

INSPECTION REPORT

ELBURTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113322

Headteacher: Mr David Bradford

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 10th to 14th February 2003

Inspection number: 252913

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Elburton Primary School
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Frieda Court

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Elburton Primary School serves a wide spectrum of families of almost entirely British heritage most of whom comes from the urban village surrounding the school on the edge of Plymouth. Employment rates are high and in many families, both parents are working. Take up of free school meals is low. The school is popular in the area and, with waiting lists and pressure on places, the number of pupils on roll has remained stable at about 370 for several years. Movement of pupils in or out of school other than at usual times is very low as is the turnover of staff. Fewer than a tenth of pupils are on the special needs register but five have statements of special need. Attainment on entry is a little above that found in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many strengths which is very popular in the community. Academic standards, pupils' personal standards and teaching are good. Overall leadership and management are very good, Current expenditure per pupil is a little less than most schools and attainment on entry is a little above average. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching ensures that pupils of all ages achieve well and eleven-year-olds attain good standards when they leave
- Arrangements for supporting pupils who find learning difficult are very effective. Very good work by support staff ensures that they make very good progress towards their learning targets
- All staff know pupils very well, take very good care for their safety and welfare and encourage their moral and social development
- Boys and girls are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic learners, willing to express themselves and happy to work alongside their classmates and play sociably
- It has an excellent relationship with parents who make a very substantial contribution to their children's learning and the work of the school
- The head is an outstanding leader and manager who has made the most of existing resources and created a very positive ethos based on openness, trust and mutual respect

What could be improved

- The core curriculum is well developed and very sound but there is real scope to make this even better by tapping into the undoubted creative energy, confidence and enthusiasm of pupils and involving them in extending and enriching what they do in school in and out of class
- Minor misbehaviour and over-enthusiasm take up valuable time especially in the afternoons

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Despite a dip in English this year, the overall improvement in results in tests for seven and eleven-year-olds since the last inspection in 1998 has matched the national trend and remained above and well above average. Current standards are all above average. All the issues identified at the last inspection have been comprehensively dealt with and many have become strengths. Assessment and recording procedures and the use of the information gained are all very good. Classroom monitoring procedures are exemplary. The whole infant/ foundation stage environment has been substantially upgraded and the curriculum for the under-fives is well planned. All aspects of whole school planning are very effective and teaching is now good. In addition, provision for information technology is much improved and the number and effectiveness of teaching assistants is a feature of the school. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

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

In the year following the last inspection, results in national tests for 11 year olds improved greatly to well above average and were then sustained at this high level for the next two years. While this very good trend continued in 2002 in mathematics and science, results in English fell to average. However, the percentage of pupils achieving at least average grades was well above average in all three subjects, the difference being in the reduced number achieving higher grades in English. Year 2 results in 2002 fell from above average to average in reading and writing but remained well above in mathematics. Pupils are achieving well in literacy, numeracy, science and several foundation subjects and attaining above average standards with expected standards in the rest. Standards are higher in several of these subjects in classes where teachers have particular expertise. Boys and girls who started school in September have made good progress and are already close to achieving the early learning goals. January starters are doing well but have some way to go before they catch up. Pupils of all ages identified as needing extra help are making very good progress towards their learning targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls are very fond of their school and the adults who look after them. Most are enthusiastic about the work they are given to do, try hard to please and are confident in their responses and contributions to discussions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour around the site is generally good which contributes greatly to the enjoyment and satisfaction pupils and adults gain from their time in school. The great majority of pupils behave very well in class but thoughtless behaviour by a small minority in some slows learning, especially in the afternoons. Overall behaviour is good.
Personal development and relationships	The very high quality of relationships between all members of the school community, including the children, is a great strength which has a positive impact on all areas of school life. Pupils are aware of their responsibilities and appreciate their roles in maintaining its open, friendly ethos. They work together very well and take responsibility for many aspects of school life as they get older but would welcome more opportunities in this area.
Attendance	Boys and girls very positive attitudes to school and their parents keenness for them to do well means that any absences are unavoidable.

Boys and girls are full of life and energy and ever ready to make their contribution in lessons. Everybody gets on very well but occasionally teachers are disappointed by the way the behaviour of a few pupils stops other boys and girls getting all they could from school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Most teaching is good with much even better and the rest satisfactory. No teaching is less than satisfactory and one excellent lesson was observed. The quality of teaching is broadly consistent across the key stages with both very good and satisfactory teaching observed in a range of subjects including English and mathematics. Better teaching is mainly associated with the expertise of individual teachers and is most often seen near the end of key stages. Teaching assistants supporting pupils who find learning difficult make a very good contribution in enhancing learning in the basics. While pupil management is a strength in some lessons, time lost in this area is the most usual reason why some lessons are satisfactory. Most pupils also make a strong contribution to their own learning by working hard and doing their best.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils are given a good range of learning experiences covering all the required elements with literacy and numeracy suitably emphasised. The curriculum in the reception classes is appropriate to their needs. Very good planning procedures making good use of national and local schemes ensure progression and that pupils in parallel classes have a similar diet. Sound attention is given to promoting pupils' understanding of themselves and matters of health and safety.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very effective procedures for identifying boys and girls who find learning difficult and helping them to succeed are in place and working very well. Teachers, support staff, parents and the children themselves are all involved in the process and with the help of the coordinator, targets are set and reviewed regularly. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution working with teachers and supporting pupils in class. The school makes every effort to ensure that all pupils, whatever their ability, are included in all the school has to offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Staff make good provision for promoting pupils' personal development with very good arrangements for pupils to develop moral awareness. Provision for the development of pupils' social skills and attitudes are good with satisfactory attention given to helping pupils to reflect on the more spiritual aspects of their growth and study and appreciate the arts, their own cultural heritage and celebrate the cultural diversity of others
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has developed a well-earned reputation for the very good care it provides for its boys and girls and its ability to meet the needs of all pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils are safe, happy and not at any risk. Their behaviour and attendance are carefully monitored and very good assessment procedures are well used for modifying planning to meet current needs and measure progress against national levels. Where problems occur, parents are kept well informed and they are closely involved in any discussions held or actions taken.

The excellent partnership between the school and parents is a very important factor in their children's learning and the outstanding ethos of the school. Very good relationships and communications are mutually supportive and built on trust. Individually and collectively, parents' contributions to the life of the school are excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The head, well supported by the deputy and assistant heads, has been very effective in involving the whole school community in building the reputation of the school in the area and in bringing about necessary improvements to the accommodation and other provision. Relationships and communications are very good and everyone values the school's positive open ethos. Most subject and aspect leaders are making an important contribution to the development of their areas of interest and the whole staff work together very well in the best interest of the children. Overall leadership and management is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Collectively and individually, the governing body are making a very good contribution to the leadership and management of the school. The openness of the school and governors' willingness to question and find out for themselves first hand means they really know their school and they are an integral part of the process of strategic decision making and evaluating outcomes. Many bring useful expertise to the governing body and training has a high profile. The head and staff value their support and ensure that they are kept well informed about current issues and concerns.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Arrangements for monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning are very well developed. Staff and governors are routinely involved in the process and this results in a noteworthy degree of discussion about the direction of the school. Information from tests and assessments is very carefully analysed to sort out trends and focus planning, especially in literacy and numeracy. Teaching and learning are observed very regularly in the classrooms and staff are given regular opportunities to discuss their performance.
The strategic use of resources	Available funds have been very wisely spent on upgrading and improving the existing buildings in imaginative ways so that a difficult site is now a much better learning environment. Good use is being made of teaching and support staff. Good levels of well used resources have been accumulated in most subjects and the budget is thoughtfully allocated and efficiently managed at all levels.

The headteacher, thoughtfully supported by the deputy and assistant heads, has provided the vision, direction and determination to lead the school in substantially improving its learning environment and provision year on year. Very well supported by the governors and staff, his contribution to the current success of the school has been outstanding.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children enjoy going to school • teaching is good and their children are making good progress • pupils work hard and do their best • the school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good • the work children are expected to do at home • information about how well their children are doing • the staff are very approachable • the school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the range of extra activities

Inspectors agree with all the positive judgements made by parents and also that the range of extra activities provided by the school is less than in many similar schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in national tests in English, mathematics and science for eleven-year-olds improved by the equivalent of more than two terms to well above average between 1998 and 1999 and stayed at these high levels for the next two years in each. When compared with other schools this meant Elburton School achieved well above average results in English and mathematics and above in science as national standards improved. Similar standards in mathematics and science were sustained in 2002. A well above average number of pupils achieved at least average grades in English but overall, compared to other schools, the school came out average. Despite the percentage of pupils achieving higher grades separately in reading and writing being above average, when individual pupil's scores were added together, a below average number achieved the higher level five. This brought the overall comparison down to only average.

2. By improving at the same rate as other schools, standards achieved by seven-year-olds in reading and writing have kept above and well above average from 1998 to 2001. As national standards levelled out, results in 2002 fell to a little above average. However, this was not unexpected as the school had, from its own assessments, already identified this cohort as the weakest for several years with higher levels of special need especially in literacy skills. However, a good improvement in mathematics took results from average to well above in 2001 and, with every pupil achieving at least average grades, they remained well above in 2002.

