

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BICKLEIGH DOWN CE AIDED PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Woolwell, Plymouth

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113493

Headteacher: Mrs C Deykin

Reporting inspector: Mr D Penney  
23039

Dates of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Inspection number: 250927

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Drive  
Woolwell  
Plymouth  
Devon

Postcode: PL6 7JW

Telephone number: 01752 301837

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend R Carlton

Date of previous inspection: May 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23039	David Penney	Registered Inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well does the school care for its pupils? What should the school do to improve further?
19338	Graham Ellis	Lay Inspector	Educational inclusion, including racial equality	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3855	David Langton	Team Inspector	Art and design Music Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
6169	Melvyn Bradshaw	Team Inspector	Foundation stage Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
17907	Michael Bowers	Team Inspector	Special educational needs Science Design and technology Information and communication technology	
2756	Michael Barron	Team Inspector	English History	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bickleigh Down Church of England Aided Primary School serves the estate of Woolwell, north of Plymouth, which is an area of predominantly owner-occupied houses with some local authority housing. Almost a quarter of its pupils come from elsewhere as a result of parental choice. The school is a large infant and junior school with 371 boys and girls on roll, aged from four to eleven years, with two parallel classes in each year group. All four-year-olds join the school in the September of the academic year in which they will become five; initially, this is part-time, mornings only. Nearly all pupils come from a white ethnic background, although there are small numbers of other ethnic groups and some whose parents or carers have not furnished the necessary information. Ten pupils have English as an additional language, and one of these is at the early stages of acquiring the language, which is about average. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is below average, although only about a fifth of pupils stay for cooked meals. Twenty pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs for a range of learning, behavioural and physical needs; this is below average. Four of these have statements of special educational needs, which is also below average. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly in line with that expected nationally, although standards of listening and writing are below average. The school has received achievement awards in each of the last two years. The school was identified by the local education authority (LEA) as giving cause for concern in the summer of 1999 but has since been removed from that category. Since July 1999, the school has had three acting headteachers before the appointment, in January 2001, of the present headteacher.

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

This is an increasingly effective school that gives satisfactory value for money. A monitoring visit from the LEA a year after the previous inspection showed standards and provision to be less good than at the time of the inspection. Standards in the national tests are now rising in Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall; a significant proportion is better than this but there is still too much that is not good enough, especially in some classes in Years 3 and 4. The headteacher has a very clear idea of how to improve the school and is determined to do so. In this she is fully supported by key members of staff and by the governing body.

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

- The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher, who sets a very clear educational direction for it and is completely supported by key staff.
- The school development plan addresses appropriate priorities and sets a very good agenda for sustained improvement.
- The governors have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Parents are provided with very good information about their child's progress and events in school.
- The range of activities outside lessons is very good.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and there is no oppressive behaviour.

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

- Standards of work, particularly in English in Year 6, and geography and information and communication technology (ICT) more generally throughout the school.
- Individual teachers' confidence and knowledge in some subjects and the range of strategies used by them to help pupils learn.
- Assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science and the way the information gained from them is used to set work that matches pupils' developing needs.
- The way that pupils' skills and competences in English, mathematics and ICT are being developed in other subjects.
- The range of opportunities offered to pupils to help them develop their spiritual and multi-cultural understanding.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1998. In July 1999, it was placed on the LEA's list of schools causing concern. Following a period of improvement, it was removed from this list in July 2001. Improvements since that date have been rapid and, consequently, since the last inspection the extent of improvement has been satisfactory, overall. Key issues of the last inspection have been addressed suitably, most noticeably in the quality of leadership and management and in the planning and assessment structures that support learning and teaching. However, work still remains to secure improvements in assessment procedures for a number of subjects. Standards have risen in the national tests in Year 6 and are now at a similar level in Year 2, although, in this year group, the school results improved markedly in 2001. The partnership with parents has improved. However, although the provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, it is not as good as reported in the last inspection, and the brochure does not fulfil statutory requirements.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	B	C	E
mathematics	A	B	C	D
science	A	A*	A	B

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

In the national tests for Year 6 in 2001, standards were well above the national average in science and matched the average in English and mathematics. When compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils claiming free school meals, standards were above average in science, below them in mathematics and well below them in English. Overall in the three years from 1999 to 2001, results have been steady in science, although they have deteriorated in English and mathematics in comparison with the national average as groups of pupils who have been adversely affected by inadequate teaching and provision in the past have moved through the school. The school's results for 2002 show standards in Year 6 for English and science have been broadly maintained but in mathematics standards have risen. The school met its targets in mathematics but failed to do so in English. In Year 2, standards in 2002 were higher than in the previous year when they were in line with the national average in reading and below it in writing and mathematics.

The findings of this inspection are that children enter the reception year with standards that are average, overall, although there are weaknesses in listening and writing. They achieve well and, overall, are likely to exceed the standards expected on entry to Year 1 in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and scientific skills and to match them in all other areas of learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve soundly, overall, and standards in Year 2 are above those expected in science and design and technology but are below them in geography and ICT because of weaknesses in provision or resourcing. In all other subjects, standards match those expected nationally. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve satisfactory results, overall, although they do better in science and less well in geography and ICT. Current standards in Year 6 match those expected nationally in nearly all subjects, including mathematics and science; the exceptions are English, geography and ICT, where standards are below those expected. In these subjects, achievement is unsatisfactory. In addition, pupils' standards of speaking and listening in class groups or bigger are below average. The school is likely to meet its targets in 2003 for English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those identified as able and talented, achieve soundly overall, although there is room to improve the achievement of individuals within each group.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to the school. Their involvement and application in lessons vary but are good, overall.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is frequently very good in and around the school. It is generally good in lessons, except where teachers' behaviour management is ineffective and the work set is not challenging.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well collaboratively and relationships at all levels are good. Pupils become mature and responsible people who respect each other's points of view.
Attendance	Good. It is consistently above the national average with very little unauthorised absence.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, but there are significant variations. It is good in the reception classes and in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 and one class in Year 3; it is unsatisfactory in Year 4. There are examples of very good teaching and learning in all year groups except Year 4. Of the 80 lessons seen, ten were very well taught and a further 30 were taught well. As a consequence, pupils achieved good standards in relation to their prior learning in these lessons. Thirty-two lessons were taught satisfactorily. Teaching and learning were unsatisfactory in six lessons and poor in two. Throughout the school, teaching and learning were good in art and design and history and satisfactory in mathematics and ICT. Overall, English, science, design and technology, music and physical education were taught well in Years 1 and 2 and soundly in Years 3 to 6. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in geography. Opportunities to use pupils' skills of literacy and numeracy and their competences in ICT are not exploited sufficiently in other subjects.

Characteristics of effective teaching that result in swift learning are: secure subject knowledge, which results in challenging questions that probe pupils' understanding; thorough preparation to the lesson that ensures that all resources are readily available and no time is lost in the lesson; good planning that uses the information gained from continuing assessment and a good pace to the lesson that retains pupils' attention. Poor learning occurs when teachers' planning and subject knowledge is inadequate, they fail to motivate pupils because of a lack of pace and challenge and do not manage their waning interest well enough to counteract worsening behaviour. The needs of all pupils are met satisfactorily, overall, although the needs of some who have English as an additional language are not met as fully as they could be if the school received help from outside agencies. Pupils with special educational needs are not supported as well in some junior classes as they are elsewhere in the school. Potentially higher attaining pupils are not challenged fully in some classes and subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, overall, and improving. The curriculum in the reception classes is good. Links with the local community are good and the range of activities outside lessons is very good. There are some known weaknesses in the provision for geography and ICT and insufficient attention to using important skills and competences in all subjects.



Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Support staff are deployed well to meet areas of greatest need. Individual targets for improvement are specific and appropriate and the school complies fully with the new statutory requirements. Some teachers lack sufficient knowledge of pupils' specific needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. These pupils are fully included in all the school has to offer but provision for the older pupils is hindered by the lack of outside support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. For their cultural development it is satisfactory but lacks an emphasis on preparation for life in a multi-cultural society. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school is a caring and safe environment. Good assessment procedures in key areas of the school are used well to track pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement but more work is needed in a number of subjects.

The school works well with parents, who appreciate the efforts made for their children.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher, supported very effectively by the senior management team, provides a clear vision and strategies for the school's improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties effectively, apart from a minor omission in the school brochure. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide good support to the headteacher and staff of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Effective procedures are in place to enable staff and governors to judge how well the school is doing, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Information is used well to set targets for development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources, and especially the library, are used well to underpin teaching and learning. However, there are weaknesses in the way that the computers are used. The accommodation is very good and the number and expertise of members of staff are soundly matched to the demands of the curriculum. Principles of best value are followed well.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is led and managed well.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li> <li>• They feel able to approach the school easily with questions and complaints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The amount of information they receive about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The amount of work their children get to do at home.</li> <li>• The closeness of the partnership with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team broadly agrees with the positive views expressed by parents and carers. However, there is too high a proportion of unsatisfactory or weak teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6, which results in pupils having made inconsistent progress as they move through the school. The range of activities outside lessons is very good, as is the amount of information parents receive about the school

and their children's progress. The partnership with parents is good, as is the amount and regularity of homework at this early stage of the school year.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Over time, children's standards of attainment on entry to the reception year are broadly average, although there are variations for each year's intake. In 2001, children made good progress and, on entry to compulsory education in Year 1, they attained standards that were at least in line with those expected nationally at this age in all areas of learning<sup>1</sup>. Higher attaining children exceeded those standards, especially in their personal, social and emotional development.
2. In the national tests in 2001, which is the latest year for which there are national comparative statistics, pupils in Year 2 attained standards that were in line with the national average in reading but which were below average in writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools (which are those with similar proportions of pupils claiming free school meals), they were well below average in all three tests. In this year, girls performed better than boys in reading and writing but this is not a feature over time. While the proportion of pupils achieving at least the nationally expected levels was close to that seen nationally in all three tests and, according to teachers' assessments, in science, too few pupils attained the higher levels; this adversely affected the overall school average in each test. Following significant dips in attainment immediately after the last inspection, results in all three tests since 1999 show significant improvement.
3. The school's own validated figures for pupils' performance in the national tests in 2002 shows that Year 2 results have improved in all three tests, with fewer pupils failing to achieve at least the nationally expected levels. There was some high achievement by a small minority of pupils, especially in reading.
4. In Year 6 in 2001, pupils attained standards in the national tests that matched the national average in English and mathematics and were well above it in science. When compared with similar schools, standards in English were well below average while, in mathematics, they were below average. In science, however, standards were above average. Over time there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
5. In all tests, the Year 6 results were not as good as they had been in 2000. The three-year trend is significantly up in science, although down in both English and mathematics. The five-year trend is steady in mathematics, upward by the same as the national trend in English and significantly upward in science. Overall, the trend of improvement over five years exceeds the national picture because of the significant rise in science attainment.
6. Results in Year 6 in the 2002 national tests indicate that the previous year's standards in English and science have been broadly maintained and that there has been some improvement in mathematics standards because many more pupils attained the nationally expected levels.
7. It should be noted that it is likely that the proportion of pupils claiming free school meals in this school does not accurately reflect the true level of need as over four-

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<sup>1</sup> The six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage are: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

fifths of pupils bring sandwiches from home and do not have cooked meals at school. As a result, parents and carers do not need to complete the relevant paperwork and the school has no accurate means of judging the true level of entitlement.

8. A series of monitoring visits by the LEA, starting just over a year after the last inspection in July 1999, found that pupils' progress over time and their achievements, particularly for the higher attainers, were unsatisfactory. Furthermore, standards in speaking, listening and art and design were below those to be expected.
9. The findings of the current inspection are that the children currently entering the reception class do so with attainment that is broadly average, although there are some weaknesses in their listening and writing abilities. They are achieving good standards in relation to their prior attainment, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. This is as a result of good teaching, based on a firm understanding of what they already know, understand and can do and what is needed to extend their learning. As a result, they are on track to meet the national expectations on entry to compulsory education in Year 1 in nearly all areas of learning, except their personal, social and emotional development and their mathematical development, where they are likely to exceed the standards expected, as they are in their scientific knowledge and skills.
10. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are achieving good standards in lessons in relation to their prior attainment, especially where teaching is good, and make satisfactory progress overall. Because of factors identified in paragraph 17 below, pupils' progress over time in science is very good and is good in design and technology. In all other subjects, apart from geography, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in relation to prior attainment.
11. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' rate of progress has been uneven during the last academic year because of weaknesses in teaching, some of which remain, and the legacy of previous weaknesses in organisation, now largely addressed. Overall, the progress pupils are currently making in these years is satisfactory. It is good in science and unsatisfactory in geography and ICT. It is satisfactory in all other subjects.
12. At this very early stage in the academic year, there are no apparent differences in the rate of progress between parallel classes. However, there are still variations in the quality of teaching and the likely effect on the rate of pupils' learning. Therefore, the decision of the senior management of the school to evaluate frequently the quality of teaching and learning is sensible and shows a strong commitment to continuing improvement.
13. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs (SEN) against the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) is good in the infants. Teachers plan carefully to include them in their lessons where they are sensibly supported by well-briefed and informed learning support staff who understand the children's needs and have identified sensible strategies to keep them interested. Pupils with SEN in the juniors make satisfactory progress, overall, because, in some circumstances, staff do not fully understand the nature of their special need and do not recognise the most appropriate levels or quantity of work. In other situations some pupils make good progress, supported well by learning support staff who have good relationships with them, following the work that has been planned in accordance with their individual education plans.
14. The school has compiled a register of gifted and talented pupils. They often receive carefully planned extra work that serves to challenge them and they attend extension activities in such subjects as art and design and mathematics. The school has already identified the need to improve the match of work to pupils' needs and has also

planned a training programme for teachers to improve the provision of mathematical investigations to challenge all pupils, especially the higher attainers. However, in some classes and lessons, particularly in the juniors, the extension work, even where identified, is 'more of the same' rather than a planned programme of challenging work. In these lessons, for example in geography and mathematics, the needs of those who are potentially higher attaining are not catered for fully enough.

