in the sessions enabled pupils to make good progress. In all lessons when the pupils moved to group activities, the clear instructions given by the teacher and the good quality support given by teaching assistants meant that pupils got on with the tasks confidently.
28. Good teaching was observed in the Year 1 and 2 classes in a range of subjects including mathematics, English, science, ICT, music, design and technology and physical education. In these lessons the materials provided for pupils were stimulating and the pupils were keen to be involved in the activities and as a result they made good progress. In a Year 1/2 design and technology lesson, the teaching enabled pupils to learn techniques for joining different materials together using practical approaches. This led to a high degree of motivation and good progress in their learning.
29. Overall, the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. In total thirty-one lessons or part

lessons were observed. In one lesson teaching was judged to be excellent, in nine lessons very good; in thirteen lessons good; and satisfactory in eight lessons.

30. Good teaching was observed in all year groups in the juniors, and in a number of subjects including mathematics, English, geography, design and technology, science and physical education. In these lessons the work given to the pupils took account of their past learning and enabled pupils to make further progress. In a Year 5/6 class the teacher used a torch and a world globe to effectively teach the pupils how the moon and the earth move. Teachers' secure subject knowledge, clear explanations and effective questioning ensured that the lesson was exciting, engaged the pupils and led to good learning. The well-established classroom routines meant pupils moved from one activity to another without wasting time.
31. The teaching of English is good for all pupils. Some very good teaching was observed in Years 3 to 6. The teachers are successfully implementing the National Literacy Strategy. The lesson organisation and suggested teaching strategies are securely in place. Overall teaching is better in the literacy lessons than in the reading and writing lessons. There is a good emphasis on the teaching of speaking and listening skills. The teaching of writing, however, is under developed. Many teachers are not fully competent or confident in the approaches necessary to raise standards.
32. The good and very good lessons share many of the features of effective teaching with good relationships and effective behaviour management so that pupils are keen to learn. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and share these with them frequently. They plan effective tasks that interest the pupils, are relevant and promote independence. The pace is brisk in lessons with pupils making good progress. Good use is made of questioning and explaining so taking the pupils' thinking and learning forward.
33. The teaching observed in mathematics was good in both the infants and the juniors. The school is making good use of the national strategy for raising standards in numeracy. A common characteristic of the good teaching was the way that the teachers used questions that made pupils think about their answers. For example, in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were developing their multiplication skills, the teacher asked questions that helped pupils develop their knowledge about the relationships between numbers. The school has decided to arrange pupils in attainment groups for numeracy lessons. This arrangement has proved to be effective in raising standards of numeracy. Teaching resources for numeracy are used well and support staff deployed effectively to enhance the pupils learning. The weakness in the teaching of mathematics is that in too many lessons, the higher attaining pupils are not expected to achieve enough, either in terms of the amount of work they produce or its level of difficulty.
34. In science, the teaching of experimental and investigative science needs some improvement. At its best, it is very good, but this standard is not apparent throughout the school.
35. Teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in ICT are good. Good teaching of ICT was observed throughout the school during the inspection. The teachers make some use of ICT to support literacy and numeracy and other curriculum areas such as, science and design and technology, art and design, history and geography.

36. Overall, in English, mathematics, science, ICT, and physical education the teaching is good for all pupils in both the infants in Years 1 and 2 and the juniors in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is very good in design and technology in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is satisfactory in history, geography and religious education. It was not possible to make a judgement about the teaching of art and design, as none was observed during the inspection.
37. The progress made by pupils as they move through the school is good, with the exception of the higher attaining pupils, who do not make fast enough progress. Some teaching does not challenge them to achieve more. Children enter the Foundation Stage with well below average levels of attainment. Many children make good progress to reach standards in line with those expected nationally for five year olds when they transfer to Year 1 and 2 classes. The good progress continues in the infant classes, so that many pupils are attaining standards in line with those expected for seven year olds. This progress also continues in Years 3 to 6, where an increasing number of pupils are attaining standards in line with those expected by the age of eleven. The progress made by pupils is a reflection of the quality of teaching. Work in the pupils' books shows that over a period of time, they are developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. However, the quality of marking varies. It rarely focuses on specific objectives or gives pupils clear feedback on what they need to do to improve.
38. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs generally make good progress as they move through the school, as do those pupils for whom English is not their first language. The good quality learning support assistants enable these pupils to access the whole curriculum. Pupils are provided with structured opportunities that enable them to build on their previous learning.

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

39. The school provides a broad and reasonably balanced curriculum in the Foundation Stage and for infants (Years 1 and 2) and juniors (Years 3 to 6) that satisfactorily meets the needs of all its pupils. It enables the pupils to participate in a range of relevant experiences that support all round development. In both the infants and juniors, the use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the schemes of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) have helped ensure that pupils are exposed to a range of worthwhile learning opportunities. The school now needs to develop planning systems to identify more challenging work for more able pupils in English, mathematics and science. There is also a need to provide more opportunities for extended writing and to ensure that adequate time is allocated to the teaching of science and ICT.
40. Curriculum planning for the youngest children in the nursery and reception class appropriately reflects the nationally agreed areas for learning and early learning goals. However, there are limited opportunities for outside play activities due to the unsuitability of the play areas. In both infant and junior classes, medium term planning is detailed and contains clear objectives. For subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT, planning is carried out in a two-

year cycle. This system enables sensible links to be made between subjects. Good links between the content of different subjects are identified in all classes. For example, science and design and technology work on 'structures and materials' is woven appropriately across the curriculum in the Year 1 and 2 and the Year 5/6 history focus on 'World War Two' is very well integrated into English, personal and social, design and technology and art and design teaching. Securing appropriate cross curricular links and applications in ICT remains an area for development. The school allocates ample time for the development of literacy and numeracy, but the organisation of time for literacy is not yet having a positive impact on the amount and quality of work produced in writing. There are good opportunities for developing speaking and listening.

41. Short term planning is precise but varies in the extent to which it caters for different levels of attainment and how it sets out the ways in which pupils' learning will be assessed. For example, the planning for English in Year 5 and 6 is not sufficiently clear in relation to different learning experiences and objectives for the wide ability and age range. This is having a negative impact on attainment for average and more able pupils in Year 6.
42. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. There are discrete programmes of work that cover relevant topics such as sex and drugs education, and opportunities to discuss aspects of healthy living. The school makes appropriate links with neighbouring secondary schools. They collaborate to ensure transfer arrangements work well. Some subject co-ordinators value personal meetings with secondary school staff to develop subject links. The pupils have also benefited from using secondary school ICT, design and technology and physical education facilities.
43. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. The learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to curriculum provision and support pupils well. In most lessons teachers provides effective guidance. Occasionally, especially in whole class sessions, it is unclear how the support staff are deployed to support the learning targets of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy their full entitlement to the whole curriculum and to the range of extra-curricular activities provided. They are particularly well integrated into whole class work because they are given the opportunity to access a wide range of interactive learning styles, which mean that they can participate fully in lessons. They are encouraged to discuss their points of view with partners, to use personal 'show me' boards and letter fans. Overall, in class support for pupils with learning difficulties associated with literacy and numeracy is effective. The after school 'conferencing club' is effective in providing emotional and academic support for older pupils who need a boost with basic literacy and numeracy skills. The pupils with medical, emotional and behavioural needs all receive good support. The few pupils from ethnic minorities and those with English as an additional language are also provided for appropriately.
44. The staff work hard and with increasing success to develop a sense of community within the school and also raise the pupils' awareness of the immediate community. Visits are used well to extend and enhance pupils understanding of the curriculum. For instance, Year 5 and 6 pupils recently visited the Anne Frank exhibition at Plymouth Museum and used the knowledge gained to produce a thoughtful and very moving assembly which conveyed the drama and

irony of life for the Frank family. The assembly closed by drawing pupils back to behaviour codes in their own playground. It emphasised the need to respect the beliefs of others and to respect differences within the school community. Visitors are also used well. A recent visit of the author Simon James has been used to develop pupils' understanding of story writing and to develop a love of reading.