3. Boys and girls start school a little above average but with a full range of prior attainment represented. Older pupils in the reception classes who start school in September, make good progress in their first term and, by the time of the inspection, were already operating at or near the level of all the early learning goals. Younger pupils in their foundation year, with more July and August born children than usual, have only been in school for a few weeks. During that time they have made good progress but they are functioning at a level some way below their older yearmates especially in their literacy, mathematical and personal and social development.

4. Pupils are achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school with even better progress being made in Years 2 and 6. Standards in all three aspects are currently above average in Years 2 and 6 and, with continued good teaching in these year groups, could be even better by the time national tests are taken, especially in mathematics. This shows a good improvement by eleven-year-olds from the results obtained by the same group of pupils when they took national tests when they were seven. Focused attention on literacy in Year 3 as a result of last years national test results is seeing these pupils catching up with other year groups. There are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls in any of these areas. Very well supported lower attaining pupils make especially good progress in these subjects and the percentage of pupils achieving higher standards is broadly as expected throughout the school. Speaking and listening skills are much better than usually seen with some pupils being especially articulate and forthcoming. Standards in science are above average in Years 2 and 6 but are much less consistent than English and mathematics in other year groups.

5. Achievements in art and design technology in most classes are better than expected for the ages of the pupils concerned and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making impressive progress in information technology. In all other subjects, overall standards are similar to those found in most schools with strengths and better achievement in individual classes in subjects such as music where teachers have particular expertise.

6. Pupils who find learning difficult make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Clear measurable targets with pupil's individual education plans are reviewed regularly and careful records are kept to ensure all pupils are making sufficient progress. On the rare occasions that pupils do not meet all their targets, the inclusion coordinator very carefully monitors plans to identify exactly why the targets have not been achieved and what strategies need to be put in place to

support the pupil. Very good provision supports pupils who find learning difficult extremely well and as a result all are achieving very well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good. The pride they take in their school can be seen in the way it is kept clean and tidy with a noticeable absence of litter and graffiti. The majority of pupils are very keen to come to school, arrive promptly at the beginning of the school day and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. Attendance is well above the national average.

8. Behaviour throughout the school is good. Pupils generally behave themselves well in lessons but a small minority adversely affect their own learning and that of others especially during the afternoons. They generally play well together in the outside playing areas at break-times but the shortage of organised activities leads to their behaviour becoming rather too boisterous especially at the end of the long lunch-time break. This can result in several minor accidents and disagreements. They generally move about the school in an orderly manner and behave well in the dining hall and during assemblies.

9. Pupils relate very well to each other and to adults working in the school. They are confident and friendly in the way they approach visitors. Pupils are taught to appreciate the impact of their words and actions on others through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, during assemblies and by the constant reinforcement of teaching and other staff. This has created an harmonious atmosphere within the school which has led to an almost total lack of oppressive behaviour such as sexism and racism; no serious instances of such behaviour were witnessed during the inspection. The clear anti-bullying policy is well implemented with any incidents dealt with promptly to the satisfaction of pupils and parents.

10. The recently introduced PSHE programme, reinforced by the example set by staff within the school, ensures that pupils demonstrate respect for the feelings of others. While subjects such as religious education and geography allow pupils to understand the values and beliefs of other cultures, more opportunities could be made available for them to experience these at first-hand through visitors to the school and trips to places of worship. Pupils with special education needs receive regular encouragement and support from their schoolmates. While pupils do demonstrate their willingness to exercise initiative and responsibility on an informal basis, more could be done to make this a more permanent feature of school life. The success of the playground mediator scheme and the football league organised and run by Year 6 pupils during lunch-times is a good example of how the pupils would rise to such a challenge.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. At the time of the last inspection teaching was described as generally satisfactory throughout the school but good in mathematics and physical education and in supporting pupils with special needs. Significantly, very little teaching in information technology was observed. Weaknesses included unclear learning objectives, a poor match of activities to the needs of pupils, especially the more able, and not making use of assessment in lesson planning.

12. The picture this time is much better with consistently good teaching observed throughout the school, no unsatisfactory lessons and a good proportion of very good teaching with one excellent mathematics lesson. The majority of teaching in each year group is at least good with some very good or better teaching in the foundation year and Years 1, 2 and 6. Most subjects, including information technology, but excepting art, geography, history and religious education include at least one very good lesson and only in religious education were there no good lessons. On balance, teaching is as good in the foundation subjects collectively as it is in literacy, numeracy and science. The support provided for pupils on the special needs register largely by teaching assistants as a part of normal classroom work is now very good.

13. While the improvement in teaching is impressive in itself, the fact that it has been achieved by virtually the same staff is a very good indication of the effectiveness of the various measures taken

by the school to support staff in the classroom and in their professional development. It is also testament to the hard work of the staff in building up their knowledge and expertise. Several other factors have also contributed to the impact this has on learning:

- minimal changes of staff have meant that there has been great continuity and coherence to teaching over the years and whole school approaches are very well implemented
- comprehensive planning arrangements based on national and local schemes of work and regular planning meetings ensure that all teachers are well supported in their planning
- most subject and aspect coordinators are making a significant impact on provision in their subjects by providing support and advice to their colleagues
- well-developed assessment procedures provide very useful information to help teachers fine tune their teaching to best meet the needs of pupils in most subjects

An additional factor in several very good lessons is the effect of particular expertise in the subject often involving the subject coordinator which was seen in design technology, music and physical education.

14. The impact of professional development and the good use made of national initiatives can be seen in literacy, numeracy and information technology lessons. In an excellent Year 2 numeracy lesson using the numeracy strategy structure and materials, challenging questioning stretching pupils of all abilities and the teachers enthusiasm for the subject led to pupils being on the edge of their seats ready to answer or contribute an explanation or way of working. Working at several levels with extension activities for the mathematically gifted, the quality of intellectual effort and learning in adding together two digit numbers was outstanding. In a Year 6 booster group taken by the class teacher while his class was taken by a colleague, less confident writers were helped to develop their writing by combining simple sentences to make complex ones. The smaller numbers made it possible for each pupil to be heard in discussion and get individual support with their writing. As a result, their involvement and enjoyment in an activity that has given them problems in the past was very impressive and they learned a lot.

15. Since the last inspection, the school has acquired a new suite of up to date computers, all staff have undergone a focused and progressive training programme and challenging national expectations have been established. As a consequence, teacher's expectations for themselves and for their pupils are now very high. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher's confidence rubbed off on her pupils and they very happily painted and drew their own representations of a park. By mixing clear information, some instructions and opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves, pupils were able to demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding remarkable for such young boys and girls.

16. In the foundation stage, all of the above factors come into play. The older group having worked their way up to coping with the beginnings of the numeracy strategy, gain a good deal from focused mental maths in which boys and girls demonstrate well developed understanding. This is built on with adult supported group activities and numeracy focused play activities thus making full use of the full range of possible approaches.

17. A very good example of the way the continuity and coherence provided by a very stable staff with common aims and approaches can produce good results can be seen in art. In this subject, all the five lessons observed were good and it is evident that this is the position throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 learn to make repeating patterns in the style of William Morris, making choices and showing good control. Year 4s make bold and confident quick sketches of Victorian clothing with the teacher emphasising the importance of design and composition. Older pupils in Year 6 use a range of learned skills and techniques to design and make prototypes of mask or head-dresses to represent the Carnival of the Animals. Each lesson and all the others seen built on previous learning, was well planned and prepared and was taught by a teacher confident in the subject matter. Consistently good teaching has led to very good outcomes.

18. The school has a very good policy for ensuring that all pupils who find learning difficult are fully included in lessons. Very good support is usually provided through teachers' preparation of work, matched to meet the needs of these pupils in English, mathematics and science and through good support from the learning support assistants. However in a small number of lessons in other subjects, pupils with learning difficulties were not so well supported and did not make as good

progress as the rest of the class. In general, teachers target their questions well to enable them to succeed. The Inclusion co-ordinator supports teachers in formulating targets to meet the needs of individual pupils extremely well, taking responsibility for writing the targets. The person responsible for helping the pupil meet his or her target is clearly identified on the plan. Good teaching and support for a small group of pupils during the early morning therapy sessions enables the pupils to make very good progress in developing their fine motor skills.

HOW GOOD ARE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

19. The quality and range of learning activities provided by the school is good and literacy and numeracy are suitably emphasised. In the foundation stage the school provides a curriculum that is appropriate to the children's needs. In 1998 the curriculum was described as broad and balanced. Each subject had a policy and effective long-term plans. The school has worked hard to maintain curriculum provision with resulting improvement in many areas.

20. All pupils currently have access to a wide range of well planned, interesting experiences that meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Early Learning Goals and for religious education. A consistent and very thorough approach to planning and evaluation enables the school to build a strong curriculum ensuring full coverage. The use of National Curriculum guidance, adapted and extended where the school sees fit, ensures good provision. A personal, social and health education strategy is in place but is not planned as coherently as the main curriculum subjects and would benefit from a common thematic approach. There is an acknowledged need to raise the profile of PSHE within the school. The provision for health education includes specific sex education for Years 5 and 6, and the school makes use of the Life Education Caravan to enhance drugs education.

21. A suitable emphasis is placed on the teaching of English, maths and science and both the literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively implemented. The very thorough planning of the curriculum ensures good levels of coverage. Curriculum coordinators provide clear guidelines for the coverage in each year group, monitor planning and use teachers' evaluations to make judgements about the provision in all subjects. There is a positive attitude to equal opportunities in the school. Any underachieving pupils or groups of pupils benefit from consistently and effectively applied action. The gifted and talented are well catered for.