15. The small percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language are taught within their allocated classes and are fully included in all that happens in the school. In the infants and the earlier junior years these pupils make good progress and take part in class discussions enthusiastically, confidently answering questions. Their speaking and literacy skills are appropriate to their age. In the oldest class there is not sufficient support from the appropriate local authority services and, consequently, the acquisition of pupils' writing skills is not as advanced as it should be and the ability to work independently in English is not fully developed.
16. The table below shows the overall standards currently being attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, which are the reporting years:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 6</b>
English	Average	Below average
Mathematics	Average	Average
Science	Above average	Average
Art and design	Meet expected levels	Meet expected levels
Design and technology	Above expected levels	Meet expected levels
Geography	Below expected levels	Below expected levels
History	Meet expected levels	Meet expected levels
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Below expected levels	Below expected levels
Music	Meet expected levels	Meet expected levels
Physical education	Meet expected levels	Meet expected levels

17. Attainment in science is above average in Year 2 and is improving throughout the school because of the successful training received recently, which has resulted in improved confidence and subject knowledge for nearly all teachers. This is linked to a very good system of assessing what pupils already know and what they need to improve standards still further. In design and technology in Year 2, standards are above those expected nationally because of the effects of improvements in the scheme of work and in resource provision. The legacy of past weaknesses is still apparent among the older pupils and some teachers, although standards are rising over time and are now at the levels expected nationally in both science and design and technology.
18. In geography, standards are below those expected and pupils make unsatisfactory progress because weaknesses in timetabling do not assure the consistent and progressive acquisition of the necessary skills.
19. In ICT, standards are below those expected nationally because there are gaps in pupils' prior experiences and learning that are only recently beginning to be addressed through work in the computer suite. However, computers in the classroom are not always used well enough or systematically to ensure that pupils practise and consolidate the work done in the suite. This inhibits learning. In addition, the use of ICT in other subjects is only very recently being identified in teachers' weekly planning.

Hence the contribution to the development of pupils' ICT skills and competences that these lessons could make is not exploited fully enough.

20. Standards of speaking and listening are below those expected in Year 6. Reading standards are also below expectations in Year 4. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught soundly in English and mathematics lessons. It seems likely that the school will reach its targets this year in both English and mathematics. However, there is little systematic and planned development of these skills in other subjects, although some, but not all, teachers do vary their teaching style effectively to incorporate, for example, discussion and oral work and investigative mathematics.

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

21. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are strengths, contributing to a positive learning environment, pupils' progress and the quality of life in the school. Comments from parents, both in the questionnaires and the meeting prior to the inspection, support this view.
22. The previous inspection report indicated that behaviour and relationships were both good, with pupils having good attitudes to learning. However, monitoring by the LEA after about a year, reported, pupils' participation and independence needed to be improved, and also on problems with the behaviour of some pupils. Since that time, there have been improvements in both behaviour and pupils' independence while relationships continue to be good.
23. Children in the Foundation Stage behave well and, even this early in the year, display positive attitudes to school. They concentrate well on tasks and persevere when, for instance, completing a jigsaw.
24. Pupils with SEN have good attitudes to their work and positive relationships with adults who help them and their classmates. They quickly settle to the task and show good levels of attentiveness and interest. Occasionally children who have some symptoms of autism take longer to settle. The school has identified ways to hold their interest and attention. Occasionally in the juniors some pupils with possible emotional and behavioural difficulties are not fully involved in the lesson. This is often because they have difficulty holding concentration due to the task being too long or too complex.
25. Pupils enjoy school and are well motivated and enthusiastic. Generally they show good interest and involvement with good levels of concentration, paying attention to their teachers with evident eagerness to learn. Younger pupils and those in Year 5 are very keen to participate, join in activities and discussions in lessons, respond wholeheartedly and work conscientiously. They tackle their work independently with enjoyment and enthusiasm. They are eager to talk about what they are doing and explain themselves confidently. Other junior pupils are sometimes less motivated or involved in lessons, do not work well enough independently and contribute little to discussions. In some classes this is linked to weaknesses in the quality of teaching. In other classes staff are working very hard to promote and enhance these skills, and some improvement is already evident. Pupils are proud of their school and are careful with equipment and resources. In class they willingly and politely share equipment and quickly tidy it up. They are respectful of property and their classroom environments.
26. The school maintains an environment of responsible behaviour in which pupils are aware of what is expected of them and generally respond well. The staff's positive reinforcement enhances the school's approach to behaviour and effectively achieves a good standard in and around the school. For example, on formal occasions such as assemblies pupils enter and leave in an orderly and respectful manner. They are smart, friendly, courteous and considerate of each other and visitors, often holding the

door open and saying 'Thank you' when the compliment is returned. Behaviour in classes is generally good and sometimes very good, although there are instances of inattention in some lessons by a small minority of pupils, especially when they are not challenged sufficiently by the work. Pupils move around the school sensibly and behaviour in the playground is good. Bullying or aggressive behaviour is extremely rare and none was observed or reported during the inspection. Boys and girls play well together. There have been no exclusions.

27. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils feel valued by teachers and respond accordingly. Pupils also relate very well to each other. They work together harmoniously, assist each other in their activities and frequently provide general help. They collaborate well and learn effectively from each other. They are trustworthy, thoughtful and considerate, respecting the feelings, values and beliefs of others well.
28. Pupils respond well to opportunities to exercise responsibility and independence, willingly undertaking duties in classes. When accepting personal responsibility, they show themselves to be mature and self-confident. However, their ability to undertake activities on their own initiative is less developed and there is a need to continue the process of encouraging pupils in this regard, especially at the top end of the school. The older pupils adopt a caring and protective approach to the younger pupils at breaks and lunchtimes
29. In the previous inspection report, attendance was good. It continues to be above average with negligible unauthorised absence. Registers are completed promptly and well in accordance with regulations. Pupils are punctual in their attendance and lessons are able to start on time. There are no significant attendance problems.

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

30. In the last inspection, teaching and learning were satisfactory, overall, with about 65 per cent of lessons being good or better and eight per cent being unsatisfactory. Broadly speaking, these standards have been maintained.
31. A series of monitoring visits by the LEA, however, subsequently identified inconsistent practice through the school. Some teachers were unreceptive to the adoption of the National Literacy Strategy. The LEA further identified weaknesses in teachers' expectations of pupils' standards of work, insufficient challenge to ensure that pupils achieved the standards they could, insufficient use of assessment information to build on what pupils already knew and could do and too much talking by teachers, resulting in insufficient participation by pupils in lessons. These weaknesses are still present in a small number of teachers, whose performance is being closely monitored by the headteacher and senior management team. The effects of unsatisfactory teaching in the past are still evident in the way some pupils fail to participate adequately in lessons, particularly in Year 6, and in one class in Year 4.
32. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although this judgement masks wide variations in the effectiveness of individual teachers. Teaching and learning are good in the reception classes and in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6, as well as in one class in Year 3. In the other Year 3 class, they are satisfactory. However, teaching is unsatisfactory in Year 4, with a consequent detrimental effect on pupils' learning.
33. Eighty lessons were observed. Of these, two were poorly taught and in a further six teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. All but three of these lessons were taught in Year 4; two unsatisfactory lessons were taught in one class in Year 3 and the other took place in Year 2. Thirty-two lessons were satisfactory. In thirty lessons, teaching and learning were good and in ten teaching was very good, with the result that learning

was swift. Examples of good teaching were seen in all but two classes and there were examples of very good teaching in all year groups except Year 4.

34. Teaching and learning are good in the reception classes, where work is matched very carefully to the identified needs of the children. Relationships are good, enabling children to make a confident start to their schooling. Very effective teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants, consistently firm management and high expectations of behaviour ensure that children settle into the school routines quickly and make good progress.
35. The following table shows the overall judgement made on the quality of teaching and learning by subject in Years 1 to 6:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Years 1 and 2</b>	<b>Years 3 to 6</b>
English	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science	Good	Satisfactory
Art and design	Good	Good
Design and technology	Good	Satisfactory
Geography	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
History	Good	Good
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Music	Good	Satisfactory
Physical education	Good	Satisfactory

36. A scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work from the last academic year (2001 – 2002) showed that there had been a disparity in the curriculum given in some subjects in parallel classes and in the level of teachers' expectations of pupils' neatness, application to task and standards. This confirms the concerns expressed by parents at the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. This disparity in provision is not in evidence at this early stage of the school year because teachers are planning jointly in year groups. However, differences in expectations and effectiveness are in evidence, as explained below. The senior management of the school is well aware of parents' concerns and of the unacceptable variations in effectiveness of teachers. It is continuing to monitor the situation closely and to set explicit and suitably high expectations for teachers.
37. Where teaching is less effective, resulting in inhibited or limited learning, it is because:
- Teachers are not precise enough in their planning to identify exactly what it is that individuals and groups of pupils are to learn in any particular lesson. An example was a Year 4 lesson on rules, which was poorly organised and focused. The discussions were too general to be effective in giving pupils an understanding of who makes rules and for what purpose. This aspect of teachers' planning is broadly satisfactory in English, mathematics and science lessons throughout the school but is acknowledged by the school to be an area for development in other subjects.
  - Teachers' expectations of pupils are too low and pupils are not as fully involved in the lesson or as motivated as they should be. Levels of challenge in these lessons are too low. For example, in a Year 4 physical education lesson, it was 20 minutes



before the pupils started any relevant activity and this activity lasted for too little time to be fully effective.

- There are weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, for example in music, ICT, art and design and science, that result in a slow pace to the lesson and lost opportunities to exploit the potential of resources, as in a Year 3 ICT lesson, where some computers in the suite were not used at all while other machines were shared by two or three pupils. This meant that each pupil used only one hand to enter data and lost the opportunity to improve their typing skills. Equally, in a Year 4 science lesson to represent data gathered, the teacher did not use the correct words to describe axes and how to draw them accurately.
- Pupils' behaviour is not managed well enough, which means that they are not sufficiently attentive and time is wasted, limiting their learning, as in a Year 4 music lesson.

38. Where teaching is most effective and learning is swift:

- Teachers plan their work thoroughly, utilise all available resources effectively and use the results of continuing assessments well. As a result, they set tasks that are matched closely to what individuals and groups of pupils need and challenge them to achieve good results. As explained earlier, this is most in evidence in lessons in English, mathematics and science, although a good example was also to be found in a Year 1 history lesson that used old toys brought in by the pupils to extend their understanding of chronology.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching, which enables them to ask interesting and probing questions that extend pupils' understanding and to address pupils' problems effectively. For example, pupils' understanding of key historical concepts of chronology and the use of primary evidence was extended fully in a Year 6 lesson because of persistent and probing questioning. Also, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson, the teacher's questioning ensured that all pupils understood exactly what they had to do and were well able to use the correct technical terms, such as 'fabric', 'stitching' and 'gluing'.
- Lessons are conducted at a good pace that ensures that pupils are involved in learning for a high proportion of the time available. In a Year 5 mathematics investigation lesson, for example, the teacher organised the lesson to ensure that pupils worked in small groups and then was continually insistent that they work productively, setting explicit time targets to encourage them. As a result, they concentrated well and produced a good volume of work.
- Teachers use pupils' interests and answers well to improve their knowledge and understanding. In a Year 3 science lesson, for example, the teacher used the pupils' mistakes and misconceptions about the nature of shadows very effectively, showing a very good management of a potentially disruptive pupil with identified special educational needs as he did so. As a result, all pupils in his class made very good gains in their scientific understanding.
- Relationships are strong and, consequently, pupils are confident enough to admit they need more help and are willing to work hard to achieve good results. For example, the teacher in one Year 5 class includes herself in the class behaviour management system and, so far in the inspection week, had been awarded three merit marks by the class!
- Teachers show an enthusiasm that captures pupils' interest and sustains their attention so they are motivated to learn and to contribute to the lesson. A prime example of this was a Year 6 mathematics lesson in which the pupils were initially

exceptionally reluctant to contribute. The teacher persevered in his demands for them to answer questions and resisted the temptation to find alternative methods of moving learning in mathematics along. As a result, he was eventually rewarded, pupils began to reply less reluctantly and the aims of the lesson were accomplished, as well as having improved pupils' basic learning skills more generally.