45. There is an improving range of extra-curricular clubs, which are well supported by the pupils. It includes sports clubs, music and book clubs and gymnastics.
46. The provision to foster pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school has worked very hard over the last year to develop a climate in which all pupils can flourish, respect others and be respected. Pupils have opportunities to focus on the larger questions in life during school assemblies where their self-esteem is consistently raised through reference to their personal and academic achievements. In Years 3 to 6, the work on World War Two has helped develop pupils sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion.
47. The provision for pupils' moral development is strong, especially in relation to its social aspects. Adults provide very good role models for fairness, respect and resolution of conflicts in all they do. Pupils respond well to earned praise. This is apparent in the playground, in classes and in assemblies. The pupils are expected to know the difference between right and wrong and are consistently helped to acquire an appropriate range of moral principles. There are some opportunities for the pupils to assume routine responsibilities around the school and the school council provides appropriate opportunities for debate and decision-making. The school pays particular attention to the management of behaviour and this is a very strong feature of the school. There are very clear school rules, which establish what represents acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Pupils are frequently asked to work in teams, groups or pairs to in order to complete tasks or share resources, and are taught explicitly to respond to each others' needs and to treat others fairly. For instance, in a Year 5/6 design and technology lesson two pupils with special educational needs are helped to complete their structure for an Anderson shelter by others in their group without being asked.
48. The cultural provision through the curriculum is sound. The strongest aspect of the school's work in this area is through literature. The recent book week, work on Ann Frank's diaries and a visiting author have broadened the pupils' understanding of the influences which have shaped their own cultural heritage and that of others. Pupils in the extra-curricular book club are developing a strong partnership with a Plymouth book shop. A number of pupils have visited the Houses of Parliament; others have also explored Chinese New Year and Diwali. Attractive, high quality displays offer opportunities to extend cultural development across the curriculum. However, opportunities to explore diverse cultures are underdeveloped.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. Relationships within the school are very good. Teachers and support staff provide caring and thoughtful support to pupils. Newly appointed teachers have benefited from the support staff's very good personal knowledge of pupils, which has helped them to quickly establish good relationships with the pupils in their classes. The good relationships within the school are now a significant strength, and are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Support for the very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good, helping them to make good progress.
- Information collected through the assessment of pupils' work is not yet used in a consistent way to plan the next stage of learning. The school is working towards the full implementation of its accessibility plan; no issues of any kind concerned with access for disabled people were noted during the inspection.
50. The school has successfully encouraged a climate for good behaviour by having high expectations, and by the praise and encouragement given to pupils who behave well. Parents and pupils say that behaviour has improved dramatically over the past twelve months. No unsatisfactory behaviour was observed during the inspection. Appropriate advice from the Behaviour Support Team was effectively used during the inspection to ensure that potential bullying was discussed within the classroom in an appropriate and useful way. The school's policy for promoting race equality is effective. There was no evidence of racist attitudes or behaviour observed during the inspection, and there is no sign of racial tension in the school. The very small number of pupils who come from a minority ethnic background are fully part of the life of the school. There are good levels of supervision on the playground areas, and pupils confirm that they feel safe and secure within the school.
51. Behaviour at lunchtime is good. Although the dining area is noisy, this is mainly as a result of the design of the building. Lunchtime supervisors know pupils well, and have well organised routines ensuring that supervision levels are high and effective. There is a good range of activities available in classrooms for use during wet playtimes.
52. Monitoring of pupils' behaviour and social development is informal, but effective. Support staff and teachers know their pupils well, and any concerns are appropriately discussed.
53. The school has recently put in place a comprehensive computer based program for recording assessments of pupils' academic progress. The deputy headteacher, charged with responsibility for devising and implementing this tracking system, has worked hard and achieved a considerable amount in the very short time since her appointment. As yet the process is not fully impacting on the processes of teaching and learning. The school is very aware that it now has to ensure that all staff understand how the data can be used to measure progress, inform curriculum planning and teaching and contribute to the setting of accurate, challenging targets for improvements in standards. There are also implications for the consistency and accuracy with which assessments are made by individual teachers. The school has planned for developing teachers' skills in assessment through training and moderation sessions. This is particularly important in order to ensure that gifted and talented and more able pupils are fully identified.

54. The requirements for recording and reporting pupils' attendance are met. Registers are marked in accordance with statutory requirements, and parents know the procedures to inform the school of the reason for pupils' absence. The school has successfully implemented a system of telephoning parents on the first day, where possible, to establish the reason for their child's absence. Arrangements to monitor the attendance of pupils are very good, and have been used well, so that the level of attendance has risen over the last two academic years. There is good liaison with the education welfare officer.
55. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and meet statutory requirements. The headteacher is the person designated as having responsibility for child protection. Liaison with appropriate support services, including the school nurse, when necessary, is satisfactory. The school has in place effective procedures to ensure that when pupils are using computers, access to inappropriate material on Internet is blocked.
56. The health, well-being and safety of pupils are given an appropriately high priority. Regular safety checks are regularly carried out, and a governor with appropriate experience is effectively involved in health and safety matters.
57. Overall the school provides good support, advice and guidance for its pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. The school now very successfully encourages parents to be actively involved in their children's education. Parents confirm that the relationship has been improved recently and appreciate the role of the new headteacher in promoting this improved relationship. Parents are now very supportive of the school, feel welcome in school, and appreciate the care and support given to their children as well as the improvement in behaviour generally.
59. Parents confirm that they feel able to approach the headteacher and teachers, and that support and guidance is now freely offered and available. Information from parents' questionnaires returned, and at the parents' meeting, indicates that pupils enjoy coming to school. This was confirmed by parents and pupils consulted during the inspection. In addition, parents very much appreciate the increased range of extra-curricular activities now available to their children.
60. The quality and range of information available to parents is good. The prospectus provides a good range of useful information, but is in the process of being reviewed to simplify its presentation. Regular newsletters are being produced, effectively informing parents concerning school events and activities. Parents are given good information regarding the work to be covered in each class each term.
61. Parents are informed weekly about the homework set for their children, and have a good opportunity to communicate their concerns or queries to teachers when the homework sheets are returned to the school.

62. Annual reports of pupils' work are satisfactory. The reports give parents a satisfactory range of information concerning what their child knows and can do, and gives details of the work covered during the year. Reports tell parents how their child has progressed, but do not always tell parents how they can help their child progress further. Some reports set targets for pupils, but most of these targets are very general, and could be made more specific and useful.
63. Parents' evenings are well attended, and support from parents and grandparents for the weekly class assemblies is very good.
64. Parents of younger pupils are successfully encouraged to be involved in helping their child by hearing them read regularly. The Welcome to Nursery sessions provide a very effective opportunity for young children and their parents to become familiar with nursery staff and the school surroundings. Parents confirm that this helps their children to settle more quickly into the nursery.
65. The weekly Coffee Club run for a number of years by a group of dedicated parents provides a very valuable opportunity for parents to meet, with younger siblings, to establish social links, and to make a very useful contribution to the life of the school. During the inspection parents were actively involved in designing and making costumes for the nativity play.
66. The Friends of Whitleigh Primary School, comprising parents, teachers and members of the community, organise a range of social and fundraising events, effectively supporting the school.
67. A number of parents make a very good contribution to the life of the school. They help in classrooms, in a variety of roles, on a regular basis. The help provided is very much valued and appreciated by the school. In addition parents help with swimming sessions and accompany pupils on educational visits.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

68. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and his deputy have been in post since September 2002. Many new teachers also joined the school then. Already they have established an effective team of governors and staff who share a very determined desire to make the school better. There are very clear signs that this is happening: in the explicit aims of the school improvement plan, the values set out and the clarity of purpose which pervades the school. That the aims are becoming a reality is evident from the rising standards in the school and the quality of teaching. Parents show a growing confidence in the school. Everyone acknowledges that there is still a long way to go, especially to raise standards much further, but the quality of leadership displayed is leading to the sustainability of improvement.
69. The school's senior management team, which includes the headteacher, deputy headteacher and leaders of the Foundation Stage and infants and juniors, has a very clear focus on what needs to be done to continue to raise the quality of education the school provides and the standards its pupils achieve. The senior management team is energetic, enthusiastic and sets the tone for the positive ethos and culture that permeate the school. The induction of so many

new staff and their melding into a coherent team in such a short time is a major achievement of leadership.