22. Provision for supporting pupils who find learning difficult is very good. For those who find conforming difficult it is good but the school does not have a wide enough range of strategies to meet the different needs of these pupils. The school ensures that all pupils have access to the same curriculum as the rest of the class at all times and so takes great care to ensure that individual needs are appropriately met. Therefore, support for each pupil is mainly provided in the classroom although small groups or individual pupils are sometimes withdrawn for special programmes to meet their individual needs. This takes place with minimum disruption for the rest of the class. Some pupils have early morning sessions to help them develop their fine motor skills. This provision is being monitored very carefully and the school is very positive about the outcomes. The school is fully committed to inclusion and this is evident in the very good provision provided for these pupils.

23. The school makes good and frequent use of the local environment for geography, history and science. In Key Stage 2 local studies in history and geography include a thorough village study and visits to the local beach. In Years 5 and 6, pupils contrast their village study with visits to the city of Plymouth. They visit Dartmoor for a river study and spend activity days, concentrating on water-based sports, at the Mountbatten Centre. In Key Stage 1, pupils make a variety of visits including one to a small wood, ten minutes' walk away, to enhance their understanding of science. There has recently been a school book fortnight to extend work in English, that included visits by authors. Pupils also have the experience of theatre visits and drama groups. In the past there have been several successful projects working with artists, notably the work on stained glass, the sculpture tree and playground mosaics for the millennium.

24. The number and range of extra-curricular activities is less than in many similar schools. While there are opportunities for pupils to attend out-of-school activities such as the Junior Ten Tors, the

chances to attend clubs at lunchtime or after school are limited. A significant number of parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed their concern at this. Those activities that are run, such as the running club, are well attended by pupils. However, the school could make more use of support staff, parents, outside agencies and the pupils themselves in developing a more extensive range of clubs and other activities.

25. Provision for PSHE is satisfactory. The co-ordinator responsible has produced a good policy which is awaiting approval by the governing body. She has also completed a full audit of where relevant aspects are covered, in subjects such as religious education and science, and developed a programme to enable individual teachers to address aspects not covered elsewhere, during circle time and class assemblies. However, progress could be made by ensuring that all aspects of this subject are covered during a specific PSHE lesson in each class with lessons in other subjects used to reinforce the various aspects rather than teach them specifically.

26. Overall, the local community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has developed very good links with the local primary and secondary schools. Working parties are set up for all subjects and the headteacher attends a monthly meeting with colleagues in other primary schools with a full academic council meeting twice a term which includes headteachers of the secondary schools. The council has a good history of developing joint approaches for resources and sharing expertise. There are also some good sporting links with the weekly cross-country competition a good example. The school also provides teaching experience for student teachers from St Mark and St John College in the summer term. It also has close links with the local church, whose vicar is a regular visitor, while local residents also visit the school to talk of their experiences in history lessons. Some worthwhile contacts have also been made with local businesses which have resulted, for example, in the sponsorship of sports teams.

27. Good provision for pupils' personal development has been maintained since the last inspection. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school strongly promotes values and respect for everyone's beliefs. These are reflected through the ethos and sense of community spirit within the school. Satisfactory opportunities for reflection are provided during assemblies but these are not sufficiently well planned and there is not a common assembly theme for the week or a plan for the whole term. Opportunities for quiet reflection are often missed in lessons.

28. Provision for moral development is very good. Class rules are negotiated at the beginning of the year and the school has a comprehensive behaviour management policy. Support to promote appropriate behaviour is also provided by the Behaviour support team and the school has trained 'playground mediators' to help to overcome conflicts in the playground. Merit certificates also promote expected behaviour. During class assemblies and through the personal, social and health education programme pupils have time to discuss moral issues and are encouraged to make positive decisions about life-styles.

29. The school is effective in developing pupils' social skills. Boys and girls are often given responsibilities such as helping younger pupils at lunchtimes, preparing the hall for assemblies and many pupils volunteer to help with specific jobs. During class assemblies, pupils are sometimes asked to consider specific issues and their ideas are often put into practice. For example, they were asked to think of ways to improve entry into school at the end of lunchtime. However, currently few routes are available for pupils to air their views about issues that concern them. Many feel that they would like to be more proactive in voicing their thoughts and ideas about school issues. Pupils have the opportunity to raise funds for charities such as 'The Blue Peter Appeal' and older pupils are involved in organising an annual party for elderly local residents.

30. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school is good at promoting pupils' local heritage through studies in history and geography and through visits to surrounding areas. Visits from theatre groups, authors and artists are encouraged and pupils have opportunities to visit museums and to take part in organised 'book weeks'. Opportunities to experience multicultural aspects of art and music are underdeveloped. Pupils learn about the world religions during religious education but currently do not visit places of worship, other than the local Anglican Church. Opportunities are missed for them to gain a clear understanding of the rich and diverse cultures in Britain today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. This is a very caring school in which the teachers and support staff get to know their pupils well and are fully aware of the particular requirements of individual pupils. The health and safety of the school is the responsibility of the senior administration officer and a designated governor who are supported on a day-to-day basis by the constant vigilance of all members of staff. The building and grounds committee carries out an annual audit and detailed risk assessments are carried out for all activities such as external visits and the use of the swimming pool. Facilities for first aid are very good. Overall, the school was seen to be a safe environment during the inspection and the hazards identified in the previous report have been rectified. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and is operating a system in line with local procedures. He has received the appropriate training which he passes on to staff during training sessions.

32. Visitors such as the school nurse and representatives of the community dental service along with aspects of subjects such as science and PSHE, help to promote aspects of health and drug and sexual awareness. This is well supported by the Life Education Caravan which visits the school. However, the school could do more to promote a healthy lifestyle amongst its pupils by subscribing to initiatives such as the Healthy Schools Award and Sports Activemark schemes.

33. The school has a clear behaviour policy based on a simple set of school rules that are displayed in classrooms and public areas and supported by class rules agreed by the pupils with their teachers. Poor behaviour is normally resolved by the class teacher but, in support, there is a clear sanctions procedure which works well with the result that the ultimate sanction of exclusion was not needed last year. Teachers have a handbook offering guidelines and suggestions for dealing with behavioural difficulties and the school has links with the LEA Behaviour Support Team. However, a small minority of teachers are uncertain in their implementation of appropriate behaviour management strategies.

34. A computerised system is used for recording attendance and the registers are completed promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. The very high level of attendance, with most absences being unavoidable, means there is little need for detailed analysis of non-attendance. However, the school is well aware of the few pupils for whom attendance is irregular and works closely with parents, in conjunction with the educational welfare service, to improve the situation. The personal development of pupils is taken very seriously by all adults within the school and is recorded by teachers on a pupil values assessment sheet. This covers their progress in developing appropriate attitudes, behaviour and relationships and is passed from teacher to teacher as they progress through the school.

35. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and the school has made good progress in addressing issues raised at the last inspection. The comprehensive and useful Teaching and Learning Policy incorporates detailed and clear guidance and procedures for assessment and marking. The school uses optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 as well as statutory tests to assess individual pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. It uses an external marker for the year 3, 4 and 5 tests to ensure consistent assessments at the ends of each of these years. Baseline assessments on entry are recorded and a very useful tracking document has been set up for the foundation stage. Additional numeracy and reading tests are used as cross checks for attainment and progress in Years 3 to 6. The assessment policy stresses the importance of developing pupils' understanding through questioning and the constructive use of mistakes and misconceptions and this gives a good balance with the data led and summative elements of the policy.

36. Evaluation of learning is built into medium term planning and teachers use assessment information to ensure that their short term planning addresses the needs of pupils. The Assessment and Tracking folders used in each class have assessment sheets for each core and foundation subject, as well as for pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships. Half-termly assessments are done for writing, reading, numeracy and science. These are assessed against National Curriculum levels, with sub divisions according to the Plymouth local system. This

is very effective in helping teachers to identify exactly what pupils need to do to achieve the next level and for target setting. Individual writing record books are also kept throughout the year, with children's writing annotated against National Curriculum levels on a half termly basis and the outcomes and clear targets shared with the pupils, with planning adjustments made. Subject coordinators are building portfolios of work and matching these to levels in order to support teachers in making their own assessments using National Curriculum criteria. Every coordinator includes this aspect when leading staff training sessions. The implementation of the marking policy across the school and between subjects, for example with little formative marking in science, shows some inconsistencies and has not been a focus of formal monitoring recently. The use of assessment information in foundation subjects is developing but needs to be strengthened in informing starting points for teaching and learning.

37. The school makes very good use of its assessment procedures to identify those pupils with learning difficulties and to support them in overcoming them. Their progress is carefully monitored through targets on their individual education plans. The school is very well supported by outside agencies so they can provide the best support possible for each pupil. Annual reviews are appropriately completed and all agencies involved contribute to the meetings. The Inclusion coordinator provides advice and support in relation to children identified as being very able and countywide opportunities are used, such as attendance at a Maths Challenge day. Provision for pupils with statements of special needs is very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school has an excellent relationship with its parents, which clearly has a significant impact on the learning of their children. Parents are very appreciative of all the school does for them and their children with more than a half responding to the questionnaire and more than a half of these strongly agreeing with the positive statements in all areas except extra-curricular activities. Significantly, well over 90% of parents who responded agreed that they are kept well informed, that it is easy to approach the school and that the school works closely with parents.