- The extra adults in the room, learning support assistants or parent helpers, are used effectively. For example, in the reception class, the learning support assistant was used very well to observe and record the responses given by children as they responded to the teaching in a lesson on mathematical development.
39. The quality of teachers' marking in this academic year is satisfactory overall. There is good evidence in some classes that some teachers use the information gained from the marking of pupils' work well to amend subsequent lessons, as, for example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson on subtraction. However, the scrutiny of last year's work shows that work in some classes was not marked regularly and that some other marking was extremely cursory or even inaccurate, which gave a negative message to pupils about the value of their work and the interest shown in it by their teachers. This confirms worries expressed by parents and also the efforts of the senior management in identifying and addressing the issue.
40. Homework is used well in English and mathematics to extend pupils' learning. It has been regular at this early stage in the school year and is at a suitable level. This addresses the concerns expressed by a number of parents in their replies to the parents' questionnaire about the regularity of provision last year.
41. The focused teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well in the infants. They usually work in their designated classroom where they often receive sensitive encouraging support from learning support staff. Pupils with SEN throughout the school have well written individual education plans with specific time scaled targets that guide and direct the teaching. These accurately record the levels reached in English and mathematics. The support given by the class teachers in the juniors is variable. In some classes, a lack of understanding of the nature of the pupils' special educational needs prevents them from making the progress they should, while, in others, support is directed well to meet their individual needs. Higher attaining pupils identified on the gifted and talented register are satisfactorily provided with work of greater challenge. However, there is room to improve levels of challenge in some classes and subjects through the refinement of teachers' planning.
42. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory, overall. However, recognised weaknesses in curriculum planning mean that opportunities to extend learning in other subjects are not exploited fully enough. Although teachers are beginning to identify in their planning for some other subjects suitable opportunities to develop pupils' skills and competences in ICT, this is not widespread and, together with the fact that computers in the classes are not always used fully enough to reinforce pupils' skills, means that learning is not at the pace it could otherwise be.

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

43. The school provides a satisfactory range and quality of learning opportunities. There has been good improvement to the curriculum since the previous inspection. The key areas of weakness identified then, and by subsequent monitoring visits by the LEA, have been successfully addressed.
44. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and adopted the latest national guidance and schemes of work for other subjects. This is helping to raise standards, and improve the progressive acquisition of learning skills. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum are met for all subjects. Satisfactory policies and procedures are in place for health, sex education, pupils' personal, social and moral education; a new racial equality policy is being formulated. Other policies are either in place or in draft form awaiting review. The governors' curriculum committee regularly reviews the curriculum. The school's 'Curriculum Statement' rightly emphasises its high expectations of pupils but makes no reference to multi-cultural provision.
45. A good curriculum is in place in the Foundation Stage, covering all the recommended areas of learning for children under six. All children have good access to the curriculum and benefit from a wide range of activities. Well-organised, interesting activities, matched to the needs of the children, and the sensitive support provided, mean that children make good progress across all the areas of learning.
46. Since the last inspection the school has lengthened the working day, improved the provision for science, and given detailed and closely monitored consideration to the allocation of time for each subject, planning successfully to ensure that there is now parallel provision for both classes in each year group. The curriculum now provided for pupils in Years 1 – 6 has good breadth, including some French for Year 6 pupils. The school has rightly identified the present need for additional time for the teaching of English. Provision for swimming has been inconsistent in the past, but usually the school is able to ensure that almost 90 per cent of pupils leave the school able to swim the expected 25 metres.
47. However, weaknesses remain in geography and ICT, and insufficient attention is given to using key skills and competences across all subjects. In particular, the use of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and competences in other subjects is insufficiently developed. In geography, the overall time allowance across the year is satisfactory, but the practice of planning 'mini-topics' taught in sessions of less than half an hour is ineffective.
48. Teachers' planning has improved as a result of monitoring by subject co-ordinators, who now have a better picture of what is taught in each class, in each half-term. Parents regularly receive good information about what their children will be studying, enabling them to give support.
49. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory elsewhere. The new Code of Practice has been successfully implemented. Parents are fully informed and consulted. Pupils with special educational needs play a full part in all that happens within the school. They are often taught within their designated class and take part in all aspects of literacy and numeracy lessons, being timetabled to be withdrawn for a guided reading, numeracy or additional literacy groups. They have good opportunities to take on duties to help in the day-to-day running of the school.

50. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and is a strength of the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Members of staff give very generously of their time, in lunch-breaks and after school to offer a wide range of activities, which are generally well supported by pupils. During the inspection week 18 different clubs were offered, including art, craft, cross-country, drama, environmental care, netball, recorders, sketching, soccer, and tag rugby. The type and frequency of clubs offered are reviewed and changed termly. Pupils in Year 2 are offered a limited choice later in the school year. About 30 pupils receive tuition in a musical instrument – fewer than at the time of the previous inspection. The school music co-ordinator has felt unable to start an orchestra or a choir with 14 pupils. On one afternoon of the inspection week one quarter of all pupils were involved in a club activity, benefiting from further very good learning opportunities. The inspection team does not support the view of the 20 per cent of parents who, in their responses to the parents' questionnaire, felt that the school does not offer an interesting range of activities.
51. The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum regardless of their ability, gender or background. Pupils from other countries, for whom English is an additional language, are making good progress, overall. These pupils are very well integrated and the school has ensured by all means within its control to minimise potential language difficulties that might impede their education, for example obtaining assistance with a teacher of Japanese from a local secondary school. Able and talented pupils are identified, and during the inspection a small group of these pupils attended a mathematics enrichment day in Plymouth. Boys and girls play together in all games and activities. In many subjects, however, work is insufficiently matched to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the potentially higher attainers.
52. Provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and health education is satisfactory. An appropriate policy is in place, and from next term a new scheme of work is planned to improve delivery of the subject. 'Circle time'<sup>2</sup> is held across the school, where issues relating to bullying and relationships are discussed. The school council is used soundly to raise items of specific interest to pupils and to enhance their citizenship. Age appropriate guidance is given to pupils on sex education, healthy living and the dangers of drugs and substances misuse. This provision contributes positively to pupils' general development and the good relationships observed across the school. Parents rightly feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.
53. The school has improved its links with the local community since the previous inspection. These are now good, and contribute positively to the pupils' learning. There are close links with the local church, where Christingle and Harvest Thanksgiving Services are held. There is a regular programme of visits and visitors, such as to Plymouth museum, Buckland Abbey and a residential visit for Year 6 pupils to Tintagel. Drama clubs and previous choirs have combined on occasions for productions such as 'Ocean Commotion'. The local clergy regularly visit the school to take assembly and church services are held in the school's St. Cecilia's Hall on Sundays. Local businesses have supported a science week. Pupils visit the local superstore for a 'Fruits of the World' lesson, the local old people's home and the guide dog centre and receive coaching from the local professional soccer team. This provision enhances pupils' opportunities for personal development and community service.
54. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory, overall. There are good links between the local nursery and the reception class when children join the school. Links with secondary schools are less positive due to the school's isolated location, and in

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<sup>2</sup> 'Circle time' is a lesson in which pupils are able to discuss matters to do with personal, social and emotional development.

the past pupils have moved on to no fewer than nine different schools. The quality of liaison with senior schools is inconsistent. The Year 7 co-ordinator from one school visits the school prior to pupils moving. However, the system for secondary transfer in the area does cause some uncertainty in pupils, although no pupils have left early this year to ensure that they are able to attend their school of choice. Soccer and netball matches played against other primary schools and contacts through sporting festivals contribute positively to the development of pupils' social, personal and physical skills.

55. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory, overall. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection.
56. The present provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, which is less good than at the time of the previous inspection. Although the school aims to encourage the development of Christian principles and benefits from good links with the local parish church, there is only limited evidence of spirituality more widely within the school. The current school development plan concentrates on raising the religious knowledge base of pupils rather than notions of spirituality. Even though the school's worship development plan focuses on improving spirituality through, for example, placing Christian symbols around the school to enhance awareness, displays in classrooms and corridors do not yet reflect this. Although pupils are encouraged to develop their own values and beliefs and are taught to be aware of other people's feelings, they are given limited opportunities to explore and develop what animates themselves and others. Spiritual awareness is only rarely enhanced by opportunities for quiet reflection or wonder at what they have seen or experienced.
57. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. The school has actively developed a climate of respect and tolerance and pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. The present behaviour policy provides a clear moral code and sets clear expectations of good behaviour, which are generally consistently applied. In this respect adults act as good role models for pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage are encouraged to suggest rules for the classroom. They are helped to think about what it means to be kind and are also encouraged to take turns, share resources and work with a partner.
58. The school fosters a sense of community and celebrates the success of pupils on a regular basis. Pupils are encouraged to respect social differences and similarities and, as a result, there has only been one incidence of bullying reported in the last two years and there have been no incidents of racism, even though a small minority of pupils in the school are from other ethnic backgrounds. In many classes pupils are given regular opportunities to work together and co-operate with each other, although in some lessons, especially those involving some older pupils, there was a noticeable reticence from them to join in class discussions. The recently formed school council, a body elected to represent pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, now gives pupils a chance to have a say in aspects of school life.
59. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, overall. Pupils are given good opportunities to explore their own culture both within school in, for example, subjects such as art and design and music, and also during off-site visits. They have access to a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, such as football club and cross-country club and also benefit from the school's close relationship with the local church. Year 2 pupils, for example, visit the war memorial as a part of their work in history and also visit the local art gallery. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are given opportunities to be involved in interactive workshops focusing on Shakespeare's plays and Year 5 pupils are given the opportunity to become 'Victorian school children' for the day during one of their educational visits!

60. Provision for multi-cultural education is unsatisfactory and the school has failed to address this issue, which was raised during the previous inspection. As a result the school still does not fully reflect the multi-cultural nature of society or enable pupils to appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures, for example through work in art and design or music. The school's provision does not take into account the richly cultured background of, for example, its Moslem pupils, or prepare pupils adequately for life in a multi-cultural society. The lack of systematic provision for the multi-cultural education of pupils remains a cause for concern. However, dressing up does introduce children in the Foundation Stage to a range of cultures from overseas.
61. There are as yet, no procedures for the school to monitor in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what it is providing in the provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. No action on future monitoring arrangements is included in the present school action plan.

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

62. The school provides a caring working environment that is effectively supervised and results in satisfactory welfare provision. The previous inspection report stated that the school had satisfactory procedures for monitoring personal development and staff had good knowledge of pupils. These remain but the quality of the educational and personal support and guidance has improved.
63. The school prioritises welfare and support as important elements in pupils' learning. All adults know the pupils well; they provide good personal support and guidance and comprehensive pastoral care that is well matched to the individual needs of pupils.
64. The school has a good child protection policy and there is a designated, experienced and appropriately trained co-ordinator. While all staff are aware of the policy, they have not recently received a thorough briefing in operating the procedures; this is a matter that the school will be addressing very shortly.
65. The health and safety policy is effective and has appropriate guidance and defined internal responsibilities. There is regular monitoring of health and safety requirements by the headteacher and a member of the governing body. There are good arrangements for the care and support of pupils who are taken ill at school, first aid and appropriately maintained accident records. There are good arrangements for the supervision of pupils at breaks and lunchtimes. Apart from very recently broken flagstones at the top of the steps leading to the field, the school provides a safe and healthy environment.
66. There is a comprehensive behaviour policy, applied conscientiously and consistently by the majority of staff. The good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, the well understood system of rewards and sanctions, the staff's good role modelling and the positive direction they provide successfully motivate the majority of pupils to act responsibly. This is amply demonstrated by the standards of pupils' behaviour in and around the school. There are good procedures for dealing with bullying and aggressive behaviour, however, instances are very rare.
67. The procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory, although the thorough information teaching staff provide in pupils' annual reports is a good feature. Staff provide good personal support and in most classes work hard to promote pupils' independence, confidence and social skills, the resulting gains to their maturity preparing them effectively for their next stage of education.
68. Pupils are provided with opportunities to exercise responsibility. There are regular duties in each class. In addition, older pupils have a number of routine duties, for

example assisting in assemblies, library duties, assisting with lunch arrangements and the Energy Rangers (recycling) group. They also help to look after the younger pupils at breaks and lunchtimes and undertake these duties reliably.

69. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory, overall; the school follows up any unexplained absences after three days. Liaison with the education welfare service is effective.
70. In the Foundation Stage classes, children's personal, social and emotional development is emphasised to very good effect. Firm management and high expectations of behaviour are evident. The learning support assistants are integral to the provision and they support children's learning very effectively. They are especially effective in contributing to the very good procedures for assessing children's progress. Teachers and learning support assistants work very closely together to form a comprehensive initial assessment of what children in the Foundation Stage know, understand and can do upon entry to the reception year. These, and continuing assessments are used very well to plan further work that is matched very closely to children's developing needs and to ensure that they make good progress overall.
71. Monitoring visits by the LEA, which started a year after the last inspection, found that there were no systematic or planned approach to the collection, analysis or feedback of a range of information, including that to do with the assessment of pupils' achievements. This has been rectified and progress recently has been swift.
72. Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics and for pupils with special educational needs. They are very good in the Foundation Stage and in science. In other subjects, they are recognised by the school as not being good enough and are identified as priority areas on subject and school development plans. In ICT, a good system for assessment has very recently been written but it has not yet had an impact on pupils' achievement and levels of attainment.
73. Pupils with SEN who are supported by the LEA and those identified on the revised Code of Practice register have detailed individual education plans. These enable their progress to be monitored frequently and systematically. Pupils with whom class teachers have a concern are also listed. There is a register for those children who are identified as being gifted and talented.
74. The information gained by annual tests in English and mathematics are analysed very closely by gender and ability by the headteacher to provide a comprehensive view of the achievements of individual pupils and to set them targets for further end of key stage improvement. It is also used to analyse the performance of pupils by class, giving a reliable indicator of effective teaching and learning. The senior management team check the progress being made towards achieving these targets through the twice-yearly analysis of a sample of pupils' work.
75. Teachers use the information to organise the initial groupings in the class. In science, the information is augmented by the very good use of formal checks on what pupils already remember before starting a topic or unit of work, which are compared with end-of-unit assessments to give a good idea of individual achievement. In English, more frequent assessment of pupils' achievement in writing is carried out through the 'first of the month book' in which work is annotated to show attainment. In addition, each pupil has a suitable individual writing target, which is conveniently accessible on the desk. In mathematics, a system of regular half-termly assessments is planned to start at the end of the current half term, together with the setting of individual targets for improvement for each pupil.

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

76. In the previous inspection report the partnership between the school and parents was satisfactory. Since then it has improved and is now good. There were parental concerns with information on the curriculum and pupils' progress. Since then there have been significant improvements.
77. The school's overall links with parents are good. Parents provide good general and financial support to the school. They hold very good views with what it provides and achieves. The school values its partnership with parents and has good relationships with them. Overall, the quality of information provided to parents is very good. The involvement of parents in the school is very good and their contribution to their children's learning is good.
78. The school communicates frequently with parents and, overall, the quality of information is now very good. The governing body's annual report to parents is satisfactory. The prospectus is informative and attractively produced though it does not advise parents of their right to withdraw their children from religious education or collective worship. There are frequent general newsletters, written in a friendly style, which ensure a good communication link with parents. These are augmented by termly curriculum information from each class. A particularly useful contact is the home/school book that is considerably valued by parents. There are also termly parents' coffee mornings and regular workshops on curriculum issues. Additionally, there is regular good quality contact between class teachers and thereby parents' information about their children is broadened by their discussions with staff throughout the year.
79. There are two opportunities each year for formal consultation, one of which coincides with the issuing of pupils' annual reports. These meetings are very well supported. Parents value the individual annual reports and overall they provide information of very good quality. They provide information on all subjects and useful general comments. In addition, targets are set and agreed with parents in the autumn term and reviewed in the spring term. Except for Year 2 and Year 6, they are not related to National Curriculum levels, but they provide full and informative comments with clear descriptions of what pupils know, understand and can do.
80. Parents' perceptions of the school are good and they are appreciative of the educational direction and support for pupils. Parents feel that the school is accessible, that they are welcomed and that the staff are approachable. They also feel that the school is responsive to their concerns, parental support is welcomed and staff can be approached at any time.
81. In the previous inspection report, parents felt there were inconsistencies with homework policy and practice. Since then there have been considerable improvements, which are acknowledged by parents although some still feel that there are inconsistencies between classes. The team's view is that the systematic homework arrangements work well and, at this early stage of the school year, are consistent within year groups, providing parents with a valuable opportunity for involvement in their children's education. There is good direct parental involvement in school with a significant number of parents assisting with activities, for example assisting with art and craft, ICT, reading and the library. Parents give good support to school activities and there is a very active parents and friends association that provides valuable financial support to the school.
82. Good links have been established with parents of children who are about to start school. There are good opportunities for them, and their children, to join in relevant activities before they start. Home visits are offered early in the autumn term after the children have started school.



83. Parents of pupils with special educational needs receive better information now than they did at the time of the last inspection. There are formal arrangements to ensure that parents are kept up to date with their children's progress through the sharing of individual education plans. Parents are invited to annual reviews for children with statements of special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps appropriate records of all discussions and communications between the school, its parents and outside agencies.

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

84. The school is very well led and managed. Following her appointment less than two years ago, the headteacher has provided very effective leadership. She has been very successful in creating a clear vision for the school's future development and securing the commitment of the staff, governing body and parents to its achievement. There is a determination to improve the school, but her style is one that involves the whole school community. In this, the establishment of a strong and supportive senior management team has been of great assistance. She has managed difficult staffing problems very effectively and is building a team whose performance is improving. The headteacher recognises that the school's aims and values are adequately reflected in its daily work, but she understands that more needs to be done to bring about the vibrant school she desires. She has used performance management very effectively to begin, for instance, to eliminate the variations in practice seen throughout the school when she arrived.
85. The headteacher has established effective procedures by which she monitors the quality of teaching throughout the school and tracks pupils' progress carefully. There are variations in the quality of teaching in the school. The headteacher and senior management team are fully aware of the teaching weaknesses in the first half of the junior section, but a combination of clear targets and good support are being used to improve teaching in these years. Similarly, there is an awareness that variations of practice between classes in the same year group still exist. The school intends that joint planning and the support of senior staff will eliminate these variations during this year.
86. The effectiveness of co-ordinators varies considerably. Assessment, science and the Foundation Stage are very well led. Good management is also evident in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology and for special educational needs. In most other areas, subjects are managed satisfactorily, often by recently appointed individuals. The exception is music where leadership of the subject is not satisfactory. Procedures for staff to monitor teaching, planning and pupils' work have been established. These are particularly effective for the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, procedures are much less systematic. A similar pattern is evident for assessment.
87. The special educational needs co-ordinator has successfully introduced the latest Code of Practice. She has developed with teachers the provision of good individual education development plans that include precise and challenging yet achievable targets. The school has decided that these targets should be reviewed on a termly basis, but is aware that consideration must be given to those pupils who achieve the targets within that time. The co-ordinator has used her regular non-contact time effectively to assess pupils and to observe and evaluate how they are taught in class. Appropriate training has equipped many, but not all, of the class teachers to meet the needs of most of the pupils. Good efforts have been made to keep parents informed about the nature of special educational needs.

88. The governing body carries out its responsibilities effectively. With a minor exception, it now meets all of its statutory responsibilities, including those for staff appraisal and performance management. The minor exception relates to the omission in the prospectus of parents' rights to withdraw their children from religious education and collective worship. The minutes of the full governing body and committee meetings indicate that governors conduct their business in a well-organised and effective manner. Improvements in the information that governors receive mean that they now have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They receive detailed information from the headteacher, senior management team and staff, through contact with individual co-ordinators. Many also visit the school often, although they do not visit classrooms regularly to observe lessons.
89. After a very difficult period, the governors now play an important role in shaping the school's direction, and work very closely with the headteacher and staff to match the budget to agreed priorities for improvement in the school development plan. They are fully involved in the development of the plan, as are members of staff. Parents' views are also taken into account. The development plan is detailed, focuses very closely on raising pupils' attainment and the quality of the curriculum that they receive.
90. The previous report suggested that many features of the school were good, but important key issues were identified. Following this inspection, limited progress was initially made. However, after an interim inspection by the LEA and a succession of temporary headteachers, strong progress has been made in the past 18 months. The school's management procedures have improved, and all members of staff now have detailed job descriptions. Roles and responsibilities are clear. Progress in this area has been good. Curricular planning has improved and progress here is satisfactory. Improvement has been strongest for children in the Foundation Stage and for English, mathematics and science. The picture is similar for assessment procedures, although the impact of the improvements on standards is not yet always evident and more needs to be accomplished in other subjects. Good progress has been made in improving attainment in science. The school is well placed to continue this evident trend of improvement.
91. A good induction programme is in place to support newly qualified teachers coming to work at the school. The performance management initiative has identified individual teacher's professional development needs well.
92. The school's budget is managed well with expenditure following identified priorities, with all targeted grants being used well for the purposes intended. The co-ordinators, together with the principal administration officer, continually assess the quality and cost of purchases before placing orders. This ensures that the school gains the best value possible in its purchases.
93. The very good quality accommodation is clean and spacious. The premises are well maintained by the caretaker who completes regular repair work to keep maintenance costs low. The placement of classrooms in pairs enables the two classes in each age group to work in close proximity. The availability of open areas and tutorial rooms gives teachers the potential to organise withdrawal groups. Current projects to prevent roof leakages and clean out covered guttering are in hand. The computer suite is not well ventilated and this causes the room to become too hot when all the computers are operating.
94. The school is adequately staffed by teachers and learning support assistants. Teachers have sufficient expertise to plan lessons that meet the challenge of the National Curriculum. However, there are some identified training needs, for example, in science, art and design, ICT and music.

95. Although there is room for improvement in the way the school computers are used in lessons, teachers and other staff make good use of new technology, for example in their planning of lessons, analysis of annual testing, recording of attendance and keeping of records.
96. Learning resources are adequate and are used well, overall, to help pupils learn, a good example being the use of the kiln. They are particularly good in the library and are used well by pupils to research knowledge and read for pleasure. There is a good range of physical education equipment. The good range of resources to support children in the reception classes is effectively used to provide interesting and challenging activities. The designated outside play area for these pupils is insufficient and does not have enough equipment.

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

97. In order to improve standards further, especially in English in Year 6 and in geography and ICT and for the higher attaining pupils throughout the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) \*Improve teachers' confidence and subject knowledge, where necessary, so as to ensure that pupils participate in learning more actively. (*Paragraphs: 11, 17, 24, 25, 28, 37, 58, 94, 117, 130, 134, 138, 140, 149, 152, 157, 163, 165, 169, 180, 186, 187, 190, 193 and 194.*)
- (2) \*Develop manageable assessment procedures in those subjects where they are lacking and use the information gained from them to ensure that teachers match work closely to the developing needs of individual pupils. (*Paragraphs: 13, 14, 37, 39, 41, 51, 72, 86, 90, 119, 123, 137, 140, 141, 146, 149, 155 to 157, 162, 163, 165, 166, 170, 172, 188 and 194.*)
- (3) \*Identify relevant and meaningful links between subjects in order to utilise fully the skills and competences pupils gain, especially in literacy, numeracy and ICT. (*Paragraphs: 18 to 20, 42, 47, 95, 125, 130, 141, 152, 157, 162, 165, 175, 178, 181 and 188.*)
- (4) \*Provide more opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual and cultural development so as to prepare them fully for life in multi-cultural society. (*Paragraphs: 56, 60, 61, 88, 157, 166, 171 and 188.*)

#### **In addition, the governors should also consider the following points:**

- Continuing to take steps to ensure that all teachers understand the special educational needs of those pupils with whom they deal.
- Reviewing the arrangements for monitoring absence.
- Ensuring that statutory requirements are met in the school brochure.
- \*Improving the outdoor equipment for the youngest children.
- \*Continuing to make all reasonable attempts to improve the provision for pupils at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language.
- Continuing to make all possible efforts to improve liaison with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer.