70. The school improvement plan sets out appropriate actions to raise standards with the criteria for measuring success sharply drawn. The school recognises that the need for further changes will be identified as the self-evaluation mechanisms the school has put in place embed and impact on the school's processes and outcomes. Systems for monitoring curriculum planning, teaching and pupils' work have begun. As yet, it is too early to evaluate their impact fully, but the improvements made in pupils' behaviour, standards achieved in national tests, particularly for seven year olds, and in teaching and learning, all point to their effectiveness. The systematic analysis of performance data is at an early stage of development. However, under the leadership of the deputy headteacher, a comprehensive yet manageable computer based tracking system is established. It is now possible to monitor the progress in learning made by every pupil in the school year on year.
71. Each subject is co-ordinated by a member of staff. The co-ordination of English, mathematics and science is particularly strong. The subject leaders have excellent subject knowledge and model good practice. Because of the need to raise standards rapidly in these core subjects there is a focus on them. Nevertheless, all subject co-ordinators now have clear action plans to raise standards and are working to fulfil them.
72. The school's governing body is good, led by a strong and effective chair. It is very clear about the improvements made in the school over the past year. It has played a significant role in this improvement, not least through the appointment of very good new staff and the resolution of difficult personnel issues. The governing body is very supportive of the school. However, it is increasingly challenging and accepting of its role as a critical friend. It is now carrying out its own monitoring and evaluation processes, through visits to the school, links with particular subjects and their co-ordinators as well as through the normal channels of its committee and reporting structures. Governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The majority of them have stuck with the school loyally through very difficult times, giving of their time and energy unstintingly. They feel that they are now reaping the benefit of this dedication. The chair judges that the school is in its best shape in all the years she has been associated with it. The vice chair believes the community "has got its school back". The governing body acknowledges the support that they have received from Plymouth local education authority in recent years and recognises that it has played a significant role in the improvement of the school.
73. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties. The performance management of teachers and the headteacher is in place. Rigorous targets have been set, associated with pupils' performance and teachers' professional development.
74. The governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value and are beginning to apply them in practice. Their decision to take on direct employment responsibility for the site manager and cleaning staff has been successful. The school buildings, maintenance, health and safety, risk assessment and cleaning are well managed and effective. All spending decisions are carefully considered according to the principles of best value. They attempt to evaluate their decisions in terms of the impact they have on the improvement of standards in the school.

- The provision of the newly opened ICT suite has had a very significant impact on raising achievement in the subject.
75. Recently the school has received significant amounts of extra finance as a result of it being a school causing concern to the local education authority. The current budget has been carefully planned and managed to ensure that the school will be viable and run efficiently now that the enhanced funding has been withdrawn. All grants allocated for specific purposes, for example ICT training for staff, have been used appropriately.
 76. The school's financial systems are well run. Administrative staff possess high levels of skill in managing day to day processes and appropriate use is made of ICT to support the high quality of provision in this area of the school's management.
 77. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and effectively managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She is well supported by the chair of governors, who has oversight of the provision from the point of view of the governing body. The conditions of statements of special educational needs are met. Individual education plans vary in their quality. In some, the targets for improvement are not focused sharply enough and it is difficult to judge the extent to which they have been achieved because the intended outcomes have not been made objectively measurable. The deployment of support staff to meet the needs with pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, and their personal contribution, is a strength of the school. These groups of pupils, special educational needs and English as an additional language, are well integrated into lessons and fully included in the life of the school. A number of more able pupils, however, are not getting access to the curriculum at a level of expectation that enables them to be stretched in their learning.
 78. Teachers have a suitable range of qualifications and experience that are well matched to the needs of the curriculum. There is need for further training and support to ensure that they have sufficient subject knowledge to teach writing effectively. They are a strong team; they support each other, work very well collaboratively and support the shared vision of an exciting, school.
 79. The school accommodation comprises the two sites of the previously separate infant and junior schools. There is plenty of space, but it is not particularly suitable for the provision of outdoor activities, particularly for children in the Foundation Stage. On the whole, the school utilises the accommodation well.
 80. The resources the school has are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. In some subjects, such as music, and design and technology, they are good. The school library is in need of upgrading and the book stocks added to. The implementation of plans to do this is imminent.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81. In order to improve standards, quality and the health and safety of pupils, the school governors in conjunction with the headteacher, staff and local education authority should:

- (1) raise standards of attainment in English by:
 - improving teachers' knowledge of and expertise in teaching writing;
 - increasing the opportunities for extended writing;
 - increasing the opportunities for independent writing in the Foundation Stage;
 - raising teachers' and pupils' expectations for the amount and quantity of written work produced;
 - improving subject knowledge of the National Curriculum assessment levels and use this to set challenging targets for pupils to improve.
[see paragraphs 6, 24, 31, 39, 78, 85, 87, 92, 94, 97, 98, 99, 100, 103, 168]

- (2) raise standards in mathematics by:
 - increasing opportunities for problem-solving;
 - raising expectations of the amount of independent work pupils should do in lessons.
[see paragraphs 33, 88, 106, 107, 111, 112]

- (3) raise standards in science by:
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge of experimental and investigative science;
 - increasing the teaching of experimental and investigative science.
[see paragraphs 24, 34, 123, 126, 127]

- (4) raise standards for more able pupils by:
 - implementing clear procedures for identifying this group;
 - having higher expectations of what these pupils can achieve;
 - planning challenging work so that the pupils can achieve higher levels of attainment.
[see paragraphs 5, 7, 24, 33, 37, 93, 94, 122, 123, 169]

- (5) improve the way in which the curriculum is organised by:
 - giving more time to ICT and science and increasing the use of ICT in other subjects;
 - making sure that lessons are not too long, so that the pace at which pupils produce work has to quicken;
 - making sure that there is variety in lessons that are timetabled consecutively.
[see paragraphs 10, 24, 39, 40, 53, 85, 96, 102, 127, 150]

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL:

- Improve the quality of some individual education plans.
[see paragraph 77]
- Fully implement the assessment and recording system.
[see paragraphs 41, 53,111]
- Improve book provision in the library.
[see paragraphs 80,104,170]

The school is very clear about the issues identified by the inspection. The majority of them are identified in its improvement plan with appropriate actions being taken to address them.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

52

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	23	14	0	0	0
Percentage	2	27	44	27	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

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	265
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15	61

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	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	32

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	12	21	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	20	17	21
	Total	29	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (64)	79 (51)	94 (62)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	21	21	20
	Total	31	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (51)	94 (64)	97 (51)
	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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	21	19	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	9	16
	Girls	11	8	12
	Total	22	17	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (35)	43 (33)	70 (53)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	14
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	17	18	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45 (42)	46 (33)	64 (38)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	258	4	3
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5
Average class size	26.5

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	313

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	16.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	30

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
	£
Total income	879,720
Total expenditure	857,612
Expenditure per pupil	2731
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,987
Balance carried forward to next year	62,095

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

291

Number of questionnaires returned

60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	41	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	56	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	58	2	2	2
The teaching is good.	53	44	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	34	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	27	2	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	39	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	41	53	5	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	41	53	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	51	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	42	10	0	12