39. The prospectus is informative, as are the newsletters that are distributed on a regular basis and consist of a diary of events and other information that keeps parents updated on the life of the school. Parents are informed about what their children will be studying through letters sent home by their teachers at the beginning of each term. These are very detailed for pupils in the early years but are in a more outline form in the junior classes.

40. Formal meetings with parents take place in October, where discussions centre around how their children are settling in to their new class, and July, when their progress over the year is discussed. Parents are also invited to the more informal sharing sessions in the spring term where they can see their children at work. The annual reports are produced in July and provide a brief description of pupils' achievements in each subject along with an assessment of personal development. In English, mathematics and science a simple target is also set. However, the reports provide limited information on what a pupil needs to do to make progress. Overall, the annual reports supported by the ongoing use of reading diaries linked to the opportunity for informal discussions after school, or more formal meetings by appointment, provide parents with good information on their children's progress through the school year. Parents, of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in their child's learning at all levels and this is a strong feature of the provision. They are welcome to discuss the needs of their child at any time and the school provides very good support for them. Targets are regularly shared and reviewed with parents and parents and pupils contribute to target setting.

41. Parents are made very welcome if they wish to help in the life of the school. Many take up the opportunity to do so with around 30 currently on a list of active volunteers; several of these go on to take child-related qualifications. They all go through a basic induction process which includes a criminal record check. The Parent Teacher Association, very well organised by an enthusiastic band of volunteers, runs around twenty events each year. These are for social and fund-raising purposes as well as enabling pupils to go on subsidised trips. Substantial funds raised (some £12,000 in the last year alone) are used mainly for projects such as the refurbishment of the swimming pool and

the purchase of computers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. Despite only being in post for just over a term, the head was reported to be providing strong and effective leadership at the time of the last inspection and the staff and governors were said to manage the school well. However, the monitoring of 'the curriculum, planning and teaching' was said to be 'not yet sufficiently rigorous' and aspects of strategic planning, notably coordinating developments and setting targets for raising standards, were criticised. Solid foundations laid then have been very well built on so that the school is now in a very strong position. The head has made it possible for the school to create an excellent community spirit and a tradition of high standards in many areas of its work. He keeps a careful eye to ensure that nothing slips and as a result, staff all know exactly what is expected of them. Very well developed policies, procedures and ways of working are known and implemented consistently throughout the school community.

43. The last report said that the head had, 'established a clear educational direction for the school'. This has been translated into a very well developed positive caring ethos based on very good relationships, an ever 'open-door' policy and mutual respect and trust. Aply assisted by the deputy and assistant heads and very well supported by the governing body, he has successfully built on the school's strengths and made very good use of national initiatives and a variety of sources of funding to steadily improve provision. It is now possible to say with real certainty that the leadership and management of Elburton Primary School are very good and that the contribution of the head in this has been outstanding.

44. An important factor in this has been the way the leadership roles of other members of staff have been built up in order that they can make their own contribution to the development of the school. This was an issue at the last inspection and is now much better. Curriculum and other leaders are now strong influences for good which has had a noticeable effect on provision in their areas of responsibility. The school has made a substantial investment in time and finances to making it possible for staff with management roles to actively monitor provision, develop their expertise and make an impact on their responsibilities. Staff have very specific documented roles and targets within their areas of responsibility which they evaluate and reset each year. Most staff manage their responsibilities very effectively and are very conscientious. A good example of this is in the foundation stage which was an area for improvement at the time of the last inspection and which, with recent improvements to the accommodation, has become a feature of the school thanks to the efforts of the assistant head.

45. Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. The Inclusion coordinator (INCO) has set up simple but very effective systems to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. She has carefully analysed pupils' targets and has highlighted issues arising from targets not achieved. These issues form part of the INCO's development plan and are an extremely effective way of identifying strengths and areas to develop within the provision. During the coordinator's maternity leave the school has been very well supported by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator for the Plymstock Academic Council with a member of the school's teaching staff also providing good support to ensure continuity of provision. The Governing Body are kept very well informed about special needs provision in the school.

46. Members of the governing body provide the school with much-appreciated practical and moral support and are very active members of the school community. Many bring considerable expertise to their responsibilities which they make good use of in the interest of the children. A very good example of this is the area of finance. All are committed to taking advantage of appropriate training to increase their knowledge and understanding of the role of the governor. Well-defined and clearly understood arrangements have been put together to manage their various responsibilities involving committees, individual responsibilities and a rolling programme of review. The openness and accessibility of the head and staff encourages governors to spend a lot of time in school and to be willing to ask questions, discuss issues and developments and make suggestions in their areas of interest. They also monitor more formally and receive reports from the head and staff on the success or otherwise of various aspects of the school's work. As a consequence, they are particularly well informed about the school's current position which enables them to take a very

active part in strategic planning and setting priorities. Governors make a very good contribution to the leadership and management of the school.

47. Monitoring and evaluation has a high priority in the school community with the lead taken by the head who keeps a very close watch on what is happening. Standards, classroom practice and the effectiveness of policies and procedures are kept under review by responsible staff and governors. Very good use is made of available data and other information to identify trends and make comparisons. The evaluation of assessment data is used effectively to decide what needs to be done. For example, school assessment procedures predicted that national assessment results in Year 2 in 2002 would be lower than usual and extra attention has been given to this year group to good effect. Recent developments in using more detailed assessment procedures for 'tracking' individual pupils and similar groups through the school have made this an even more rigorous process. Very good use is made of information and communications technology for this purpose. The headteacher monitors the assessments on a termly basis, and ensures that strategies are put in place for children who are slipping off track, for example in booster groups or by using recovery resources, such as a teaching assistant leading a six or seven week reading recovery group.

48. Individual members of staff are encouraged to think about their own performance through professional interviews, and professional development through in-service training has a high priority. The clearly structured and very practical school improvement plan is a comprehensive document that focuses on the key aim of improving standards and involves everyone in deciding what should be included and how effective actions have been. Strong links are made between assessment information and summaries from lesson observations and the performance management targets of staff. For example, information from mathematics data and trends in teaching the subject are used to inform target setting with teachers.

49. Strategic use of resources, including funding, is very good. The school budgets thoroughly for all expenditure and has benefited greatly from shrewdly targeted spending, which reflect the priorities the school has identified. Working closely with the Governing Body the Headteacher has been very astute in making very good use of the various grants available to help finance improvements, particularly accommodation. For example the Governors agreed the use of funds and grants, such as Seed Challenge and Disability Grants, to significantly modify the Infant area, to provide an extra classroom, a quiet working room, First Aid facilities, a disabled toilet, designated SEN room and extra storage areas. The school also intends to use grants and other funds to build, equip and resource a larger ICT suite as part of a junior classroom replacement building project. For the past two years the governors have been careful to ensure that they are able to fund an additional teacher from September 2003 for at least two years so that they are able to achieve their declared aim of 'achieving 14 single age classes.' The school is also working with the local pre-school group who are making a bid for lottery money for a pre-school unit on site with 'wrap around' provision (i.e. before and after school places)

50. The school uses its Improvement Plan to identify changes the it wishes to make over a three year period. Additionally it produces a very detailed costed and targeted annual School Management and Evaluation Plan, which in effect is detail of the way the school proposes putting the Improvement Plan into action. Together the plans are the corporate vision of the school and a strategic overview of what it aims to achieve. Spending decisions are reviewed in the light of evaluation to ensure funds are directed to areas of need or development. All staff and governors are actively involved in identifying priorities for development. Teachers submit bids for their areas of responsibility, which are considered by both the senior management team and the governing body before budget allocations are finalised. Governors are provided with on-going budget detail to regularly monitor the progress of the various developments and the emerging financial position. Clear limits are put on spending and virements to ensure appropriate financial control, and are detailed in the Financial Policy Statement. Sufficient levels of responsibilities for spending are delegated to staff with management responsibilities; for example subject co-ordinators manage their subject budget.

51. Action and financial planning have improved greatly since the last report, which stated "at present insufficient attention is given to setting criteria to monitor the effect of budget decisions on the pupils' standards of attainment." In their evaluation of the success of their part of the School

Management and Evaluation Plan subject co-ordinators are asked to identify the impact of the developments on standards of attainment. The school has begun using a special needs provision map to help inform staff and governors of the current level of provision and resourcing in the school. As part of the process staff have put in quantifiable indicators of the effectiveness of any compensatory programmes using data analysis from existing tracking procedures.

52. The school seeks to follow 'best value' principles wherever possible. Competitive quotations are sought where appropriate and where the lowest quotation is not accepted it is reported to the Governors Finance Committee and the reasons for the decision are recorded in the minutes. Financial resources have been used to create additional posts both inside and outside the classroom to support the smooth running of the school and to raise standards by improving provision. For example the ICT teaching assistant provides valuable support by, among other things, ensuring resources are available for lessons thus allowing more time for teachers to teach.

53. Systems of financial control are well-established and respective roles and responsibilities are appropriately defined. Good accounting records are maintained and monitored by the school. The Senior Administrative Officer and Administration Assistant provide high quality support. The school's administration systems are efficient, unobtrusive and support the day to day running of the school. A finance computer package is used efficiently to raise and pay orders and monitor spending. The most recent external audit carried out in June 2000, did not identify any major weaknesses in financial control. The areas of financial control highlighted as needing attention have all been addressed, with the exception of one which was shown to be not feasible.

54. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and supportive, raising £10 -12000 annually to help fund several major improvements. By organising many events and functions throughout the year they have raised considerable sums that have benefited both the fabric of the school and education of the children. In future the school would like to get more parental involvement in the planning of the next three-year improvement plan.

55. Over the last few years staff changes, particularly in teaching staff, have been minimal. As a result of this stability staff are very well informed of the policies and procedures of the school and have played a full part in the various changes that have taken place. The match of staffing to the demands of the curriculum is good. It is difficult to make a judgement on induction procedures for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) since the school hasn't appointed an NQT since the last inspection. The school is very committed to the professional development of its staff and recently achieved 'Investors In People' status. All teaching staff take responsibility for a curricular area and setting targets for their subject. All staff (apart from mealtime assistants and cleaners) have annual individual performance and professional development meetings with the head teacher at which targets are set. Teaching and mealtime assistants receive regular training and also attend weekly meetings with the head teacher. The school is developing a new Continuing Professional Development Policy and encouraging curriculum leaders to take greater responsibility for meeting their own needs and the needs of those they monitor. It has good links with a local initial teacher training institute and regularly has student teachers completing their teaching practice in school.

56. Accommodation overall is satisfactory, despite several classes being taught in temporary classrooms. The Governors, working closely with school staff, have looked creatively at ways of improving accommodation. In addition to the improvements in the infant area mentioned earlier, they recognise that the building would lend itself to further development to the rear of the school and plans are in place to improve the accommodation and provision for older pupils and ICT- the present ICT suite is too small to properly accommodate a whole class. The school has engaged architects to produce a master plan for the school that complies with current DFES guidelines. In addition, the local authority is funding the replacement of the roof and work in the main hall following movement of a wall and this work is already underway. Although the hall is sufficiently large to teach gymnastics to a whole class, there is no fixed PE apparatus and this limits teaching and learning opportunities.

57. The school has good resources available to support teaching and learning in most subjects, except in science and ICT where it is satisfactory. Resources are mainly centrally held and updated regularly. The last inspection said 'Arrangements and resources for outside play for the U5s are insufficient.' This is being addressed and although building work is not yet fully completed it is clear

resources for outside play for the U5s will be more than sufficient.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. To build on the school's many strengths, especially the energy and enthusiasm of its pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff of Elburton Primary School should:

- (1) Involve pupils in the process of extending and enriching the well-established core curriculum to make best use of their creative energy and self-confidence by:
- looking at the design of each school day as an important element of the learning environment and designing the timetable to fit the needs of each year group
 - ensuring that where possible morning and afternoon sessions include activities which are active, practical, creative or expressive
 - ensuring that pupils have opportunities to add depth to their learning, reflect on their experiences and understand & celebrate cultural richness and diversity by:
 - looking for opportunities to include these elements when planning work in all areas of the curriculum
 - taking opportunities as they arise to develop pupils' thinking and awareness about deeper issues and the wider world
 - increasing the number of whole school special events such as subject weeks or cross curricular themes
 - integrating all the various strands of provision for pupils personal development such as circle times, personal, social and health education and assemblies by using common themes so that they reinforce each other
 - involving parents, pupils and outside agencies in extending the provision of extra activities at lunchtimes and after school
 - providing opportunities for pupils to be involved in the decision making process and empowering them to take the initiative in improving areas which directly concern them
- (Paragraphs 10.18 ,20 ,24 -30 , 32, 61, 123, 131 & 133)

- (2) Minimise the amount of teaching and learning time lost to over-enthusiasm and minor misbehaviour by;
- analysing when and where teaching and learning time is lost and taking whatever practical steps possible to eliminate any causes or pressure points eg the long lunch break and the use of hymn books
 - extending the school's behaviour policy to take better account of pupils with special needs in this area
 - implementing the curriculum developments note in (1) so that pupil's energy and enthusiasm are channelled into constructive activities
- (Paragraphs 8, 22, 33 & 73)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Children in the younger foundation class are at a disadvantage in terms of opportunity over slightly older children in the other class (Paragraphs 3, 60, 63 & 64)
- The limited accommodation and resources for information technology are inhibiting further development in this area and its use in other subjects (Paragraphs 65, 114, 117 & 118)
- Best use is not being made of marking to support and promote learning (Paragraphs 83, 86 & 112)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

74

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

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	38	24			
Percentage	1	15	51	32			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		366
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		22

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	26	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	26
	Girls	22	25	26
	Total	45	49	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (92)	94 (98)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	25	26
	Girls	22	24	25
	Total	44	49	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (94)	94 (100)	98 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	32	22	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	27	31
	Girls	22	22	21
	Total	47	49	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (93)	89 (83)	98 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	27	27
	Girls	22	21	22
	Total	46	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (97)	89 (85)	91 (95)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
361	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
1	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

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.2
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	227

Financial information

Financial year	2002
	£
Total income	689150
Total expenditure	680565
Expenditure per pupil	1859
Balance brought forward from previous year	44209
Balance carried forward to next year	52794

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	366
Number of questionnaires returned	217

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	28	3	1	
My child is making good progress in school.	59	34	3		4
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	45	1		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	44	5		5
The teaching is good.	68	30	1		1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	39	4	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	27	1		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	28			
The school works closely with parents.	58	36	5	1	
The school is well led and managed.	71	28	2		
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	36	2	1	
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	34	21	3	12

Other issues raised by parents

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

59. When the school was last inspected in 1998, the report stated that provision for under fives had not been a priority in the school and that the new leadership recognised that 'the environment, planning and organisation of the under five's curriculum' needed development. Children had 'limited access to a range of relevant activities in the reception classes. Very little monitoring of progress was taking place. Since then, the foundation stage has been completely revamped and, with the recent partial completion of modifications to the accommodation, it now provides a very suitable environment for young children to start their school life. This will be even better when the outside area becomes available for larger scale physical activities and staff have had time to develop their classrooms and newly available shared indoor area. Parallel to this, the school has made very good use of the national scheme of work for the foundation stage to ensure that the planning and organisation of the curriculum for these young children properly meets their needs. In addition, much better use is made of teaching assistants (TAs) to support boys and girls learning in class and in the shared area

60. Elburton School's popularity in the area plus its very open ethos and good procedures for inducting boys and girls into school, mean that the introduction to school is well managed and they very soon settle into the ways of school life. Those children with birthdays in September to February inclusive start in September while the rest start in January in a new class set up for the purpose. At the time of the inspection, the younger children had only been in school a few weeks, some of which were disrupted by ongoing building work. Attainment on entry is a little above that found in most schools especially in expressive language, mathematics and personal development. However, there is a significant difference in the current achievements of the two groups. Most of the older group, who are now all five, are working at or close to the early learning goals while many four year olds are still getting used to school and working at basic levels in most areas of learning.

61. The quality of teaching, described as 'satisfactory' at the last inspection is now consistently good, with some very good teaching, a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have high expectations, and the range of experiences provided motivates children to work hard and maintain concentration. Planning is thorough and teachers are good at challenging the children to extend their knowledge and vocabulary through effective questioning, seizing every opportunity to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills. However, in the older class, free choice activities such as construction toys, tend not to have specific and challenging learning objectives to match the high quality work observed in reading, writing and mathematics.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Boys and girls are more than happy to come to school and the sensible way they come into class and sort themselves out in the mornings is a good indication of their self-esteem and their confidence in their 'teachers'. They all know the various routines and expectations very well and are capable of looking after themselves and working independently when the opportunity arises. While the teachers and the TAs work with groups, other children happily get on with one of the 'choosing' activities set up for them. A key factor in the good progress made is the very good role model provided by all adults working with foundation children. Relationships are very good and all interactions value what children are trying to do. Consequently, boys and girls are not afraid to put their hands up and make their contribution to any discussion in the knowledge that whatever they say will be taken seriously. As a result, whole class sessions are lively and animated with children listening to the contribution of their classmates attentively and showing their appreciation spontaneously. Boys and girls in the older class are particularly mature in their behaviour while younger children still sometimes lack self-control in whole class sessions and not all are able to

share when working together. Boys and girls in both classes change into physical education clothes independently and, prompted by the teacher, take great care to fold them up and lay them flat on a chair.

Communication, language and literacy

63. In the older class, boys and girls have made very good progress in learning literacy skills so that the teacher is able to use a modified version of elements of the literacy strategy to take them further. In a lesson focusing on traditional tales, children enjoyed sharing a Big Book of the 'Three Little Pigs' joining in with repeated phrases and identifying the 'Once upon a time' start and 'Happily ever after' finish. Word level work involved a well prepared activity where children had to say when their objects had the end letter the teacher called out - almost all got it right every time. In follow up work, boys and girls knew what consonants and vowels were and could identify the initial and final consonants of a whole range of CVC words on their worksheet. Most recognise the sounds and shapes of letters, write them using the correct formation, know a fair sight vocabulary and can read either accurately or using reasonable substitute meanings. However, though most younger boys and girls can write their own names and know the letters in them, the formation for many is untidy and few know many other letters or sounds. They love books and especially enjoy being read to but few have any sight vocabulary yet. Speaking and listening skills are well developed in both groups with several children being very articulate and confident in discussion as when talking about their families.