*(References to these points are to be found in paragraphs: 13, 15, 41, 54, 69, 78, 87, 96, 104, 109, 116 and 124)*

**Note: Those issues marked with \* have already been identified as priorities by the school.**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	30	32	6	2	0
Percentage	0	12.5	37.5	40	7.5	2.5	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	371
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	29	30	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	25
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	49	49	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (89)	83 (95)	92 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	27
	Girls	29	30	29
	Total	50	55	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (82)	93 (91)	95 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	24	22	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	23
	Girls	15	14	19
	Total	34	33	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (81)	72 (78)	91 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	21
	Girls	16	14	18
	Total	34	32	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (81)	70 (81)	85 (97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

## Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	293	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	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	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	6	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	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)	15.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25.7

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	199.8

FTE means full-time equivalent

## Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	695,919
Total expenditure	695,538
Expenditure per pupil	1,916
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,697
Balance carried forward to next year	-5,316

### Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Results of the survey of parents and carers

#### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	360
Number of questionnaires returned	105

#### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	33	9	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	47	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	52	4	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	50	10	5	1
The teaching is good.	49	44	5	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	43	15	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	48	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	50	12	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	44	47	5	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	48	8	0	5

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

32	39	19	1	9
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## **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**

98. The previous report indicated that children made satisfactory or good progress in all areas, and achieved, or exceeded, the expected standard. This was due to good teaching. The previous strengths have been maintained and many areas improved further. Very good progress has been made and the requirements of the Foundation Stage have been introduced well.
99. Reception children join the school part time in September, gradually becoming full time over a period of a few weeks. At the time of the inspection, there were 57 children in the reception year, all of whom were attending part time. They were taught in two classes. Currently there are no children identified on the school's special educational needs register, but assessments have already identified a few children who have to be watched closely. None of the children having English as an additional language needs support.
100. Many of the children have attended nursery or other pre-school establishments, joining the school from one of the three nurseries situated close to the school. However, a minority of children have little or no pre-school experience. Good links have been established with parents, with good opportunities for parents and children to join in reception activities before they start. Early in the period when children attend part time, teachers offer to conduct home visits; a good proportion of parents take up this offer. Daily contact is maintained once children start school, and it is aided by the use of homework and the home/school book. Children are familiar with the school before they start and they settle in easily.
101. Assessments are completed shortly after children start school. These assessments show that, on entry, attainment is about average for children of their age. It is strongest in mathematics, and weakest in aspects of English. In particular, listening and writing skills are below the level expected. Well-organised, interesting activities, matched to the needs of the children, and the sensitive support provided, mean that children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Satisfactory progress is made in all other areas of learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children are likely to meet or exceed the early learning goals<sup>3</sup>.
102. A suitable curriculum is in place, which covers all the areas of learning for children under six. All children have good access to the curriculum and benefit from a wide range of activities. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are effectively taught. Marking of children's work is very good. It emphasises teachers' expectations, praises children and helps them to know how they can get better. Careful attention is given to children's levels of attainment in organising work and providing support. During the period of the inspection, much of the time was spent on assessment activities. During this time, good arrangements ensured that children were given good support or were able to try a wide and interesting range of activities. The teachers emphasise personal

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<sup>3</sup> The early learning goals are the standards expected nationally of the average five-year-old on entry to compulsory education.



development strongly, and are already planning opportunities for children to work independently. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is also responsible for Years 1 and 2. She is very effective in monitoring provision, and in ensuring that all children receive a similar range of experiences.

103. Teaching is now consistently good, and much is very good. Teaching is effective in promoting the development of skills across all areas, but in particular in literacy, numeracy and personal, social and emotional development. This results in children making good progress in most areas of learning. The teachers, supported very well by learning support assistants, are skilful in meeting the needs of children in the class and work together as a very effective team. They have a clear understanding of the needs of young children, and of the national guidance. The calm quiet manner of both teachers, and the relationships they build up, have helped children to make a confident start to school. Firm management and high expectations of behaviour are also evident. The learning support assistants are an integral part of the team and support children's learning very effectively, especially in contributing to the very good procedures for assessing children's progress.
104. Accommodation is good, with two classrooms and a spacious adjoining area for activities such as painting, sand and water work. A good-sized, suitably equipped hall is available for indoor physical education. Children have access to a small outside area, which is used for use of large, ride-on toys. A new, larger area is currently being marked out, and a fence is to be erected to create a new, secure environment. The outdoor area is limited, however, owing to a lack of climbing, and associated, apparatus. Apart from this, resources are satisfactory. The good teaching and range of learning experiences prepare children well for the remainder of their time in the school.

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

105. When children enter the school, their attainment in this area is usually similar to that of most children of their age, although a significant minority find it difficult to pay attention and to listen carefully. Children's personal, social and emotional development is emphasised to very good effect. As a result, they make good progress and almost all are likely to achieve, and in many cases exceed, the early learning goals. This good progress is due to very well organised teaching and well planned opportunities for children to work independently. In a very sensitive way, teachers consistently remind children of their expectations. They are encouraged to take turns, share resources and work with a partner. Not all do this well at present, but the improvement over the week of the inspection was impressive. Owing to interesting tasks, and a good range of resources to support the planned activities, children concentrate and persevere very well. During the few direct teaching activities seen, teachers used questions effectively and invited children to contribute their own ideas. When sitting on the carpet, children are encouraged to listen carefully, although this is not yet a well-developed skill. Children behave well and, even this early in the year, display positive attitudes to school. Last year, children's writing showed a good awareness of how other children might be similar to, or different from, themselves. The children help to produce the class rules, and discuss ways of being kind. Dressing-up activities allow children to become aware of different areas of the world because of the variety of clothes used.

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

106. Children make good progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most are likely to attain the early learning goals, with a few exceeding them in reading and writing. Children's speaking skills are about average. However, listening is currently below this; children in Year 1 demonstrate the good progress made as they now listen well.

Good opportunities are taken by the teachers and other adults to increase the range and use of children's vocabulary when they are completing the tasks planned. This development of vocabulary extends to all areas of learning. The learning support assistants often discuss and explain words related to the work being done with the children in their groups. For instance, during an assessment session, a learning support assistant introduced many words beginning with the letters being used. Through the effective use of stories and individual sessions with books, children make good progress. Books are handled carefully, and children know that the pages are turned from right to left. The vast majority understand the difference between words and pictures, and that print carries meaning. They know a range of letter sounds and, by the time they start in Year 1, recognise them at the start of, within, or at the end of a word. They use pictures well to sequence a story they have heard. By the end of reception, about half the children read simple sentences well, talk about what they have read and build up words from the initial sounds. Most children copy letters and words written for them when they start school. Almost all write their own name. They make good progress so that, by the end of the year, many children write simple, understandable sentences, with spellings that are recognisable. The higher attaining children at this stage write complex sentences, and include some correct punctuation, such as capital letters and full stops. The arrangements for teaching literacy are good and assessment is organised very effectively. Planning shows that whole-class teaching is used to introduce children to areas such as stories, words, letters, sounds and simple punctuation. The teachers carefully plan the literacy sessions so that children are well prepared for starting the more formal National Literacy Strategy early in Year 1.

### **Mathematical development**

107. Provision for the development of mathematical skills, including number and associated language, is good and the effective use of good resources aids learning. Children make good progress and almost all are on track to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1, with a good number likely to exceed them. This was the pattern evident at the end of reception last year. Through good teaching and well-organised practical activities, children make good strides in their knowledge of mathematics. Simple counting and comparing numbers helps children develop an understanding of numbers to ten and, for higher attaining children, numbers beyond this. Counting songs and rhymes are used very effectively to help this process. Children recognise and correctly extend repeating patterns involving numbers. Most children recognise flat shapes such as a square, rectangle and triangle. Teachers and learning support assistants emphasise a range of mathematical vocabulary, which children then use correctly to compare objects. Sand and water work introduce children to aspects of capacity, and terms such as full, empty and half full.

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

108. Provision and teaching for children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them are satisfactory, although a particular strength is in the area of science. Children make satisfactory progress, overall, and better in the science aspect. By the time they reach the end of the year, most are likely to attain the standards expected nationally. Last year, in science, standards exceeded those expected. Children sort items into living and non-living correctly, and recognise that fruits and vegetables are healthy foods. They correctly label features of the face, know the names of different parts of the body and know that plants have a stem, roots and leaves. They also develop good enquiry skills, such as when rolling toy cars down a slope. They use good scientific vocabulary, such as 'scrunchy' and 'crinkly' to describe different materials. When using a computer, they use drag and drop programs correctly to dress 'teddy' and use the mouse with good control. Although last year the amount of map work in children's work was limited, there were good

examples of routes having been drawn of the child's journey to school. The amount of recorded work linked to raising historical awareness was limited.

## **Physical development**

109. Owing to the timing of the inspection, very little teaching of physical development was seen. In a particularly good lesson outside, very good teaching helped staff to assess quickly children's skills of hopping and jumping. In these areas, children's skills are currently about average, or a little below. The teacher ran the session with very good control and clear instructions. She used many opportunities to promote other areas of learning, especially for personal development. The learning support assistant was used very effectively to assess and record children's attainment. By the time children reach the end of the reception year, most have made satisfactory progress and achieve the early learning goals related to handling scissors, pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. During a painting session, the learning support assistant assessed children's skills and intervened, when necessary, to help children improve, particularly effectively in the case of a boy who could not hold his paintbrush correctly. Children's dexterity is developed well through handling objects, such as sand, water, construction apparatus, jigsaws and puzzles. Opportunities are planned carefully for children to use paintbrushes, crayons, pencils, and felt pens for making marks, writing or drawing pictures. A small outdoor area, immediately outside the reception classrooms, is used for independent activities, including riding on wheeled toys. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe its use for more than a few minutes. The school is aware of the need to improve outdoor facilities, including climbing apparatus.

## **Creative development**

110. Good displays and portfolios of artwork show that children make satisfactory progress in this area. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. A wide range of opportunities and good teaching encourage children to use a variety of media, including paint, pencils, crayons, and recycled objects. Children use paint with good control and imagination, such as seen in bonfire night pictures. Their collage work, using a range of materials, effectively supports learning in science, for example seed germination or 'minibeasts'. Good use of recycled material resulted in models of vehicles seats, doors, windows and chimneys. Children's creative and physical skills develop well as they use pencils, paint and crayons for colouring in shapes and pictures they have drawn. In assembly, children are beginning to join in the clapping when hymns are being sung, and they sing counting rhymes enthusiastically and tunefully during numeracy sessions. The home corner encouraged children to develop imaginative play. This resource is varied regularly during the year, usually linked to one of the 'big books' being read.

## **ENGLISH**

111. In the national tests for Year 6 in 2001, standards matched the national average in English but were well below those of similar schools. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Overall, in the three years from 1999 to 2001 standards of work in English at the end of Year 6 deteriorated when compared to the national average as groups of pupils who had been adversely effected by weaker teaching and provision moved through the school. In 2002, data that is, as yet, unvalidated shows that, although the school broadly maintained standards in English in this year group, it failed to meet its targets for the subject. In Year 2 standards of attainment were higher in 2002 than in the previous year when they were in line with the national average in reading and below it in writing; in both these tests, results were well below those of similar schools.
112. This represents an overall decline in standards since the last inspection. The 1998 inspection report further commented that standards of reading and speaking and

listening were above average and that standards of writing were average at the end of Year 2, although standards at the end of Year 6 were average.

113. However, subsequent monitoring of standards in English by the LEA concluded that the teaching and management of literacy in the school was weak and that, in this respect, the school was giving cause for concern. It further concluded that the teaching of the literacy hour should be applied consistently in all classes on a daily basis in order to raise standards in English. The school was subsequently checked on a regular basis until, in July 2001, the LEA recognised that the school had made good progress in addressing the issues that had previously made it a cause for concern.
114. Even though standards have risen since the LEA monitoring programme was put into place, the school is well aware that standards need to improve even further; consequently, it has implemented measures aimed at achieving this, such as developing staff expertise with in-service training and raising the profile of English within the school as a whole. All classes now include a daily literacy hour as normal practice and this has contributed to the rise in standards.
115. Inspection evidence confirms that standards of attainment in English in Year 2 are average and in Year 6 are below average. However, pupils' progress throughout the school is satisfactory compared to their previous attainment. If this rate of progress continues, the school is likely to meet its targets for attainment in Year 6 by the end of the year.
116. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN), those identified as able and talented and nearly all who have English as an additional language make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment, overall. This achievement is good in the infants, where work is carefully matched to their individual needs. Because some teachers lack sufficient understanding of how to match work sufficiently closely to their needs, the progress of some SEN pupils is not as swift as it could be in some lessons. Teachers meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language conscientiously and, for the most part, effectively, although some, whose needs are greatest, would benefit from additional input from outside agencies.
117. Standards in speaking and listening, while average in Year 2, are still below average in Year 6. Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing confidence in talking and listening skills and are able to use these effectively during conversations. However, the skills of oracy have not been developed systematically in the past and, as a result, pupils in Year 6 are reluctant to converse and many are unable to communicate effectively or enter into class discussions during lessons. Confidence seems lacking and this affects their ability to question the ideas of others responsively and therefore affects their learning. This was noticeable during a Year 6 lesson when the class teacher tried a variety of strategies to involve pupils in a class discussion but had a very limited response from most pupils who did not seem interested in volunteering answers to the simplest of questions.
118. Standards in reading are in line with national averages in both Year 2 and Year 6 but there is variation throughout the school and also in different 'parallel' classes. By Year 2 many pupils read with a certain amount of confidence and higher attainers read a variety of texts with accuracy and fluency. By Year 6 most read with fluency and accuracy and find and make use of ideas and information. Pupils have developed outline ideas about inference and deduction, which was also evident in their written work. However, only higher attaining pupils select key points in texts and use inference and deduction consistently correctly.
119. Standards in writing are improving and are broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6. Analysis of the work of Year 2 pupils contained evidence of steady progression in all

areas of writing as pupils moved through the year but achievement was not helped by the variable quality of marking of pupils' work. Presentation of work was also of a variable quality with too much that was poor. Work from the higher attaining pupils contained evidence of structure as well as appropriately accurate punctuation and spelling. Lower attainers struggle to understand the meaning of words to do with time, which adversely affects their ability to put events into a correct sequence. Whilst progression was evident in the written work of Year 6 pupils, there was also evidence that work was not always matched to ability and this affected overall achievement. In one additional literacy lesson, several pupils had difficulty coping with the work whilst a number of higher attaining pupils coasted through the session and were not sufficiently challenged. Higher attaining pupils have a basic grasp of appropriate grammatical conventions, such as prefixes and pronouns, but lower attainers need constant help, for example, to identify which word in a sentence is the verb.