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

82. During the inspection three lessons were observed in the nursery and five lessons in the reception class. Discussions were held with the Foundation Stage coordinator, the nursery teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistants. Children were heard to read and their work was analysed. Discussions were held with children and records of their assessments and entry profile were analysed.
83. At the time of the inspection there were fourteen children in the reception class and the fifty-two in the nursery, on a part-time basis. Children are admitted to the nursery when they are three and to the reception class in September and January of the year in which they are five. When children enter the nursery their attainment is well below what would be typically expected for children of this age in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Attainment on entry to nursery in mathematical development is below what would be expected for children of this age. Children in the Foundation Stage are making satisfactory progress overall and good progress in personal and social development and physical development. Higher ability children in the reception class are on course to achieve the nationally recommended goals in literacy and social, emotional and physical development, with the majority of children expected to achieve the goals in mathematical development, physical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
84. During the Foundation Stage all staff develop very strong relationships with parents. They are made to feel very welcome and are encouraged both to help in school and also to support their children at home. As well as encouraging reading through the use of reading diaries, parents are given ideas for other activities to support learning at home.
85. The quality of teaching is good in both nursery and reception classes and promotes satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in the Foundation Stage. There is particularly good teaching in personal, social and emotional development. Planning is good and what children are expected to learn is made clear for the teaching sessions. These are often shared with the children. There are high expectations of behaviour and the nursery nurse and teaching assistants provide good quality support that is used well to support the children's learning. There is a clear emphasis on the development of independence and on the improvement of children's speaking and listening skills. Support for children with special educational needs is good and it is satisfactory for those for whom English is not their first language. There are, however, too few opportunities for children to develop their independent writing skills. The organisation of time within lessons sometimes limits the opportunities for children to engage in independent activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

86. The school places a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development. This

results in good progress, with the higher attaining children expected to achieve the nationally recommended goals by the end of the reception class. Relationships in the classes are good and adults set good examples for the children by treating them with care and respect. Children settle into classes quickly and generally come to school with confidence. They are beginning to take turns, for instance on the climbing frame during an outdoor play session. Children are beginning to concentrate for appropriate periods of time, for instance a child spent a long time at the writing table in reception making a card and envelope to send to her mum. Although behaviour is generally good, some children can become unfocused when whole group sessions go on too long or when they are not sure what to do. Children are developing independence and are able to, for instance, put on their own aprons, get out resources and put on the cassette player for the 'tidy up music'.

Communication, language and literacy

87. The majority of children will not achieve the nationally expected goals by the end of reception. All staff and parent helpers take every opportunity to extend children's spoken language. Children are developing the confidence to speak to each other and to initiate conversations. For example, children playing with cars on the play mat were keen to talk about where the cars were going. Children are generally attentive and listen to instructions. Through good use of resources, staff are helping children learn their letter sounds and names. For instance, during one session children were encouraged to find objects beginning with the letter 'b'. Children take books home and parents are encouraged to make comments in the reading diaries. The highest attaining children are able to read simple texts, however they are not yet using a range of strategies to support their reading of new words. Children are developing their writing skills, with the highest attaining children beginning to write words on their own. Progress in writing, however, is limited by the lack of opportunities for children to write independently, rather than copying or writing under, or over, the adult's writing.

Mathematical development

88. Children are on course to achieve the nationally recommended goals by the time they leave the reception class. Progress in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and sometimes good. In the nursery and reception classes staff provide many opportunities for children to count and learn about numbers, for instance nursery children enjoyed adding up the cost of meals in their café. The highest attaining children are able to recognise numbers up to 20, match number up to 10 to the numerals and some are able to count in 10's to 100. The majority of children are able to recognise and name circles, squares and triangles. Where the pace of the lesson is slow and there is a lack of match of work to individual's needs, some children lose concentration and, consequently, learning is limited.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

89. Children make satisfactory progress and are on course to achieve the expected national goals by the end of reception. Teaching provides opportunities for children to observe carefully. For instance, children looked at conkers and leaves through magnifying glasses and were also watching carefully what happened to the seeds they had planted. Children have been learning

about their own bodies and some children in reception were able to discuss healthy and unhealthy foods. Children are developing their ICT skills through weekly access to the computer suite. There is little evidence, however, that computer skills are being transferred to support learning within the classrooms.

Physical development

90. Children make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress and are on line to achieve the nationally expected goals by the end of reception. Children are able to manoeuvre wheeled toys and climb on small apparatus. The opportunities for outdoor play are limited by the poor quality of the learning environment. This has been identified as a priority for the school. Some whole class sessions outdoors are too long, which results in some inappropriate behaviour. Children have a satisfactory level of skill in using small equipment such as scissors and paintbrushes, for example in the junk modelling of puppets. They are able to manipulate playdough and build models. For instance nursery children worked hard together to build a train and track. Planning for the use of a variety of small equipment in all areas of learning enables children to have opportunity to practise and improve their skills.

Creative development

91. Children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children enjoy imaginative play, such as the café in the nursery, where they assume different roles. Children develop their creative skills using paint, felt tips, crayon, printing and collage. Children enjoy music and show curiosity about sounds from different musical instruments.

ENGLISH

92. Standards in English are below average when the children enter school. In the 2002 tests for seven year olds, standards in reading improved significantly at the national average. Standards remained below average in writing but were significantly better than standards achieved in 2001. The proportion of pupils reaching above average levels in reading and writing was below that of similar schools with no pupils attaining the higher levels in writing. Overall, standards were improved but were not high enough in writing for all ability groups.
93. In the 2002 tests for eleven year olds, standards in English were very low in terms of national averages and also very low compared with school containing a similar range of pupils. The school's results were in the bottom 5% of all schools. However, the 2002 results represented a significant improvement on attainment in 2001. The 2002 test results and inspection evidence indicate that these low standards are due to poor progress in writing. For example, over twice as many pupils achieved the expected level for eleven year olds in reading than for writing. The school has worked very hard of late to introduce a range of different approaches for learning during lessons, to ensure that the needs of a wide variety of pupils are catered for. As a consequence, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are achieving satisfactory standards and making good progress. During the inspection, the differences in standards of the work between boys and girls were not marked. This is a changing pattern, a further result of teaching which focuses on the need to include all

pupils and make sure they have full access to the curriculum. The group who at present are not fully provided with sufficient challenge in their work are those capable of the highest attainment.

94. During the inspection standards in classrooms were broadly judged to match the most recent results at both key stages. In Years 1 and 2 they match the national expectation for reading and speaking and listening and are below national expectations for writing. In Years 3 to 6, they are below expectation in reading and well below national expectations in writing. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory and sometimes good. Overall, attainment in English is unsatisfactory. The attainment of more able pupils' in both reading and writing is below national expectations across the school.
95. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills. Many develop the ability to speak confidently and fluently. They are able to express ideas with clarity, extend their responses and show an awareness of their audience. For instance, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 assume the role of different characters from World War 2, they are able to express points of view, reason, debate and empathise with how it felt to live in a war time city that had been badly bombed. Teacher s' planning shows a range of opportunities for speaking and listening, including drama, role play, group and partner work. Collaborative planning ensures that these very good opportunities for speaking and listening are embedded throughout the school and across the curriculum. All pupils listen carefully and some are beginning to use technical vocabulary that teachers have taught them in subjects such as English, design and technology and science.
96. The teachers show a high level of commitment to improving all aspects of the pupils' literacy skills. However, the organisation and use of time often works against pupils having regular and consistent access to a breadth of reading material and appropriate coverage of the National Literacy Strategy reading objectives. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have blocks of time where reading is not taught via shared sessions. This results in the pupils not being given a context or model for their own reading and writing. The frequency in which the pupils are taught reading is also variable across the school and there is not a shared understanding of how reading will be taught during shared and guided sessions. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not developed the full range of strategies for tackling unknown words in their reading. Although many can break down regular words, and generally have a secure sight vocabulary, their phonic skills are often limited. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are exposed to too many work sheets which do not go beyond simple letter and sound recognition. These shortcomings are currently being put right by whole school use of the DfES 'Progression in Phonics' programme. Where the programme is systematically taught, pupils are beginning to develop good strategies for understanding and using their knowledge of the sound patterns in English, for reading and for spelling. For example, in Year 1 where many of the pupils are beginning to hear beginning, middle and end sounds in simple words such 'cat', 'bat' and 'sat'. Most pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of the storyline or content of their reading, but are often not able to use skills of inference or deduction. These skills should be the focus of teaching at both key stages.
97. The analysis of pupils' writing and lesson observations shows that pupils' handwriting, spelling,

punctuation and organisation of writing is weak across all classes. The majority of pupils make unsatisfactory progress in writing because they spell simple words incorrectly, do not consistently join their writing, do not punctuate their work correctly or complete enough work. The pupils' writing style does not develop as they get older and this results in them staying at below average levels for extensive periods of time. Pupils of all ages have too few opportunities to write for themselves and do not write enough.

98. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to spell some common words correctly and they are beginning to use capital letters, full stops and simple punctuation. Pupils' in Years 1 and 2 have too few opportunities to write for a purpose or context in English lessons or to see what good writing looks like. They complete more written work in lessons other than English and often presentation and writing is of a better standard in history, geography and science work. However, skills such as drafting are used infrequently and the knowledge, understanding and skills pupils learn in literacy lessons are not used explicitly in most other lessons. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are being exposed to the skills necessary to write in a wide range of forms including stories, poetry, reports, play scripts, character descriptions and newspaper articles. Writing frames are well used to help structure the writing process. However, this is not yet impacting in the pupils' own work due to too few opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing. The oldest pupils are not yet secure with the ability to shape a piece of writing for a particular purpose or audience or to use paragraphs consistently. Handwriting is not consistently neat or well formed. The vast majority of pupils do not consistently join their writing. However, in practice sessions they produce neat, well formed and consistently joined handwriting and some older pupils take great pride in their presentation. Overall, the formal teaching of writing skills is underdeveloped throughout the school. This has an impact on lowering standards in all other subjects of which writing is a component part.
99. The teaching of English, including that in literacy lessons, ranges from satisfactory to very good, and in the main is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, and almost half the teaching was good or very good. However, the quality of teaching was variable within each key stage with both key stages having both satisfactory and good teaching. The good teaching is supported by thorough planning which focuses sharply on the objectives for the learning and a range of interactive learning styles are used well to keep the pupils involved, interested and motivated. For example, use of personal white boards, role-play, time for reflection with a partner and use of personal letter cards. Where lessons are less successful, teachers do not model writing or set high enough expectations for the amount or quality of work they expect the pupils to complete. Questioning in whole class teaching is managed well and demonstrates good subject knowledge.
100. The generally good teaching, together with the effective targeted support offered by learning support assistants ensures that most pupils at both key stages are making satisfactory progress in reading and speaking and listening. However, there are areas for development in the teaching, which would ensure satisfactory progress in writing composition, spelling and handwriting and a faster rate of progress for higher attaining pupils. Assessment information, including pupils' target sheets and teachers' day to day marking, should be used more effectively to plan for shared and guided writing sessions. Teachers and pupils need to be clearer about the next steps for learning, which in turn should be assessed more systematically.

Teachers should also plan to use the outcomes of whole class and group teaching to set targets and prompts for future independent work. Teachers also need more support with the teaching of grammar and the purpose and organisation of writing.

101. Teachers establish very good relationships in their classrooms and behaviour is good. Teaching assistants are carefully used to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are well supported during both whole class and group work. Teachers carefully select practical and interactive tasks, which enable pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language to access the curriculum. For example, rehearsing reading with a partner to develop fluency and expression and then tape recording and playing back their efforts. Homework, the extra-curricular book club and the literacy discussion group are used well to support pupils' learning.
102. Time is not always well used to enhance literacy skills both inside and outside the Literacy hour because some lessons are too long and pupils' are not expected to produce enough work in the time available. However, some very good planning for cross curricular links are beginning to be made in Years 3 to 6 and this is enabling pupils' to be enthusiastic and make sense of their learning. For example, the work on World War Two in Years 5 and 6 is linking history led work very effectively to work in English on role play, speaking and listening, poetry, use of metaphor and character study. The use of ICT in English is at an early stage and is an area for development.
103. There have been substantial improvements in English provision this term. The newly appointed English co-ordinator is enthusiastic, well informed and committed and has already begun to successfully steer the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy with over half of the teaching staff being new this term. She provides a good model in her own teaching and has supported collaborative team planning and the generation of teaching ideas well. Resources are well organised and adequate. Literacy displays are of a high quality and illustrate a good exposure to a range of writing opportunities in Years 3 to 6. There is an appropriate range of books for use in literacy teaching, including 'big' books. A literacy audit and detailed action plan have been produced this term. The co-ordinators' plans for the development of the subject are broad but do not focus sharply enough on improving the key area of writing. She has not yet had time to undertake monitoring activities but is aware of the need to undertake regular scrutiny of the pupils' work and classroom observations.
104. The literacy co-ordinator, supported by the senior management team has rightly made development in literacy work a high priority. The school has recently appointed a number of teachers with good subject knowledge and expertise in English teaching. Staff are working effectively as a team to plan a creative and interesting curriculum. Efforts now need to be made to secure satisfactory progress in writing for pupils of all abilities across the school.
105. At present the school library needs more books of better quality, a wider range of books and better organisation if it is to fully support the implementation of the national strategy for improving standards of literacy. The school is aware of this and has plans to improve it, which are detailed in the current school improvement plan.

MATHEMATICS

106. The results of statutory assessments in mathematics for seven year olds in 2002 indicate that attainment was below the national average when taking account of attainment at all levels, although it is in line with that of similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected levels was average when compared to all schools and above average when compared with similar schools. However analysed, these results show a significant upward trend over the last two years. The assessments show that pupils' attainment at the higher levels was well below that of schools nationally and well below that of similar schools. The results indicate that the performance of girls in mathematics is slightly better than boys in the national tests. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that standards are improving, that pupils are on target to achieve average standards by the end of Year 2. However, too few are likely to achieve higher than the nationally expected level, although higher attaining pupils are capable of it.
107. In the 2002 statutory tests for eleven year olds in mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 are very low, in the bottom 5%, when compared with schools nationally, and when compared with similar schools. The assessments show that pupils' attainment at the higher levels was well below that of schools nationally and that of similar schools. The results show that the performance of boys in mathematics is slightly better than girls in the Key Stage 2 national assessments. Results of the national tests show steady improvement over the last two years. The work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are now on line to meet national expectations by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. However, if more pupils are to achieve higher levels, the pace at which they are making progress must increase.
108. In Year 2 the most able pupils can recognise the difference between numbers in hundreds, tens and units. They present their work accurately. They are beginning to use mathematical vocabulary appropriately. Pupils are able to solve money problems using multiplication facts relating to the two and ten times multiplication tables. They know odd and even numbers and can use simple fractions. Less able pupils are able to add and subtract to ten using practical counting apparatus. Most of the Year 2 pupils are able to identify common two- and three-dimensional shapes, and classify them according to the number of edges, faces and corners. They can measure in standard measures and can make up coins to a given amount up to £1. Overall, pupils in this age group are beginning to attain standards in the important skills of numeracy that are in line with those found nationally. In Year 6, pupils are taught in a number of different mathematics groups according to their past attainment and needs. Higher attaining pupils can employ a variety of efficient methods for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They can add and subtract decimals to two places. They can use a calculator effectively to check results. They can find the perimeters of shapes. They can compare fractions, calculate percentages and work to two places in decimals. They have learned to use fractions and percentages when calculating the costs of items. Less able pupils can use their knowledge of the 2, 5 and 10 times table to carry out mentally simple multiplication and division sums. They can add and subtract money. They are able to sort fractions in order and use doubling and halving to round numbers to the nearest ten. During the course of the year some Year 6 pupils have learned about the properties of different types of quadrilateral shapes

and angles and measuring right angles.