Mathematical development

64. Children's learning in mathematics is good and most will attain the targets set nationally for young children's learning in this area before they move into year one. However, the same differences between the two classes noted above apply in this area. Routines, such as counting children present, naming the day and date, singing number rhymes are used suitably to help develop mathematical skills. In regular times set aside for learning about number, older children count confidently to 20 and back again, recognising all the numerals. In conversation, several show they can use numbers up to 10 to add and take away both with and without objects to count with. In a lesson aimed at beginning to understand the concept of longer and shorter, boys and girls showed that they understood what this means and could apply this to a range of objects. Other younger children working with teaching assistants in the shared area were encouraged to talk about various shapes as they printed them onto their houses.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Boys and girls are gaining a good understanding of the world in which they live. The current theme of 'Family' is presenting many good opportunities for exploring similarities and differences and comparing their family to others with questions such as, 'What transport do you use to visit your granny?' Boys and girls have many good opportunities to use a variety of construction kits to make their own models and develop their technological skills. All children get the opportunity to share a computer in the suite once a week but at the moment they do not have access to a classroom computer as an ongoing activity of choice for them to experiment with. Small groups and individuals happily use the tape recorder to listen to stories.

Physical development

66. Many classroom activities give children the chance to practise and develop skills with their hands. They have ample opportunity to handle small tools for cutting, sticking, painting, drawing, writing and putting together and taking construction kits apart. Most are developing good control and show increasing skill in this. Some activities are specifically designed to develop particular physical skills such as hand eye coordination. They enjoy the times when they are able to use the hall for movement lessons although the lack of larger fixed apparatus limits the range of movements they are able to try. Performance levels are good in both classes with children showing good control and a good awareness of space as in the younger class with boys and girls responding to different musical instruments. A good sized secure outside space has been integrated in new developments and a good supply of suitable apparatus accumulated, Unfortunately, at the time of the inspection ongoing building work stopped this from being used.

Creative development

67. Four and five-year-olds have many opportunities to be creative and to develop their creativity

and are making sound progress. They regularly play imaginatively in the role-play area, with toys in the sand and with small collections of figures and models. Boys and girls use the equipment and props well. Creative activities such as modelling with dough, painting and printing are a regular feature of daily activities and other materials are used in a creative way to make pictures. Boys and girls enjoy the regular times when they can sing and respond to music. They know a number of rhymes and jingles and are beginning to develop a sense of time and rhythm through clapping and moving to music as in physical education.

ENGLISH

68. Standards overall are above the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils are making good progress because the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school and because the school is making very good use of Government initiatives, such as the early and further literacy intervention programmes the additional literacy strategy and booster groups to support learning. Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that all pupils who find learning difficult are making very good progress.

69. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards in speaking and listening are well above the national average and all pupils are achieving well. Standards are well above average because teachers plan speaking and listening opportunities for pupils both during literacy sessions and in other areas of the curriculum. In Year 2 many pupils listen and talk confidently in a range of situations. Boys and girls take part in discussions confidently, showing understanding of the main points and that they have listened carefully to each other's comments. For example, pupils in Year 1 explain the organisation of information books confidently and demonstrate good understanding of their knowledge of the human body when answering questions. Pupils in Year 2 explain clearly the repeated patterns, rhythm and rhyme in poetry. Some pupils read their poems to the class, speaking clearly and expressively so that everyone could hear and understand. This was because the teacher insisted on the pupils achieving very good standards.

70. Year 6 pupils are articulate and their talk engages the interest of the listener as they begin to vary their expression and vocabulary. For example, they are well able to explain why they like or dislike particular limericks. Younger pupils are able to compare story settings and share their thoughts and evaluations confidently with their peers.

71. In Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading are above average. Achievement is good and most pupils enjoy reading. Most have a good understanding of a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words and use these well. They read fluently with expression. All are able to discuss the contents of the book they are currently reading and to predict what might happen in the story. Pupils in Year 1 explain clearly the organisation of non-fiction books and how to use the 'contents' and 'index' pages. In Year 2, pupils are able to name favourite authors and higher attaining pupils explain preferences with reasons. By the end of Year 6 many pupils are avid readers and give reasoned opinions about a range of books. Standards are above average. They recognise how poets manipulate words and investigate humorous verse, confidently giving opinions about their favourite limericks and saying why they do not enjoy certain ones. Most have good library skills and can explain how the library is organised and use it to research for information. For example, pupils in Year 5 use their library skills well to find information about the planets. Good teaching enabled them to skim and scan effectively for information. Younger pupils read a range of story openings and decide whether they have 'descriptive', 'dialogue' or 'action' beginnings.

72. Pupils have good opportunities to write in a range of styles and for different reasons. Standards of achievement at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Year 2 pupils write their own verses for 'The Holiday Train' following the same style and pattern as the first verse. Year 1 pupils successfully label a diagram of a farmyard, whilst others write interesting sentences. Some pupils in Year 3 prepare story plans to write alternative endings for a traditional tale and others use their plans well to begin to write their own endings. Year 6 pupils write down their opinions about the limericks that they have read and in a booster group, pupils explain how to use complex and simple sentences in their writing for effect. Many are producing good quality writing, conveying meaning clearly in a range of forms for different readers. Overall presentation of work is good with most pupils

using a neat joined style of writing.

73. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan their lessons very well and consistent planning across year groups is a strong feature. They know how to teach reading and writing and all use well the teaching guidance in the National Literacy Strategy confidently. All teachers ensure that pupils are clear about the learning intentions for the lesson and refer to them at the end of the lesson to judge how well pupils have done. They make good use of extra support material to help those who are struggling or have learning difficulties. Most teachers have high expectations and use behaviour management strategies effectively to promote learning. However in some lessons, where teaching is only satisfactory, classroom organisation and management is not always effective to ensure all pupils are on task. Learning support assistants help small groups of pupils very well during activity sessions. However, in some lessons they are not involved in the whole class session at the start of the lesson when support is needed to keep some pupils focused and to ensure all fully understand what is being taught.

74. Assessment procedures are very good and teachers are using assessment information well to support their planning. They are making very good use of the small components within each National Curriculum attainment target levels to track pupils' progress. Assessment information is also used to set individual targets, which are regularly shared with the pupil and parents and to predict the National Curriculum level each pupil is expected to achieve by the end of the year. Another very good tracking system is through the pupil's writing progress book. Every pupil completed one or two samples of written work each term in the progress book, which is carefully marked and given a National Curriculum level of attainment by the teacher. This is a simple but very effective way of tracking individual pupil's progress in writing. Samples from the progress books have been used to produce a portfolio of pupils' work to support teachers with their assessments. These very good tracking systems are supporting the good standards achieved by the majority of pupils. Assessment information is also used very effectively to identify whole school issues. Currently the coordinators are looking at ways to improve the quality of pupil's spelling, particularly for the older pupils.

75. The subject is very well managed. The coordinators have evidence of very detailed monitoring of the quality of teaching, samples of pupils' work and assessment information, which they use very well to continue to raise standards in all aspects of English. They have led several training sessions for teachers, particularly to support planning and as a result both medium and short term planning are of a high standard. Appropriate plans for future areas for development have been drawn up and the school is very well supported by the local authority. Good resources are used well to support learning. The school makes satisfactory use of information technology to support English and the coordinators have appropriately identified an increased use of laptop computers as an area for development. Pupils use word processing programmes to publish their work. English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with regular visits from theatre companies. A recent book fortnight held with local primary and secondary schools enabled pupils to meet a number of authors and to share in a number of events to encourage reading for both pleasure and information.

MATHEMATICS

76. Since the last inspection test results for 7 and 11 year olds have been consistently above the national average, and in the last two years well above. Evidence obtained during the inspection indicates that attainment at present in both key stages is above average. This judgement is largely consistent with test results, although slightly down on the past two years. However, this is an improvement on the last inspection, which said 'overall the pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations (average).' There are no consistent differences between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and are achieving well because of predominantly good teaching, pupils' positive attitudes to their work and the greater emphasis on the use and application of mathematics.

77. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has provided not only precision to planning, but also proper progression to the development of the subject throughout the school. The impact of the Strategy has been marked, resulting in more direct teaching and higher

expectations of what can be achieved. Various strategies to perform number operations are built on and reinforced through Key Stage 1. In Year 1 pupils count forward and backwards in twos up to 20. By the age of 7 pupils add 24 to 53 by partitioning the second number. They can identify line symmetry in a regular shape and are able to interpret and construct a simple bar chart. Attainment dips slightly in Year 3 and is about average. Pupils use the 100 square to identify patterns when counting on. They tell the time using digital and analogue clocks, although some children found this difficult. In Year 4 pupils use mnemonics, such as 'Naughty Elephants Squirt Water' to remember the points of a compass. They understand that a $\frac{1}{2}$ turn is two right angles, which is 180 degrees. Year 5 pupils understand and use mathematical terminology, such as reflection, horizontal, vertical and axis of symmetry. The oldest pupils remember facts well and calculate swiftly, finding the most efficient methods. They find the mode, mean and median of a list of numbers and identify the range. Their computational ability is generally good, for example they can multiply 48×24 using the grid method.