120. Standards of handwriting throughout the school are variable. Whilst pupils practise handwriting skills on a regular basis and older pupils attempt to develop their own personal styles, teachers in different classes do not expect similar standards of good handwriting and this has a resultant impact on standards.
121. The standard of teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory but variable in Years 3 to 6. This affects the quality of pupils' overall achievement as they progress through the school. In lessons observed, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good.
122. When teaching was effective and learning was good, for example in a very well taught Year 5 lesson in which pupils learned how to construct plots for stories:
- planning was detailed and linked to previous work, so building on what pupils already knew, understood and could do;
  - what pupils were expected to learn was clearly stated, so that they knew what they had to achieve by the end of the lessons;
  - resources were used well;
  - the lesson was well structured and briskly paced, gaining and retaining pupils' interest and attention; and
  - the teacher's subject knowledge was very secure.
- The teacher also made good use of learning opportunities to enhance the lesson and, as a result, pupils were keen to learn and worked productively. By the end of the session, the lesson objectives had been reached and effective learning had taken place. At this early stage in the school year, homework is being used well to reinforce and extend learning throughout the school.
123. In those lessons where teaching was less successful in extending pupils' learning, for example in a Year 3 lesson focusing on the choice of lively adjectives for a piece of writing, teachers do not use the information gained from marking of pupils' work to match subsequent tasks closely to their differing and developing needs and pupils who needed support were not always given it. This had a detrimental effect on pupils' attention and achievement.
124. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and her enthusiasm and hard work have helped to develop the profile of English, especially literacy, within the school. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of the subject and has recently completed a very relevant literacy observation report, which lists these in detail. As a result, the school is well aware of the continued need to raise standards and to continue to train teachers to recognise pupils' needs, especially for SEN pupils, to improve their attainment; this is reflected in the school development

plan. Delivery of the curriculum is monitored satisfactorily on a regular basis through scrutinies of teachers' planning and pupils' work.

125. Assessment procedures are good; assessment information is analysed in detail and pupils' achievement and progress is recorded and tracked closely throughout the school. Appropriate writing targets are set for every pupil and are readily accessible to them on their desks. Overall provision for SEN pupils, and for the minority of English as an additional language pupils, is constantly monitored and focused additional literacy support is provided for those pupils who need it. Resources for teaching the subject are comprehensive, easily accessible and used well. The library is a good resource and is used extensively. Links between English and other subjects, especially ICT, were not sufficiently evident, limiting the development of pupils' literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

126. In the previous inspection report, standards in Year 2 were judged to be above average and those in Year 6 to be average. The rate of pupils' progress was variable, being better in Years 3 and 4 than in Years 5 and 6. The results of the national tests in 1998, which was the relevant year, showed standards in the tests to be less good than those seen during the inspection and below the national average.
127. In the national tests in 2001, pupils' standards in Year 2 were below the national average and well below similar schools because too few pupils attained the higher levels. Standards are now at similar levels to those seen immediately after the last inspection, although results have improved over the last three years. In Year 6 in 2001, standards matched the national average but were below those for similar schools. The three-year trend in this year group has been downward, although results are now better than they were immediately after the last inspection. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in either year group.
128. The school's figures for 2002, for which there are no national comparative figures as yet, show a substantial increase in the proportion of pupils in Year 2 at both the expected and the higher levels of attainment, as well as a 50 per cent improvement in the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the expected levels. This is due to the recent and effective adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy and good levels of relevant training for teachers, which have resulted in an increased continuity of experience for all pupils.
129. A subsequent monitoring visit by the LEA identified a substantial percentage of pupils who were not making the progress they should. Consequently, developments in the subject became a priority. Improvements have been effective, although more remains to be done, a fact that the co-ordinator has already identified.
130. The findings of the current inspection are that all pupils throughout the school make sound progress, including those with SEN, potentially higher attainers and those for whom English is an additional language. They achieve satisfactory results in relation to their prior attainment and attain average standards, overall, in both Year 2 and Year 6. However, their ability to use the facts they know in a range of contexts is below average, especially in Years 5 and 6. This is because the legacy of past weaknesses in organisation and teaching are taking longer to counteract than they are with the younger pupils, and there is insufficient emphasis throughout the school on investigative work, which has been recognised and is shortly to be addressed. The school's targets for attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2003 are likely to be met.
131. Year 2 pupils have a sound grasp of place value, reading and writing two-digit numbers accurately, although some need to use, for example, number squares to

help them. Higher attainers extend this ability to read four-digit numbers with some ease while lower attainers struggle to read and write numbers to five. They have reasonable recall of the appropriate basic number facts but many are unsure of the answer when required to calculate one less than multiples of ten. Only about a quarter of pupils are confident with mental calculation, for example answering eagerly when asked to double single-digit numbers.

132. Year 6 pupils have a broadly satisfactory knowledge of number operations but are inhibited by their lack of relevant vocabulary; for example, some higher attainers were unsure of the operation associated with the word 'product'. All except the very highest attainers lack confidence in using their mathematical skills and in articulating ideas and they recall basic number facts more slowly than would be expected. Pupils use a small range of strategies to calculate problem involving appropriate number operations, such as multiplication, although average-attaining pupils sometimes get the sequence of operations incorrect when solving more complex problems. About half the pupils know how to use inverse operations to check their answers and have a secure grasp of place value that enables them to calculate, for example, 240 divided by 20 as 24 divided by 2 and multiplied by 10.
133. The adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy has been helpful in providing a structure for teachers that assures progression in learning and a continuity of experience. As a result, no teaching seen was less than satisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
134. All three lessons in Years 1 and 2 were satisfactory, with teachers planning their work carefully to take account of the needs of differing groups of pupils and conducting lessons at a lively pace so as to retain and sustain interest and attention. In one Year 1 lesson a lack of extra adults in the class to support groups of pupils resulted in some not working as productively as they could while the teacher's attention was focused on others. Pupils' inability to work independently was also a factor inhibiting learning in one Year 2 lesson because the teacher was not sufficiently explicit in explaining her expectations of how pupils should apply themselves to their work. In the other Year 2 lesson, no extension work was set for those pupils who had worked well and completed the task and they got out a reading book, which is not acceptable practice. Strengths in these classes, nevertheless, were:
  - the use of mathematical apparatus to help Year 1 pupils add up, ensuring that they were able to understand the underlying concepts more easily;
  - the use of the information gained from recent and continuing assessment to modify and match the work planned to individual's developing needs, which meant that pupils concentrated well on meaningful tasks, and
  - the sense of magic engendered in one Year 2 class through the use of a 'magic box' of numbers that pupils were to use to calculate. This instantly engaged and enthused pupils so that they were eager to answer and sustained very good levels of attention throughout that part of the lesson.
135. The scrutiny of pupils' work from the previous year shows that teachers' expectations of what pupils should and could achieve varied between parallel classes in Year 3. This confirms the reservations expressed by parents before the inspection and adversely affected the progress made by pupils in that class. Currently, and at this early stage in the school year, these variations in pupils' progress are not to be seen.
136. Over time and taking into account the factors explained in the paragraph above, the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, overall. In the ten lessons observed in this part of the school, teaching and learning were satisfactory in four and good in a further four. In the remaining two lessons, teaching and learning were very good. Five of the six lessons that were good or better took place in Years 5 and 6; the other was



in Year 3. In some other lessons, judged overall to be satisfactory, strengths and weaknesses were finely balanced.

137. Where teaching and learning, although satisfactory, were less effective, it was because:
- the pace of lessons was not sustained in such a way as to maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm, with the result that they were not as motivated to learn as they might have been, resulting in wasted time. This was the case in a Year 4 class in which the pupils clearly have not in the past been shown a suitable work ethic;
  - what individuals and groups of pupils are expected to learn in the group part of the lesson is not explicit enough to allow the teacher to judge whether or not they have been successful.
138. Furthermore, the reluctance of older pupils, particularly those in Year 6, to participate fully in the mental/oral and summative parts of lessons has an adverse effect on their facility with mathematics and their ability to explain strategies and ideas. The teachers involved are very aware of this weakness in pupils' confidence and ability and make very good attempts to overcome it, generally successfully, as in a Year 6 lesson where the teacher's persistence resulted in many more pupils contributing orally at the end of the lesson than at the beginning. Nevertheless, pupils throughout the school generally behave well and listen politely to what is being said. They have good attitudes to school and to work.
139. Factors that contribute to successful lessons, in which learning is swift are:
- a good pace to lessons to sustain pupils' interests and good levels of persistent challenge for all pupils, based firmly on a recent assessment of what they need to know next;
  - good relationships so that pupils are increasingly willing to participate and to increase both their confidence and their competence;
  - good subject knowledge so that the teacher capitalises on pupils' answers, even when incorrect, to extend their learning, as in the initial session of a Year 3 lesson to do with the basic two- or three-times tables;
  - high expectations of what pupils should know. For example, in a Year 5 lesson investigating ways of building up their multiplication tables, the teacher explained the task very clearly and ensured that all pupils were fully engaged in what they had to do. As a result, they were well able by the end of the lesson to explain how they worked out the 17 or 23 times tables;
  - a continuous emphasis on the acquisition and use of the correct technical vocabulary so that pupils build up their mathematical understanding.
140. Throughout the school, the planning is now done jointly in year groups, which has helped to overcome the disparity observed between one pair of parallel classes in the scrutiny of last year's work. Different activities are appropriately identified to match, in broad terms, pupils' differing needs, thus catering soundly for all pupils, including those with SEN, those with English as an additional language and the potentially higher attainers. However, lesson planning would benefit from identifying more precisely what it is that pupils are expected to learn, rather than do, in each lesson so as to increase the level of challenge for all pupils, especially the higher attainers. In addition, the co-ordinator has correctly identified the need to incorporate investigational mathematics regularly into all classes to achieve the same ends. Homework makes a good contribution to reinforcing and extending pupil's learning.

141. The use of computers to support work in mathematics is not developed fully enough. Nor is the potential of mathematics to support the development of pupils' ICT competences. While some use has been made of, for example, spreadsheets and the use of a turtle to draw two-dimensional shapes, this is an area that the co-ordinator has already identified as a priority for development. Pupils' numeracy skills are used routinely in some classes and subjects, such as in science, but this is not always done with sufficient care and accuracy to improve them.
142. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator and the headteacher are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject because they monitor the quality of planning and the subsequent standards of pupils' work on a regular basis. A satisfactory amount of time is allocated for the co-ordinator to be released from her class for this purpose. The subject development plan is good; it has addressed appropriate areas for development and continues to be a good tool for further improvement. The results of annual tests are analysed and used very well to identify the progress of individuals and groups and to set targets for teachers and pupils for further improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

143. In last year's national tests for Year 6, pupils achieved results that were well above average when compared with all schools across the country. When compared with schools of similar circumstances, attainment was above average. Over time, there is no difference in the performance of boys and girls, although in 2001 boys did better in this test than girls did. Standards have risen since the previous inspection because the curriculum is better organised. Teachers provide appropriate work for pupils of all abilities, continually involving them in scientific investigations.
144. Currently, standards in Year 2 are above average. They are average in Year 6. Discussions with pupils from Year 6 during the inspection indicate that about 25 per cent are beginning to work at the higher Level 5 with a further 50 per cent working at Level 4. This indicates that average results in the national tests are likely to be slightly lower than last year.
145. The older children in Years 1 and 2 are challenged to write their own thoughts about their investigations into forces and 'pushes and pulls'. They take great care with their work. The highest attaining pupils develop a sound grasp of a fair test when they run toy cars down slopes, compiling tables of results and bar graphs to interpret the results. Some pupils elaborate on their data handling by using bullet points to report their findings. They achieve very good results in relation to their prior learning.
146. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress, using accurate scientific vocabulary accurately in their reports. There is a very good balance between the assimilation of knowledge and the development of investigative skills. The children's science journals almost always include compiling of results and the use of mathematics to interrogate the collected data. Occasionally one class of the youngest pupils does not produce the same quality of work as the parallel class. Older children incorporate ICT into their work using sensing devices to measure accurately changes, for example the rising temperature of ice as it changes into water.
147. Pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language make progress at the same rate as the other pupils in their class because they are included fully in all lessons.
148. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have very good scientific knowledge and their clear explanations about how living things grow and change and about the differences between natural and not natural objects expand pupils' scientific

knowledge. Carefully chosen and precise questioning helps children to think things through and deepen their understanding. Practical activities are carefully planned and serve to revisit the first part of the lesson. For example, Year 1 pupils enjoyed using play dough to construct animals with different characteristics and ways of moving. Older children accurately collated sets of materials according to whether they were considered natural or not natural. Pupils enjoyed these activities and set about their tasks enthusiastically. There were very good levels of conversation and co-operation as pupils discussed their work and their choices. Adults circulated well, talking to the children about their work, evaluating the levels of their understanding and using questions skilfully to help them complete their investigations.

149. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, but less consistent in Years 3 to 6. It is good in Year 3 and ranges between satisfactory and good in Years 5 and 6. There is unsatisfactory teaching in Year 4. This is because pupils' ideas are not taken into account during class discussions. They make basic mistakes when setting out their work that are not identified as the teacher moves around the class and the correct scientific vocabulary is not introduced to the children. In one class, the teacher's scientific knowledge of sound was not correct.
150. Where lessons are good or very good, the teachers' own enthusiasm permeates through to the children, giving them confidence to take part in good scientific discussion about 'how sound travels'. The teacher continually questions and probes pupils' knowledge about sound transmission helping them to connect 'vibration' with 'how sound travels'. Very good teaching is effectively supported by prior analysis of Year 3 pupils' investigations into how shadows are formed. This enables the teacher to help pupils to clarify their knowledge and to gain greater accuracy.
151. A very good assessment and marking system is in place. Teachers find out what children know about the programme of work to be introduced before they plan the lessons. Work is marked positively giving pupils feedback and time is planned well to organise lessons at the end of the programme of work to untangle any misunderstandings or inaccurate knowledge.
152. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator who has made changes to the schemes of work to ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are taught science through investigations. Good in-service training has improved most teachers' skills ensuring that they are more confident and knowledgeable, although more remains to be done. Accurate assessment procedures have been introduced to ensure that lessons are relevant to the children's scientific knowledge. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and test results are analysed with a view to improve the quality of the science curriculum. The subject is carefully evaluated by the co-ordinator through the analysis of lesson planning, the scrutiny of children's work and the direct observation of teaching. The subject is not yet supported fully enough by the systematic use of ICT, nor does it make sufficient contribution to the development of pupils' ICT skills and competences.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

153. Standards in art and design at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national expectations. This is less satisfactory than at the time of the previous inspection when attainment across the school was judged to be good, but is an improvement on an interim inspection by the LEA in 2000, which identified below average standards. Weaknesses in standards identified in one Year 6 class last year have been addressed. Throughout the school most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are now making satisfactory progress, and good progress, overall, in the lessons seen. They achieve satisfactorily over time. Pupils' work covers a satisfactory range of two and three-

dimensional projects that incorporate the use of various media and techniques including pastels, pencil, chalk, fabric, water colours and clay.

154. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work effectively with pastels and other media in preparation for drawing self-portraits. In Year 1 they experiment with textures and mixtures of chalks, crayons and charcoal, enabling them to handle materials competently when, for example, drawing self-portraits. Year 2 pupils use pastels to extend a given view, paying due care to perspective and proportion and showing an awareness of foreground and background. The skills of smudging, smearing and scraping are developing soundly. Good opportunities are provided for them to evaluate their own and others' work.
155. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate the arrangement of figures in a portrait to show their relationships and develop a dream sequence, using skills of shading and lining. In both these lessons higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged. Good progress is observed across the school in observational drawing and work on textures. Year 6 pupils observed, identified and sketched features of facial expression satisfactorily to demonstrate emotions, such as happiness, anger and boredom, through the use of different media and colour. For example, they used dark colours for sadness. They compare the methods and approaches used by recognised artists to improve details of portraiture.
156. The teaching observed was good overall, across the school, and never less than satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 teachers make good use of a combination of demonstration and allowing pupils to discover for themselves through experiment. They make good use of pupils to demonstrate examples of good practice. Questioning is used well, and in one lesson the use of background music contributed effectively to the pupils' learning. In Years 3 to 6, good teaching is characterised by high levels of challenge for pupils and clear expectations by teachers of what they expect pupils to achieve. All teachers share good relationships with their pupils, who enjoy and are enthusiastic about art and design. The main weaknesses are:
- teachers' planning and practice does not always make suitable provision for the range of prior attainment and needs in the class;
  - expectations of the standard of work in pupils' sketchbooks are not consistently high enough.
157. The subject is led well by the enthusiastic co-ordinator, whose recent action plan, audit of resources and scrutiny of pupils' work have contributed positively to the rise in standards, and the identification of the need for further training in areas of weakness. The co-ordinator knows how to take the subject forward, and the school's capacity for further improvement in the subject is good. Criticisms made during the earlier LEA inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily. The new art and design policy is still in draft form but the school has adopted the latest national guidance and schemes of work. Assessment of the subject, for example, at the end of a completed topic, has yet to be formalised. Good use made of ICT to support the subject was seen in Year 2, where pupils use colour-flooding tools to create a picture in the style of Piet Mondrian, but ICT work of this quality is not evident elsewhere. Art, craft and sketch clubs support the subject well, as does the art focus within the residential trip taken by Year 6 pupils. The school makes good use of its kiln, for example Year 4 pupils had made three-dimensional clay models of human figures following stimulus from 'The Scream' by Munch, but three-dimensional work is insufficiently developed overall. The new policy for display ensures that they enhance the school consistently. However, few displays feature the works of recognised artists and opportunities to appreciate the richness and diversity of art from other cultures are insufficiently developed.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

158. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, in Years 1 and 2 get off to a good start, so that by the age of seven they are reaching standards above those expected nationally. In Years 3 to 6 they make satisfactory progress and at age eleven standards are similar to the national expectations. Standards are higher in Years 1 and 2 than at the time of the previous report.
159. The records of pupils' work and the lessons seen show that there is good teaching in Years 1 and 2. The youngest pupils rapidly learn how to manipulate construction kits when the teacher asks them to tell her what to do to join two plastic sections together with a plastic nut and bolt to make a lever and she demonstrates this technique clearly. The children are very keen to begin their task to construct their own levers and quickly set to work, sharing out a good range of resources carefully laid out for them in the main body of the classroom. The teacher has allowed sufficient time for each pupil to demonstrate his or her lever to the whole class, and at the end of the lesson, pupils quickly and enthusiastically dismantle their work and tidy up the classroom. The adult helping in the classroom plays an important part in the lesson, encouraging some pupils who have difficulty joining the components to assemble their model.
160. Older children respond well to the teacher's introductory explanation as they carefully draw labelled diagrams of the puppets they are designing. These designs are of a very good quality and their expressions make the designs come alive. Higher attaining pupils show side as well as front views in their designs.
161. Although only one lesson was seen in the junior classes during the inspection, it is clear from the records of work that the teaching is at least satisfactory. The oldest pupils make models from construction kits and wood. They make the models move using battery driven electric circuitry. Their initial design diagrams are of very good quality and their writing includes reports and notes about assembly together with evaluations of the design's effectiveness. These models are finished well, often with working headlights and electric drive mechanisms between the motor and the wheels. Younger children assemble working musical instruments to the same good quality.
162. The co-ordinator's leadership of the subject is good. The improvement to the schemes of work and the identification of the necessary tools and resources has made pupils' progression across years more even. There are some effective links with science and children use technical vocabulary in their writing. However, the use of ICT is underdeveloped as a resource to look for ideas and a tool for designing. Teachers have received training in the safe use of tools. Pupils' work is often carefully assessed and marked positively to help pupils improve their skills and techniques in the short term. However, this information is not used consistently throughout the school to build up a picture of individual achievement.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

163. The previous inspection report judged that attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 was about average, and teaching was satisfactory. The current position is not so positive. Attainment is below the level expected in both year groups because the curriculum is not organised in a sufficiently systematic way and pupils do not achieve the standards they should and could. The limited amount of teaching observed was largely satisfactory, but too much was attempted in one of the short sessions. Lessons do not always contain a specific geographical aim. Resources are just adequate, but not enough specific teaching or recording of geographical knowledge and skills take place.
164. In Year 1, pupils consider the building of houses, mainly from their own experiences. In Year 2, pupils make simple, but satisfactory, comparisons of aspects of the

geography of the fictitious Scottish island of Struay with their local area. Pupils in Year 3 produce brief summaries of their local environment. In Year 4, pupils make simple comparisons of Bombay and Plymouth. Pupils in Year 5 use simple maps to locate various shops and record their impressions of Tavistock satisfactorily. They have a satisfactory understanding of issues, such as the use and saving of water and of the effects of pollution. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is below average because knowledge and skills are not developed systematically. There is no evidence of high attainment. Although pupils know about various locations in Britain and other parts of the world, opportunities to compare and contrast different areas are not developed sufficiently. Throughout the school, the range and standard of map work are unsatisfactory and pupils' mapping skills are below the level expected.

165. In the brief lessons observed, pupils behaved well and showed interest when suggesting where particular features might be found on Struay. Teaching within most individual sessions is satisfactory, but teachers lack the detailed guidance to ensure pupils make adequate progress. Planning is not sufficiently detailed, and there is not always sufficient geographical emphasis. Planned work does not meet the needs of different pupils sufficiently, able pupils in particular are not challenged enough. Teachers' subject knowledge is not always extensive enough to allow topics to be developed in depth. There is very limited development of pupils' literacy skills and few opportunities to develop numeracy skills by extensive work using maps, the use of scales and comparing data from different localities are not evident. The potential of ICT to contribute to the subject is not developed fully enough.
166. The school recognises that the geography curriculum is not organised satisfactorily. The co-ordinator appreciates that, while teachers introduce a sound range of geographical topics, there is no clear curricular guidance to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed systematically as they move through the school. As a result, the topics offered to pupils lack coherence and important skills are given little attention. The very short units of work planned for the autumn term are not always used to best effect. Assessment of pupils' work is very limited, although written work in Year 1 last year was always linked to a specific, stated target. The nature of the curriculum limits the opportunities for geography to make a greater contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development even though some of the planned work raises important social and moral issues related to the use of the world's resources and care of the environment.
167. The co-ordinator has not yet been able to move the subject forward, although she has a good understanding of many of the weaknesses and of how to start improvement. She has not yet monitored and evaluated teaching, learning and standards in the subject. The need to improve the geography curriculum and teachers' subject knowledge is identified in the school development plan. Although geographical resources are adequate, the school does not have sufficient class atlases for one per pupil.

## **HISTORY**

168. Standards of attainment in history at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those expected nationally. Pupils in nearly all year groups, including those with special educational needs and also the limited number of pupils for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily in relation to prior attainment. These are similar judgements to those made during the last inspection and reflect the good standard of teaching in most classes and the way the pupils' understanding of history is enhanced by the school's practical approach to the delivery of the curriculum. Year 5 pupils, for example, become Victorian school children during an off-site visit when they are studying Victorian times and Year 2 pupils visit the local war memorial as part of their studies into Remembrance Day.