109. Evidence from Year 6 pupils' books indicates that there is a wide range of ability. The decision to teach the pupils in different mathematics groups according to their past attainment and needs is providing a sharper focus to teaching and learning. There are an increasing number of pupils working at the nationally expected level.
110. The school is using setting by prior attainment, booster classes and some revision clubs to raise standards of attainment. All pupils are set individual half termly targets on the basis of their prior attainment and the results of regular assessment. These targets are glued into pupils' exercise books, shared with the parents and pupils have the opportunity to comment on how they set about achieving them.
111. The progress made by pupils in mathematics as they move through the school is generally at least satisfactory. There is evidence that pupils have made good progress in mental calculations and number skills across the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good understanding of halves and quarters. In Year 3 most pupils are comparing fractions and can add and subtract decimals in two places. This is extended in Years 5 and 6 where pupils calculate percentages. Data handling skills are developed appropriately. Information is recorded pictorially in Years 1 and 2. By the age of seven pupils can interpret their bar charts showing information about their favourite pets. By the age of eleven pupils have extended these skills to plot data obtained from the Internet for a history project and are beginning to present their findings using a variety of line graphs and pie charts. More able pupils would benefit from more challenging tasks, particularly in the areas of problem-solving and the use of mathematical investigations, in order for them to achieve higher levels.
112. The match of work to pupils' abilities is satisfactory. Occasionally some higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 are given tasks that are too easy and consequently they do not have to apply themselves with sufficient concentration to move their learning forward. Attention needs to be given to increasing the challenge in the activities for the more able children. In all classes, pupils with special educational needs are well supported overall, pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs make good progress. For example in a Year 1 lesson the effective support of a learning support assistant, working on a number recognition computer programme with a group of pupils who had special educational needs, enabled pupils to remain focused and make progress in their learning. The very few children for whom English is an additional language have full access to the teaching and make satisfactory progress.
113. Teachers throughout the school are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy, drawing on its guidance to set the pupils appropriate activities for their age and abilities. Most pupils present their work tidily and accurately. Overall the standards of presentation of work in mathematics are in line with what should be expected.
114. In the eight lessons observed the quality of teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory. It was good overall, with no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching that was observed in the infants was judged to be good, and in two lessons it was very good. Overall the

teaching that was observed in the juniors was judged to be good, with one lesson that was very good.

115. All the teaching observed followed the structure set out in the national programme for teaching mathematics and was generally effective in promoting learning at a good rate. Lessons were well planned, with what had to be learned being clearly shared with the pupils, appropriate activities and sufficient resources. Mental work was conducted at good pace using a range of appropriate devices for pupils to record their answers. For example, pupils use number cards and number lines with enthusiasm and accuracy. In the majority of lessons the pupils were well behaved, attentive and keen to respond to questions. They worked co-operatively when required, for example, when sharing the small whiteboards, and most maintained concentration when working independently.
116. In the best lessons, teachers made effective use of questioning to develop ideas or to reinforce key concepts. Teachers demonstrated effectively to show pupils how to record answers and methods of calculation, so that pupils could apply these to subsequent tasks. Activities were well organised and pupils were aware of the expected classroom routines. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils moved quickly and quietly from the mental activities on the carpet area, to a series of well planned practical number activities using real coins, cubes, plastic shapes and number lines to work out money problems. In this lesson activities were well led by the teacher and two learning support assistants. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were classifying quadrilaterals using side and angle properties, organised into groups on the basis of their prior learning. They were given tasks that were well matched to their attainment and understanding. A learning assistant supporting a group of lower ability pupils and the teacher focused on the higher attaining group, as well as maintaining a good level of awareness of the work being done by the middle group.
117. Throughout the school, homework is used effectively to support teaching and learning in mathematics. During the week of the inspection evidence was seen of pupils being given, and completing homework in all year groups.
118. The school makes satisfactory use of the results of statutory tests and other assessments to set targets to be attained by the end of Year 6. Individual targets are set for each pupil using national level descriptions and objectives taken from the National Numeracy Strategy. These are assessed half termly. Marking of pupils work does not generally contain comments to enable pupils to improve their work, although it does usually celebrate gains made in skills and knowledge.
119. Teachers have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and they give due emphasis to number work. However, the computers in the classrooms are rarely being used to support the daily numeracy lessons in the classrooms.
120. The mathematics co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject. She has a clear vision for the future development of mathematics across the school. She is a member of the senior management team, which has drawn up the school improvement plan. The raising of standards in mathematics is a priority in this plan. Staff have had appropriate training for the delivery of the National Numeracy Strategy and this is on-going due to the significant changes of staffing,

especially in Years 3 to 6. The subject co-ordinator has identified the need for further training for staff to raise expectations for the more able pupils. The co-ordinator has time built into the school improvement plan for the spring term for monitoring the quality of teaching. She has begun to monitor and examine teachers' planning and pupils' work. Governors have received training in the way the numeracy strategy works and have had the opportunity to see the strategy being taught in the classroom. Resources for mathematics throughout the school are at least satisfactory. A significant and effective investment has been made in the purchase of resources to support numeracy.

SCIENCE

121. Judgements are based on evidence gathered through observations in three lessons, analysis of current and previous work in pupils' books and on displays, analysing teachers' planning, talking to pupils, class teachers and the co-ordinator for science.
122. Teachers' assessments in science in 2002 for pupils in Year 2 indicated that standards were above the level regarded as typical for pupils aged seven nationally. They were well above the standards typical for pupils in schools of a similar nature. This is a significant improvement from 2001 results. Standards at the higher Level 3 were below what is typical for pupils aged seven nationally, however, they are in line when compared to schools of a similar nature. In 2002 the attainment of Year 6 pupils in national tests was well below the standards that are typical of pupils aged eleven both nationally and with schools of a similar nature. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well below those typical for pupils nationally. Nevertheless there was a significant improvement from the 2001 results. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in the tests at either age.
123. Overall standards in science are satisfactory. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicated that in Years 2 and 6 pupils are in line with national expectations, except in scientific enquiry. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. This is because of the good or better teaching of pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, as do those for whom English is an additional language. Progress of more able pupils is, however, limited by the lack of opportunities to explore and investigate and to take part in independent research.
124. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know that living things need food and water in order to survive. They are able to make comparisons and to talk about similarities and differences between materials. Pupils understand that some foods are unhealthy and are able to make simple recordings of their findings. They do not demonstrate enough knowledge of the principles of scientific enquiry, such as the idea of a variable, because there are not enough opportunities for investigative science.
125. In Years 3 and 4 pupils understand the concept of fair testing with one variable. They are able to observe carefully and make appropriate recordings, for instance when testing effectiveness of insulators on ice pops. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were able to use the conventional symbols for parts of a circuit, when learning about electricity. They have developed a good understanding about the movement of the earth and sun.

126. Overall teaching in science is good, with some very good and excellent teaching in the juniors. The best teaching is characterised by the teacher s' very good subject knowledge; the clear objectives which are related to the pupils; very effective use of varied teaching methods; challenging use of questioning to check what pupils understand and can do; good use of support staff and very high expectations of behaviour. Where lessons are too long this can lead to some inappropriate behaviour and lack of concentration from some children. Common planning across the year groups ensures a consistent approach and appropriate coverage of the subject. Teaching is still mainly focused on the knowledge aspects of science. There is a weakness in teachers' knowledge and understanding of how to teach the investigative elements of science most effectively. However, the use of planning boards and science tables, to support understanding and recording of scientific enquiry, is already having an impact on pupil's learning in this area. The development of assessment through the use of progress charts will enable better matching of work to individual pupils.
127. The newly appointed co-ordinator has already identified appropriate priorities for development in science. Monitoring of planning and some analysis of pupils work has already taken place. This has supported the development of an action plan that is clearly focused on raising standards. Appropriate targets for levels of pupil attainment have been set with the local education authority. The school should consider the amount of time given to science overall, as it is not always possible to give pupils adequate coverage of the subject, so that they can make better progress. Also, science is nearly always taught in the afternoons, which does not always optimise learning conditions for pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

128. No art and design lessons were observed during the inspection. It was therefore not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching of the subject. However, the work on display, photographic evidence and discussion with pupils provided sufficient evidence of the range and quality of work produced. The quality of work produced in art and design is in line with those typically expected for pupils at seven and eleven years of age. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing art and design skills as they move through the school. The use of a systematic scheme of work is ensuring good coverage of a range of both two- and three-dimensional media and an appropriate progression in pupils' skills. There is also a good balance of opportunities to be creative and develop the imagination alongside structured teaching of skills.
129. There are displays of high quality work around the school. These include examples of work in a good range of media including clay, weaving, watercolours, pastels, pencil work, wax resist, collage, papier-mâché and printing. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were using computer based painting programs with confidence.
130. Pupils of six and seven years of age have had the opportunity to make detailed observational pencil sketches of buildings, make large scale paintings of houses and create three-dimensional clay houses as part of their work on 'houses and homes'. There is evidence of progress in developing observational skills for pupils from six to seven years of age. The six to seven year

old pupils have also produced a range of good quality three-dimensional work. This includes weaved sculptures, papier-mâché sea creatures and picture frames with a seaside theme.

131. The older pupils in Years 3 to 6 are acquiring appropriate observational skills. They are able to use perspective well to create depth in their landscape collage pictures of World War 2 skylines. They also show careful attention to detail when they have created large scale paintings in the style of David Hockney's *A Bigger Splash*.
132. Evidence from scrutiny of pupils' work suggests that teachers have secure subject knowledge, provide pupils with a good range of learning opportunities, and have high expectations of pupils' potential achievement. The co-ordinator has a pertinent action plan highlighting areas for development in the subject and has ensured that a range of appropriate resources is readily available. Good leadership of the subject is provided. There are more restricted opportunities for pupils to appreciate other artists, to evaluate and develop their work and for exploring work from other cultures. These are areas for development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

133. The standard of design and technology work in the school is in line with those typically seen for seven year olds. Pupils make good progress through the school resulting in above average standards than those normally seen for eleven year olds. Standards achieved by seven year olds in Year 2 are average. Four lesson observations, displays and photographs of pupils' work show that they have designed and made a variety of products for specific purposes. These include designing and making a variety of houses and homes, designing Roman money containers and constructing a variety of structures.
134. The six and seven year olds make a card wall of a house using cutting and joining skills with precision. They are then able to decide themselves how to adapt their wall by adding hinges and windows. The pupils are also able to use a variety of construction materials such as 'Lego' and 'Mobilo' to make a range of buildings with moving parts. They follow instructions with support but also adapt them to pursue their own ideas.
135. The seven and eight year olds are able to create intricate designs for Roman purses. They explore a variety of different stitches in order to decide which one will be the most suitable for their purposes. The ten and eleven year olds construct a variety of structures in preparation for building an Anderson shelter. They make their structures with great care and attention by thinking about how they can reinforce and strengthen them. They are then able to devise a fair test as they explore practically how structures fail when a load is placed on them. The eleven year olds are developing a good vocabulary to describe technical features related to structures.
136. Pupils of all ages work very well together in small groups and teams. They help each other, negotiate over use of materials and show a very mature attitude to using a wide range of practical resources and materials sensibly. The oldest pupils respond very well to being given the responsibility to negotiate their own friendship groups – their attitude and behaviour during practical work is outstanding. A particularly strong feature is how pupils with special educational needs are supported within mixed ability groups. They make good progress in

their learning. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are also well supported and progress well.

137. The teaching of design technology is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The teachers plan their work in teams and make good use of each other's subject knowledge. Tasks are very carefully prepared to teach pupils skills but also to allow them to explore and develop creativity. A number of more able pupils would benefit from being given more regular opportunities to draw conclusions and evaluate their work. Very good cross-curricular links are made with subjects such as history and science. Where teaching is very good, a variety of types of questioning is used to tease out pupils understanding and teachers show very explicitly what is expected, during focused practical tasks. The subject co-ordinator has a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Resources are just adequate and would benefit from replenishment.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

138. Overall standards in geography and history are in line with what is typical for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Progress in these subjects is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Judgements are based on evidence gathered through observations in three lessons, analysis of current and previous work in pupils' books and on displays, analysing teachers' planning, talking to pupils and the co-ordinator.
139. By the age of seven, pupils have developed appropriate mapping skills when working on their theme related to the Katie Morag books. They understand the need for different forms of transport, for instance pupils were able to discuss the need for aeroplanes or boats to travel to and from an island. In discussion pupils were able to talk about the similarities and differences between the imaginary Island of Struay and their own locality. Pupils have also developed their understanding of different types of homes through activities such as role play in the estate agents or the making of junk models.
140. In Years 3 to 6 pupils show an understanding of the way the past is represented. They have developed an understanding of chronology using times lines. They have developed appropriate mapping skills. During a geography lesson, pupils in Year 3 and 4 were able to build on previous learning about the Romans. They were able to locate places on maps and make links with the people who made early settlements there. For instance pupils knew that towns ending in '...chester' indicated early Roman settlements. In Years 5 and 6 pupils understand how World War 2 affected peoples' lives at home and in other parts of the world. For instance one class assembly focused on Anne Frank showed that pupils had empathy with people who lived through the war. The learning throughout school has been effectively supported by school visits, for example, to Plymouth museum.
141. Overall teaching is satisfactory, with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. The best teaching is characterised by the teachers' very good subject knowledge; the clear objectives which are related to the pupils; very effective use of varied teaching methods; challenging use of questioning to check what pupils understand and can do; good use of support staff and very

high expectations learning and behaviour. For example, in Year 5 and 6 lessons, teaching was characterised by high expectations as it challenged pupils' thinking about what it must have been like to live through the Second World War. Pupils responded with mature demonstrations of how they could empathise with the people of the time, using photographic evidence. Common planning across the year groups ensures consistent and appropriate coverage of the subjects. However, in some cases there is inconsistent implementation of the planning. Some activities are not clearly focused on the development of the skills of history and geography, for example the copying out of information. In many cases the focus of the marking is on the English rather than the specific knowledge and understanding of history or geography.

142. Good links are being made with other areas of the curriculum, for instance Year 5 and 6 pupils wrote poetry about World War 2 and baked cookies of the kind eaten then. These links help to motivate pupils. In the lessons seen pupils showed enjoyment and responded enthusiastically. They work well together in pairs and in groups. Their good behaviour, and the capacity to listen to and learn from each other, contributes significantly to the quality of learning.
143. The newly appointed co-ordinator has identified appropriate priorities and drawn up a clear action plan. There has, as yet, been no opportunity to monitor teaching or learning in these subject areas. Resources to support learning and teaching in history are satisfactory, however, there is a need to develop geographical resources. There is some evidence of the use of ICT, for instance the overhead projector was used in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson. There is a need, however, to further develop the use of ICT skills in these subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

144. Five lessons were seen in information and communication technology (ICT). Samples of work were reviewed and discussions held with pupils and teachers. ICT work in other subjects was also analysed. Most pupils attain standards that are broadly typical of those found nationally at the ages of seven and eleven. As pupils move through the school they make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills. All pupils have opportunities to become familiar with computers and their uses through working in the school's well-appointed computer network suite, as well as on the computers located in classrooms.
145. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory overall. From an early age pupils have the opportunity to become confident users of the keyboard and mouse. Infant pupils use their word processing skills to support literacy. They can word process simple poems, add pictures to text, use word banks and label and classify their work.
146. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. Year 6 pupils are developing good word-processing skills, including the use of different fonts and sizes for different purposes. They can use CD-ROMs and web pages to access information and retrieve this using cutting and pasting techniques. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work.
147. In general, progress in the acquisition of ICT skills is good. Pupils make consistent progress

throughout the school, enjoying the varied and interesting learning opportunities presented to them. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons and make good progress. Those pupils whose first language is not English have no problems in accessing ICT and are making good progress in their learning.

148. Overall, the quality of teaching was judged to be good. Positive features included well-planned and well-organised activities; a good mix of teacher demonstration and pupils' practical activity; a good pace to the teaching and learning; well-managed behaviour; and pupils working co-operatively in pairs. Teachers used the main server computer to effectively demonstrate key teaching points. In doing so they used appropriate technical language and exhibited good subject knowledge. Pupils' learning is well supported by a very effective teaching assistant.
149. The teachers' use of ICT in other areas of the curriculum is under developed. Not enough time is planned or given to it throughout the curriculum. It is used to a limited extent to enhance learning in literacy, mathematics, history, and art and design. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were using a CD-ROM to search for information about lighthouses. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were using a "turtle" control programme to draw shapes. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 had used the Internet to research clothes and entertainment during World War Two. The school is aware that it is not using ICT to enhance other areas of the curriculum and plans for improving this aspect are in the school improvement plan.
150. The co-ordinator took up the post in September and is leading the subject well. There is a clear policy for ICT and a scheme of work, which draws appropriately upon national guidance. He is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and has a clear vision for the development of ICT throughout the school.
151. The resources for ICT are good. ICT has been a major priority for the school and governors have identified funding from the school's budget as well as government grants to improve resources for ICT, including the development of the computer suite and the provision of a computer in every classroom. The planned purchase of a mobile suite of sixteen laptop computers should enhance the learning opportunities for pupils. The employment of a skilled, part-time, technician has ensured that computers consistently work well.
152. The school has implemented an intensive programme of staff training through the New Opportunities Fund, and in house training by the co-ordinator. This has improved teachers' confidence and expertise.