169. But even though standards have been maintained since this previous inspection the school realises there is still a need to improve standards even further and, as neither the co-ordinator nor the rest of the teaching staff have received any recent in-service training in the subject, action to further develop history as a subject is included in the current school action plan.
170. The history co-ordinator leads the subject soundly even though she has held this responsibility for less than a year. Although the co-ordinator is able to monitor medium-term planning, there are presently no whole-school systems in place for the regular assessment of pupils' progress in history and, as a result, assessment information is rarely used to inform future planning and this has an adverse impact on teaching and learning.
171. Even so the work of Year 6 pupils scrutinised during the inspection confirmed that most had built up a reasonable amount of factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of British history as they progressed through the school. There was little evidence, however, that pupils had been given meaningful opportunities to develop their awareness of history in the wider world and this had a limiting effect on overall standards of achievement at the end of Year 6, and on their understanding of the historical context of other cultures. Many Year 6 pupils, however, produce structured work of a satisfactory quality and had, for example, developed an understanding of the differences between 'primary' and 'secondary' sources when gathering evidence. This distinction in the use and value of evidence was noticeable in their studies of *'Britain Since 1948'* and *'The Sixties'*, especially in comparisons between life then and now!
172. Pupils' attitudes towards history are good in most year groups. They enjoy learning about the past and the scrutiny of pupils' work contained evidence that the history curriculum provided them with a structured approach to learning about the subject as they progressed through the school. Whilst both the breadth and depth of coverage of history increased from Year 1 to Year 6, there was only limited evidence of most teachers matching tasks to the abilities and previous knowledge of pupils. In many observed lessons work was usually set on a whole-class basis with a resultant lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. This affected not only their achievement but also that of the lower attaining pupils, whose work was sometimes of a limited quality, especially when they were not given extra support.
173. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed during the inspection was good overall and ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. When teaching was good or better the pace of lessons was brisk, planning was detailed, resources well used and the subject knowledge of teachers secure. In a very well taught Year 5 lesson about collecting information from a variety of sources, the teacher's planning and lesson delivery matched tasks to pupils' abilities and her enthusiasm for the subject was evident and inspiring. This resulted in many pupils achieving well, which was noticeable in the knowledge and understanding a majority of pupils displayed in the short summary session at the end of the lesson. Because of the structured approach taken by the teacher, learning took place and pupils enjoyed the session and, as a result, increased their knowledge and understanding of life in Victorian times.
174. When teaching was unsatisfactory activities were badly organised and work was undemanding, which resulted in unsatisfactory learning taking place.
175. Resources for teaching history are sound and include a range of artefacts that are used well, which contributes to the satisfactory achievement of pupils. These resources are easily accessed and cover all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study. Links between history and other subjects, especially ICT, were not sufficiently and consistently evident during the inspection.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

176. In both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' skills are below what is expected. While pupils are now achieving satisfactory results in Years 1 and 2, they are not achieving the results they should in Years 3 to 6. The previous report judged pupils' attainment to be at least above what was expected nationally. However, during the four years since that report was published, the status of the subject nationally has risen with new skills for pupils to learn and incorporate into their work in almost all subjects. There are gaps in pupils' experiences and there is only limited use of basic technology such as tape recorders and overhead projectors.
177. This situation is beginning to improve with the development of the computer suite where pupils are now learning the basic skills of the subject. In addition, many teachers are confident in the use of computers. However, there are known inconsistencies in the way computers in classrooms are used to consolidate learning that limit progress and newly introduced assessment procedures have not yet had sufficient time to influence achievement and attainment fully; these are explained more fully later in this section.
178. The youngest pupils create accurate simple sentences using the mouse accurately to illustrate them. They lift and drag items of clothing to 'dress teddy' and label the body parts on a human form as part of their work in science. They create portraits in art and design. However, there was no evidence of other applications. Year 2 pupils use the mouse to create symmetrical patterns. They change the colour, using the mouse to select from the toolbar. There are good links with history when pupils accurately word process their creative writing about the life and times of the 1914 – 1918 War. There are some good examples of children selecting colour and 'brushes' from the toolbar to paint in the style of Matisse. There is no evidence of other uses of the computer.
179. During the inspection the direct teaching of ICT to pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the computer suite was good. Confident and skilled teachers used the networked system to teach younger pupils new skills, linking work with science. Pupils used the mouse to recognise sounds, clicking on icons to check their accuracy. Younger pupils had opportunities to practise writing their names. The older pupils quickly learned to log on to the system and use the mouse to select different tools to create a sky. They responded with excited curiosity when the teacher demonstrated her skill through the networked system with her creation of the sky appearing before them on their screens. They rapidly learned to change tools to produce skies of different colours. A pupil with special educational needs made good progress because he quickly understood how more complex patterns could be achieved. This extended his interest levels. He was supported well by a learning support assistant.
180. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 in the computer suite is satisfactory, overall. In the one lesson where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory it was because the teacher did not have sufficient computer knowledge and was unable to use the network system to lead the pupils through the process of changing fonts, underlining, centring and increasing print size. In other classes, teachers' knowledge is secure, enabling children to increase their competence in using spell checks. Year 5 pupils quickly learn how to set up spreadsheets, learning rapidly and accurately from the teacher's instructions. They learn to adjust the cells on their spreadsheets correctly. Good use is made of the network system by the teacher enabling the class to observe the changes on their screens before experimenting for themselves. The oldest pupils made good progress and gain introductory insights into the use and effectiveness of website pages and multimedia. This well prepared and resourced lesson was effectively introduced in the classroom prior to work commencing in the computer suite. Pupils enjoyed their lesson, taking turns to use the mouse to activate the



website page. They completed a written matrix to evaluate the different web pages and make suggestions on how to improve them.

181. The use of computers in classrooms is inconsistent. This means that children are unable to practise and consolidate their skills. During the inspection, good use of ICT was made to assist a sight-impaired pupil. In history, the Internet was searched to capture information about Victorian times. The examination of work in other subjects shows that some use of the computer is made in art and design and mathematics (use of data-bases, spreadsheets, and associated bar charts, the use of a turtle to draw two-dimensional shapes and sensing and measuring temperatures). However, links with any subject are not developed fully enough, which inhibits the progress pupils make in developing their ICT skills and competencies as well as their skills in other subjects. Pupils are keen to use the computer. Before school started pupils in a Year 4 class were conscientiously using a computer to research dinosaur and human skeletons. However, the provision is not systematic and pupils do not receive regular periods of time using all applications.
182. Pupils are not always encouraged to use both hands when operating the keyboard. Often when they work in pairs the pupils completing the typing do not sit directly in front of the machine. Consequently, keyboard skills are not fully developed.
183. The recently appointed co-ordinator, (since September 2002) is fully aware of the present situation and is addressing the current issues. The action plan has ensured that the software loaded into the networked computers covers all the applications and demands of the National Curriculum. Card upgrades are in place to ensure that the older computers situated around the school will be added to the network. This will enable the computers to be used in classrooms. Twilight training sessions are planned to give teachers the necessary skills and confidence. A helpful assessment system has been written to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable but this has not yet made an impact on raising pupils' standards. The scheme of work satisfies fully the demands of the National Curriculum. Change is now being managed well.

## **MUSIC**

184. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attainment in music meets national expectations. This represents a lowering of standards in Years 1 and 2 since the previous inspection, but an improvement since an interim inspection from the LEA in 2000, which suggested significant weaknesses in the school. No judgement was made in the previous inspection of standards in Years 3 – 6. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs are now achieving satisfactorily as they move through the school.
185. Pupils know a range of songs and hymns, some of which they sing by heart. They sing tunefully in assemblies but with little expression or spirit. In an assembly for younger pupils the singing was accurately pitched and followed the tempo and rhythm accurately, but lacked commitment and enthusiasm. On the only occasion in which the teaching of singing was observed, briefly, in a hymn practice, there were missed opportunities to improve the quality of the performance, for example by concentrating on the difficult high notes, holding notes to the end of lines or asking the pupils to stand up to sing.
186. In Years 1 and 2 pupils listen to a variety of sounds, the younger ones progressing from classroom to school to the outdoors, developing keen listening skills, to identify, for example, the school's fish tank and a bird in the sky. Year 2 successfully listen to, identify and group untuned instruments as scrapers, bangers and shakers. They write their comments on whiteboards – 'The Zilophone makes a tink'; the scraper sounds 'like a train's wheel'; the chime bar makes 'a vibrating sound'. They all successfully

recognise how sounds can be organised. They recognise and name maracas, triangle and tambourine. Older pupils in Year 3 progress further in understanding that sounds can represent something, for example the characters in 'Peter and the Wolf', observing 'It sounds like a bird tweeting' and 'I thought it was a boy dancing'. By Year 4 pupils attempt to compose their own sounds, playing simple tunes based on a pentatonic scale. Year 6 pupils studying the lyrics of 'Where have all the flowers gone?' comply with the teacher's efforts to improve their singing standards but are subdued, show little interest or enthusiasm, and most fail to open their mouths fully. They are far more animated by her very good vocal 'warm-up' exercises and respond to these very positively.

187. Teaching of music is satisfactory overall. One good lesson was seen in Year 2, and one unsatisfactory lesson was seen in Year 4. In the good lesson effective planning, a variety of methods to maintain pupils' interest and an imaginative and stimulating method involving pupils working together in pairs, resulted in a good response from pupils. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's weak management of pupils led to much wastage of learning time and there was insufficient challenge to pupils. Pace slowed, and the opportunity to extend the pupils' achievement was lost. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally satisfactory, but some lack confidence, and short-term planning has insufficient detail. Year 6 pupils were helpfully provided with the music as well as lyrics for their song but opportunities were missed to refer to the music, to discuss the composition and identify notes.
188. Leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory and there is much potential for improving provision. Pupils do not use an exercise book for the subject and there is little recorded evidence of composition work. Assessment in the subject is unsatisfactory and planning for pupils of differing levels of attainment is insufficient. Choirs are raised for specific occasions such as the recent 'Ocean Commotion' performance. The use of ICT is underdeveloped. Although music is played to pupils when entering and leaving assemblies, no reference was made to this music during the inspection week, and those pupils asked had no knowledge of the piece or the composer. The subject supports the development of pupils' awareness of their own culture satisfactorily, but there is less emphasis on the study of music from other countries and cultures. Singing in assemblies lacks direction; pupils were asked to sing the same hymn twice in two separate assemblies during the inspection, with no attempts to make improvement, thereby restricting their learning opportunities. There is no choir, although 14 volunteers were interested in starting one. Similarly, with so many other activities supported so very well by pupils, and with so many instrumentalists and recorder players available, there is no orchestra. Some 30 pupils (many less than at the time of the previous inspection) receive individual tuition in instruments such as keyboards, guitar, clarinet, flute and violin, but are unknown to the co-ordinator; insufficient use is made of the additional talent and knowledge of these children within the normal school environment.
189. The school is fortunate to have a separate music room and two halls for performances; resources are satisfactory, but some untuned instruments are ageing and will require replacement soon. Recorder clubs are held, and performances in assemblies help encourage and develop pupils' skills. The subject co-ordinator has supplemented the latest planning now used with further resource packs, and monitored some teachers' planning, but has yet to be enabled to visit any classes.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

190. The standards attained in physical education meet national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. They are below those found at the time of the previous inspection, but have improved since the LEA inspection three years ago. A full physical education curriculum is followed, although only dance and games were seen during the

inspection week. Provision for swimming is under review, and no pupils swam with the school during the last academic year. Future provision will be within Year 6, towards the end of the year, and this arrangement will be an improvement on the earlier system. The school claims that about 90 per cent of its pupils who leave from Year 6 are able to swim unaided the expected 25 metres, but keeps no records to confirm this. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are achieving satisfactorily over time but insufficient provision is made for higher attaining pupils within lessons.

191. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are aware of health and safety issues as well as the effect of exercise on their bodies. They use space well as soon as they enter the hall and respond positively to their warm-up sessions. All change appropriately. They move around the hall travelling by skipping, hopping, twisting movements and successfully mirror their partner's actions. Year 2 pupils create the actions of string puppets, building a complicated sequence of dance movements. In their games session they improve catching skills, throwing beanbags to one another from increasingly long distances, and demonstrate above average standards.
192. Pupils in Years 3 create syncopated, robotic actions to perform a machine dance, involving head, arms, hands, body, legs and feet movements appropriately, creating their own dance motif. They improve their performance over time through practice and refinement. They evaluate and copy their partner's actions successfully. Year 4 pupils are less successful in their task to trace out the first letter of their name through their movements and do not work to the level expected of their age. In a Year 5 dance lesson pupils struggled to create movements to characterise people from the Victorian past such as a pickpocket, seller, street entertainers, with strong links with the history they are studying. Year 6 pupils were skilful in catching, throwing, passing, intercepting and evading in their lesson on netball techniques, attaining good standards. They worked well in pairs, matching boy with girl, and in small groups. The teaching of games and the pupils' successes are strengths of the school, supported well by governors, the local football club, and by parents.
193. The teaching observed was satisfactory overall, good in Years 1 and 2, with one poor lesson in Year 4. In the good lessons seen the teachers changed appropriately, led from the front by example, and kept up a good pace, which maintained the pupils' interest. They made good use of pupils to demonstrate examples of good practice and ensured that learning objectives were well understood at the outset and reinforced in the plenary session at the end of the lesson. Most teachers plan appropriate warm-up and cool-down sessions, but planning for pupils of different levels of attainment is inconsistent and, in one poor lesson, pupils were insufficiently challenged. Not all teachers act as good role models by changing into appropriate clothing, and not all are confident with the subject content and delivery. Pupils generally enjoy their lessons; they behave well and work well collaboratively in pairs and small groups.
194. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has written a new policy and new guidelines for safety in gymnastics. Since the previous inspection the school has adopted the latest national guidance for the subject and a new scheme of work, which has been modified, with the inclusion of some aspects of planning from the local Devon Approach curriculum; this is helping to raise standards. The need for in-service training in the teaching of gymnastics has been identified. The time allocation for the subject is above average, and in some lessons the time allowed was more than the planning required. The school is fortunate to have two halls and two tarmac areas to deliver the subject. Large apparatus in the hall is challenging, resources are good, but insufficiently well organised for easy access. Teachers' planning is monitored, and provision has been made for the co-ordinator to observe lessons in the near future, but formal assessment of pupils' performances in the subject is underdeveloped and record keeping is not developed sufficiently. Extra

curricular provision for the subject is very good and does much to develop pupils' games skills. Clubs are established and well supported for soccer, tag-rugby, netball and cross-country. Competitive fixtures are held with other schools, which help to develop pupils' physical, social and personal skills. The subject has a low focus around the school, with few displays.