MUSIC

153. Standards in music are average for pupils aged seven and eleven. Lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. In addition there were several occasions when singing and music making were going on in assemblies and during the extra-curricular music club. Discussions were held with pupils and with the subject co-ordinator, resources were audited and school displays analysed.

154. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show good recognition of how sounds are made and changed. Some are beginning to recognise how sounds and sound patterns are organised. Pupils in a Year 2 class drew simple diagrammatic representations of patterns they made on xylophones. Pupils in a Year 1 lesson used all of the percussion instruments appropriately as they were asked to respond to sound descriptions: slow, loud, sustained. All pupils showed a good and developing sense of rhythm and pitch. Pupils in a Years 3 to 6 assembly sang enthusiastically but were not helped by the taped accompaniment, as they lost the timing and shape of the song. The singing of all pupils is limited because the accompaniment is not able to adjust and help them keep together. In general, pupils' knowledge and understanding of music and their performance with instruments is better than their singing. Pupils demonstrate good speaking and listening in music lessons.
155. The teaching seen in lessons was good. Teachers subject knowledge is very well supported by a detailed and comprehensive scheme of work, which guides their planning and teaching. They teach with enthusiasm and enjoyment, which is clearly transmitted to the pupils. Behaviour is very well managed. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons, well supported by teaching assistants. They make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also well catered for. In a Year 2 lesson one pupil from an ethnic minority group was encouraged to use her musical talent to demonstrate her playing to the class. All pupils are fully included in lessons. ICT is used in lessons to some extent, but there is more scope for pupils' independent use of this. This is true also for the exposure of pupils to a wider range of music from different genres, cultures and heritages. The contribution which music makes to pupils' cultural development could be improved.
156. Pupils display very positive attitudes towards music. This is in response to the enthusiasm shown by their teachers. They behave very well, work very hard and consequently make good progress as they learn new knowledge, skills and understandings of music.
157. Music supports the development of pupils' social skills very well. They enjoy working together as a group and collaborate well in pairs when required to do so. The way in which pupils shared instruments and took turns in a very mature way in a Year 2 class was very impressive. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils in this regard.
158. The subject is well managed by an effective co-ordinator. The after school "music zone" club which she runs alongside a teacher from a local Education Action Zone is much enjoyed by the pupils and adds a significant dimension to the musical opportunities the school provides. Resources are good and well organised.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. Seven lessons were observed during the inspection and five after school clubs. Discussions took place with pupils, teachers and the subject co-ordinator. Pupils attain standards that are broadly typical of those found in other schools by the time pupils reach the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils receive a well-balanced programme of work, focusing on gymnastics, games, dance and swimming. All pupils are taught to swim and can do so by the time they are in Year 6. Additional activities include outdoor and adventurous activities. For example, the

Year 5/6 pupils undertake a residential visit in the summer term where they experience a wide range of outdoor activities. The curriculum is also enhanced by the provision of extra-curricular clubs, which include tag rugby, netball, gymnastics, football and dance. The school has established links with a local college, which provides a one to one coaching in short tennis, badminton and football for Year 5 pupils. In addition the school takes part in a variety of inter-school team games, including tag rugby, cricket, athletics, football and netball. These activities extend the curriculum well and make a strong contribution to pupils' self-esteem and social development. They also provide the opportunity to extend the provision for the more able pupils so that they achieve at a high level.

160. Teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers pay close attention to health and safety issues and pupils generally have a good understanding of the need to exercise their muscles before activities and the importance of cooling down after exercise. Lessons are well planned and identify a clear focus for pupils learning. Teachers make good use of direct teaching and positive encouragement to improve skills. For instance in a Year 2 dance lesson, where pupils were making up a simple dance sequence based on the movement of autumn leaves, they were encouraged to explain their choice of movement ideas and demonstrate them to the class. Pupils in badminton and short tennis training coaching session at Marjohn College made exceptional progress. Expectations are appropriate for the age and the ability of the pupils. Behaviour is managed well and pupils are enthusiastic and well motivated. Resources and equipment are well prepared for the sessions. Non-teaching support staff are used effectively so that all pupils are able to take part in the lessons. Lessons started promptly and the pace was brisk.
161. Pupil's learning is enhanced within games, gymnastics and dance where they work collaboratively. For instance pupils in Year 3/4 in a tag rugby lesson worked in pairs to improve their control and accuracy when throwing and catching the rugby ball. Pupils were able to vary their movements in speed, level and direction and are able to balance on a given number of parts of the body. They use appropriate language to describe and comment on their skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 get out and put away apparatus safely. They use space effectively. For example, in a Year 1/2 games lesson pupils were able to build on their skills of dodging by varying the pace of their running. They can copy, remember and repeat simple actions with control and confidence.
162. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good because of the sensitive interaction and support of the teaching assistants and various coaches, which the school makes very good use of. This enables pupils with particular talents in physical education to make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve standards in line with the rest of the class because teaching is well adjusted to their needs.
163. The accommodation is good and well used. The school has the benefit of two large halls; its own indoor swimming pool and extensive playgrounds marked out for various team games, as well a large grassed area. The co-ordinator leads his subject well and has a clear strategy for the development of physical education, which forms part of the school improvement plan. He has put in place a new scheme of work, which provides good support for non-specialist teachers to be able to deliver the full curriculum. He has put in place a system for identifying

professional development needs of staff and organising the appropriate training. Finances have been well targeted and resources are good. Physical education has a high profile and is greatly valued by the school, pupils and parents.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

164. Evidence shows that standards in religious education are average. Pupils aged seven and eleven are meeting the attainment requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4, pupils' work, teachers' planning and school displays were analysed and discussions were held with pupils and the subject co-ordinator.
165. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are taught the major Christian festivals, they know Bible stories and some of the basic teachings of Jesus. They are gaining knowledge of festivals in faiths other than Christianity, such as Diwali in Hinduism. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are gaining knowledge of the Bible and its significance to Christians and Jews. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 gained understanding of what an idol is by comparing and contrasting the modern notion of an idol, through contemporary people, with the worship of idols in the Bible.
166. Pupils are beginning to understand the eternal nature of God in religious belief. The stories and teaching in collective worship add to pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion, through the use of the teachings of Jesus, such as the parable of the lost sheep, and other major religious figures.
167. Teaching is satisfactory. Subject knowledge is guided and enhanced by a scheme of work and is in line with the Plymouth local education authority's locally agreed syllabus for the teaching of religious education. However, not enough opportunities are given for pupils to develop and extend their writing in religious education lessons and there is little evidence of ICT being used to support the subject. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally well managed and satisfactory, although in one lesson observed they did not produce as much work as they should have done. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully included in lessons and make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. This is due in no small part to the classroom support staff who help and guide their participation.
168. Pupils who are capable of higher attainment do not get enough opportunity to carry out individual research. For example, few opportunities are provided for them to use the library or the Internet to find out things for themselves. This limits the progress they make and the standards they achieve.
169. Religious education lessons contribute to pupils' moral development as they begin to understand how religious faiths define and evaluate people's behaviour in terms of right and wrong. During assemblies and other times provided for personal reflection, for example on their own and other's "special gifts" in an assembly for Years 3 to 6, pupils' spiritual development is enhanced. The subject also makes a contribution to pupils' social development as they discuss issues in class. These discussions also provide opportunities for

pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening. The curriculum has been enhanced by visits to such places as the local Salvation Army centre.

170. Resources for religious education are good, although there is scope for improving the book provision. This should happen when the school under takes its planned improvement of the school library. The subject co-ordinator is currently on maternity leave, but there is evidence of well-organised support for and evaluation of the subject.