78. Pupils' attitude to mathematics is nearly always very good. They respond enthusiastically in lessons and are eager to volunteer answers or explain the strategy they are using, particularly in 'mental maths', when they write answers quickly on their individual whiteboards and explain their strategies. The way pupils 'get on' following the teaching input is most impressive, with a minimum of fuss being made during the transition when they move from sitting on the carpet to working at their desk. As a result little time is lost and the pace of the lesson is maintained. Pupils respect the feelings of their classmates and spontaneously show their appreciation when others share their work or give a correct answer. Very occasionally the behaviour of a few pupils has a negative impact on the pace of learning.

79. Achievements in the use and applications of mathematics, number, shape, space and data handling are above average overall. Most pupils establish sensible work habits and try hard. As they progress through the school, they improve their understanding of mathematical operations and their ability to use different methods of working out a problem in their head. Some children find it difficult to tackle word problems set in context or to recognise which arithmetic operations they need to use in the calculation. The school had already recognised this and has worked to address this issue. As a result the proportion of children experiencing such difficulties is now similar to that found in most schools.

80. The teaching of mathematics is good in both key stages. In the lessons observed teaching was at least satisfactory in all, 33% were good, 11% very good and 11% excellent. Teaching is particularly strong in Year 2. Where teaching is excellent or very good lessons are conducted at a very brisk pace, work is set at different levels to ensure all children are challenged and teachers have very high expectations. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory the work is not sufficiently matched to the ability of the child, particularly the high achievers, or class management is weak, with the result that the pace of learning is slower.

81. A feature of all lessons is the way pupils are told what they will learn at the beginning of the lesson, with the learning objectives being revisited at the end. In nearly all lessons observed the plenary was used effectively, drawing together what had been learned in the lesson or highlighting key facts or ideas that need to be remembered. There is a consistent approach to the way children are taught to carry out operations, for example, the way children are taught to multiply. Teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary so that pupils are able to explain their work using the correct terminology. Most mental/oral sessions are brisk and well-directed questions ensure that pupils of all abilities contribute and succeed. Teachers give boys and girls the opportunity to explain their strategies and methods. Sensitive questioning is used well to extend and challenge pupils' thinking and to assess knowledge. Some teachers set time limits to ensure learning is productive and carried out at pace. They ensure activities are well chosen to involve all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teaching is well supported by Learning Support Assistants who provide valuable help to children who would have difficulty accessing the curriculum otherwise.

82. The quality of learning is also good. Most pupils establish good work routines, are persistent and participate fully in lessons. Pupils willingly volunteer answers, are happy to share their thoughts and are keen to improve. Prudent provision of practical activities in lessons helps consolidate and extend learning. Homework is well used to support learning and is linked to the work children are covering in school.

83. Teachers make very good use of both formal and informal assessments to assess pupils' attainment and to track their progress. This is an improvement on the judgement made in the last inspection, which said that 'The use of assessment is ineffective in promoting high standards.' and that 'There is little recording of what the pupils know, understand and can do.' Following baseline assessment, pupils are tested yearly using commercial tests, KS1 and KS2 National tests (SATS) and non-statutory tests. After each unit of work, the class teacher assesses the children against the key objectives making reference to examples of work at agreed levels. Data from both tests and key objectives is analysed class by class and then globally to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning to inform future planning and to set targets. However, targets could be used more effectively to stimulate and focus learning. When questioned, children had little knowledge of their targets in mathematics. Each term children are levelled against the National Curriculum attainment targets and their progress monitored. Alongside these more formal assessments, on-going teacher assessments are made to help with short term planning. Pupils' work is regularly and consistently marked, but rarely includes constructive comments to help the pupils recognise how well they are doing and how they can improve. It was noted that in one or two instances incorrect work was marked as correct.

84. Mathematics is very effectively led by an experienced, well-qualified subject leader and a Key Stage 1 coordinator. They have the expertise, opportunity and support needed to influence practice. The subject leaders and the Headteacher monitor the teaching of mathematics very well. Well targeted training to raise subject knowledge and the monitoring of teaching and learning are already helping to raise standards. The school's well developed improvement planning ensures resources are targeted at agreed priorities. Funds allocated to mathematics are well managed by the subject leaders, who also oversee the Subject Action Plan. Resources for mathematics are good, with enough equipment etc. to properly resource the implementation of the Numeracy Strategy. Good cross-curricular links have been established with other subjects. For example during the inspection in information technology (ICT) pupils used a spreadsheet to input data and to work out the 'average' of the numbers involved. However, the school recognises the need to further strengthen and develop the links with ICT.

SCIENCE

85. The standard of attainment in science for seven and eleven year old pupils is above national expectations. This is an improvement since the inspection of 1998. There is a growing emphasis on scientific enquiry and pupils have a clear understanding of fair testing. The pupils currently in Year 6 have made satisfactory progress since Year 2 but are not expected to perform quite as well as previous cohorts.

86. Pupils are provided with a comprehensive programme of science that enables them to acquire a knowledge and understanding of the world around them, of materials, living things and physical processes. The use of assessment is arranged half-termly and provides a satisfactory means of tracking progress, although there needs to be more formative marking which could then guide targets for pupil achievement. Lesson planning, preparation and the use of resources are at least satisfactory and often good. When present, teaching assistants make good contributions.

87. Pupils in Key Stage 1 undertake practical investigations. In a Year 1 class pupils used a cross-curricular approach to describe the movement of animals with a good literacy input in the discussion of suitable verbs and adjectives. The pupils moved on to use playdough and pipe cleaners to make small models of animals in movement, making satisfactory progress. In discussion they were able to describe how muscles and joints aided the movement, though appropriate vocabulary was sometimes lacking. Pupils in Year 2 recently walked to a nearby wood, where they looked at and listened for birds and animals and observed the first signs of spring. This led to a good investigation of the conditions needed for plants to grow. They drew and listed conditions for growth and were then led in a good discussion about the reasons for setting up a fair test. Worksheets were used to reinforce their understanding of fair testing. Finally the teacher set up the class experiment with help from some children but pupils would have benefited from having an experiment per group.

88. Year 3 have recently covered work on materials in a detailed way and in a lively session of

scientific enquiry tested a range of materials for absorbency. The lesson reflected well on the importance of fair testing and included sensible predictions. In a Year 4 class pupils looked carefully at fabrics to find the most suitable for seasonable clothing. Pupils were able to look closely and give reasons why some materials were more suitable for winter clothing, they applied good cross curricular knowledge, demonstrating their knowledge of the way fibres are woven as this work is linked to the curriculum for art and design and for design technology.

89. Pupils in Year 5 classified materials as liquids or solids and then had to produce their own definition. This work was reinforced by worksheets which were successfully completed. The class then discussed gases and were set a challenge to prove that the air, a gas, is a material. The most common proofs were the wafting of air by a fan, one group demonstrating how to move a piece of paper by fanning it, and blowing air into a paper bag. Good questioning and preparation lead to a good pupil response. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils had to understand and explain the processes involved in the water cycle. They were able to explain the processes of evaporation and condensation and interpret a graph showing these processes in action. Year 6 children also investigate dissolving materials and performed an experiment to find out how much salt or sugar a solution can hold and whether the temperature of the water affects the way materials dissolve in a solution. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have good levels of scientific knowledge and in discussion, describe the different systems of the human body, recall how to wire simple and complex electrical circuits and describe the earth and the moon's movement in space and their place in the solar system.

90. During the inspection nine lessons were observed. The teaching was at least satisfactory with some good and one very good lesson. The subject knowledge of the teachers is at least satisfactory and often good. Thorough planning and documentation of the scheme of work ensure that the science curriculum is thoroughly covered. Pupils are enthusiastic in science lessons and they enjoy practical investigations and understand the need for fair testing. They are keen to make predictions and discuss outcomes using good reasoning.

91. Improvements have been made in science since the last inspection. The coordinator has clearly identified areas for development including the development of ICT within science and continued monitoring and evaluation. A recent monitoring exercise by the headteacher, still to be completed, accurately reflecting the position of science in the curriculum, notes the new emphasis on scientific enquiry and the need to address areas of assessment and moderation. There is a realisation that the two-hour sessions for Years 3 to 5 are not the best way to deliver the curriculum, this situation would be resolved by the creation of an extra class. Subject leadership is good overall, with the school having a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Areas for improvement have been identified and these need to be combined with a better approach to formative marking and interim assessment and target setting in order to maintain higher attainment levels. Overall good resources are well used although there is a need for greater quantities in some areas.

ART AND DESIGN

92. Standards of work in art and design, from lessons seen, school displays and work scrutinised are above national expectations. There has been an improvement in art and design since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 begin to use sketch books and use a variety of media, including pastels to draw still life compositions of toys and an ICT program to produce park landscapes. In a good Year 2 lesson, the class teacher introduced the work of William Morris and pupils were skilfully encouraged to analyse the designs of certain wallpaper. They then used stencils, crayons and paint to thoughtfully design their own wallpapers, manipulating the materials well. Pupils also use viewfinders to enhance the composition of their paintings and drawings. Digital photos were used to help the individuals produce effective interior views of the school in paint and crayon. Year 3 pupils have used William Morris as a stimulus for designing and creating clay tiles that are fired in the school's kiln. In Year 4, some pupils had created their own Victorian costumes linked to their history work. These pupils then posed in groups for the rest of the class to make quick sketches which built into a Victorian family portrait. Good advice and encouragement enabled pupils to achieve well in their sketches which had good attention to detail and were frequently well composed.

93. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were developing textile work that included batik, the use of fabric crayons, mono printing and the use of stitching. While some pupils used a janting to draw with hot wax and create batik designs, a second group used brusho after the wax and other pupils used stitched designs and appliqué to embellish their work. Pupils in a mixed Year 4/5 class experienced the same session and worked well. Attainment in the two sessions, and over the series of lessons, was at least satisfactory, with much good and some very good outcomes. Very good organisation and clear learning intentions ensured the success of this lesson. In a good Year 6 lesson pupils had researched widely for a mask-making project. The theme was the Carnival of the Animals. Designs had been drawn up, materials trialled for inclusion, prototypes made and the final masks were being assembled.

94. During the inspection five lessons were seen and all teaching was good. The work is well planned and frequently organised in well managed series of lessons. Skills are well developed and the wide range of outcomes are of good quality. The coverage and teaching of skills are good, though a little more emphasis could be given to imaginative work.

95. The subject is well managed by the coordinator, whose personal subject knowledge is considerable and one of the reasons for the secure place that art has in the curriculum. There has been effective in-service training (INSET) on moderation in the last year. Future INSET will include the use of sketchbooks and the development of painting skills. While there is some effective use of sketchbooks in the school, often with very effective results, this is not consistent between the classes and it is prudent that the coordinator wishes to address this. The useful portfolio, showing a range of work from all year groups can easily be linked to the levels of attainment via the schools tracking documents. An updated and expanded portfolio would enhance quality control in this subject. The school has a wide range of consumables and an extremely good range of visual resources, clearly labelled and readily available.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

96. Standards in design and technology, from lessons seen, displays of work and discussion with pupils are above those expected with an overall improvement since the last inspection, and pupils achieve well. A revised curriculum, based on national guidance, yet thoughtfully adapted to the needs of the school, ensures good coverage. Good levels of planning, assessment and evaluation contribute to the success of this subject. In Year 1, children made very good progress when making animal faces with sliding mechanisms to move eyes and mouth, which were inspired by a display of books with moving parts. Very clear explanation and good preparation paved the way for pupils to produce very effective finished pieces. Boys and girls were able to explain the way the mechanisms moved and could identify other ways that books can use paper engineering. Year 2 pupils design and make moving vehicles.

97. In a successful Year 3 lesson, pupils had previously examined different cloths and were now engaged on their own weaving. They had designed their new cloth and had used wool or thread to display a planned swatch of material carefully weaving the final piece on simple peg looms. This was one of a series of lessons and this sequential approach to DT is a consistently well used style of teaching in the school. Similar work is undertaken in Year 4, and pupils also work on food technology through analysis, instructions for and evaluation of sandwich making.

98. Year 5 pupils had surveyed each other to determine favourite sweet and savoury foods when preparing kebabs, though they are not able to cook the food, the attention to detail of instructions, requirements and health and safety issues is impressive. Year 6 pupils recently analysed, experimented, designed and made model shelters in a series of well-linked lessons. Detailed plans included several projections and accurate measurements; the evaluations of the project were perceptive.

99. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was good and in one case very good. Pupils' attitudes to the subject were generally good and the well very planned thematic approach brought a good level of attainment. The coordinator manages the subject very well and has a clear action plan for further improvement in the subject. School-based Inset has increased

staff confidence, and this is reflected in the well planned topic cycle. The emerging portfolio will enable all staff to have a very clear understanding of expectations in the subject and this should impact upon standards. Resources are readily available and well organised. The coordinator uses monitoring and evaluation of class teachers' work to help her to a very clear understanding of the strengths of the subject and of the areas for development.

GEOGRAPHY

100. Standards of work matching national expectations have been maintained since the last inspection. All pupils achieve satisfactorily. In Year 2, pupils draw a map of the Island of Struay and interpret it in a 3D papier mache form. They describe physical and human features and forms of transport on Struay, and compare life on the Island with that in Elburton.

101. In their recycling topic in Key Stage 2, pupils describe what happens to local rubbish, describe the effects of humans and pollution on the environment and know that litter causes diseases. They study coastal landscapes and understand the processes of deposition and erosion and how beaches are made. Boys and girls investigate what people do as jobs in coastal areas and suggest solutions to the hazards they identify in coastal environments, for example putting sea walls around houses. They use four figure coordinates to locate features on a map.

102. Year 6 pupils identify St Lucia on a world map and within the Caribbean, describing its size, population, proximity to the Equator and temperature from the maps. They use the information to draw graphs, for example of temperature and rainfall. Pupils volunteer suggestions for locations of populations, rain forests, tourist spots and banana production areas in St Lucia. They recognise that the banana is a plant not a tree and why cutting the plants down each year would be wasteful. Most know which seas border St Lucia and why the houses are built where they are and on stilts and give reasons for the decline of the sugar cane industry and know what has replaced it. Pupils have mapped out routes and worked out lengths of journeys, based on information of things seen along the way.

103. It was not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in Geography as insufficient lessons were seen. However in the one lesson observed, in Key Stage 2, the teacher's confident knowledge of her subject base, her good questioning and use of appropriate resources motivated pupils to offer considered questions about banana production, for example about whether fungus infections occur, given the wet conditions needed for growth. Links between geography and other subjects such as history are good especially in fieldwork planned by every year group locally and further afield, to places such as Wembury beach, Mountbatten and Dartmoor. This considerably enhances the social and cultural aspects of the school's life.

104. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject coordinator has good knowledge of and enthusiasm for her subject. She has had a systematic approach to enhancing resources for example with the photo pack for the Struay topic and the coastal aerial photos for Year 5. As a result resources are good, and are stored and used effectively. Assessment tracking sheets have been set up, identifying the geographical elements, and the next stage of development is to ensure that these are used as the children move from one year to the next. The coordinator has led training sessions in aspects of geography. Year 6 have used ICT to plot data and find information for their work on St Lucia. The high profile of the subject in the school is seen in topics that have been used in assemblies such as the story of bananas, life on the Island of Strauy and recycling, and in the Adventure Club's day on Dartmoor using the GPS navigation aid.

105. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, with activities in the medium term plans having learning intentions defined as "must should or could" achieve in order to give differentiated tasks to higher and lower attaining pupils. The subject coordinator acts on evaluations of the plans given to her by the teachers, and makes amendments to the plans based on this feedback. Natural progression is built into the plans, for example with the coastal work in Year 5 leading into the river study in Year 6. Relatively new to her post, she is developing her monitoring role with an initial focus on Years 2 and 6, for example the Year 6 fieldwork skills, equipment and map work on Dartmoor. She is able to match her analysis of children's work to agreed levels so that

she can make sound judgements on the standards in her subject. Monitoring reports go to the governors' curriculum committee.

HISTORY

106. Standards of work are in line with national expectations and pupils have maintained standards since the last inspection. Pupils, including those who find learning difficult, have satisfactory achievement overall. In Year 2, pupils show their developing sense of chronology by placing events in order. For example, pupils in Year 1 order pictures from a toddler to an adult and describe toys in the past shown or lent by elderly friends. Year 2 pupils put the events of the Great Fire of London in order and say how it started and where it stopped. They describe the work of Florence Nightingale inspiring people to clean and decorate the hospital rooms and know that the food was horrible and that there was little medicine. Pupils compare life in present day Elburton with that in the past living in houses with straw roofs and horse and cart transport.

107. Boys and girls in Year 3 know some details of Victorian life such as what life was like in the Royal Navy and about the differences between poor and rich people. They start to think about the implications of living conditions, for example how diseases spread because of people living so close together. They undertake some independent research about Victorian jobs. In Years 4 and 5, pupils use pictures, photos and artefacts to find out about Victorian classrooms and farms and they compare changes in education from Victorian times to today.

108. In Year 6, pupils show an increasing depth of factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of the History of Britain. They say what effect the introduction of the railway had on Elburton and analyse the effect the railway had on the lives of local people. Pupils describe the pollution as trucks drove to the farms delivering supplies brought by the railway and the farmers' feelings about their gates and cattle being knocked over. They carry out research using a range of sources of evidence including information from local census data and from local residents. They use and compare maps citing uses of the stream in the past, how the area has changed and why a quarry was moved.

109. The quality of teaching and learning in history is satisfactory with some good features. Where good teaching was observed, children were motivated by enthusiastic teachers who used good resources and brought history alive through drama. For example, pupils in Year 3/4 were given a clear focus for watching the video of a child's working life on a Victorian farm and were then challenged to ask and answer questions in a hot seating activity. Pupils in Year 2 quickly learned the meaning of being an eye witness as their teachers enacted a robbery. However, at other times the pace was slow and resources were less exciting or not well matched to the tasks.

110. Links between history and other subjects such as geography and art are good especially in the use of the local area; for example when the pupils study the local stream or track changes of the local pet shop over time. This considerably enhances the social and cultural aspects of the school's life. Pupils make sketches and group compositions in their artwork of pupils dressed in Victorian costumes. A group of pupils in Year 6 felt that not enough notice was taken by teachers of their starting points of knowledge and would like less reinforcement and more extension.

111. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. As part of the annual management plan, the coordinator assesses the impact of the previous year's plan and spending and sets targets for the coming year. She has a systematic approach to enhancing resources for example by getting local information from the census and old newspapers and using the artefact borrowing facility at the local academic council. As a result resources are good, and they are stored and used effectively. The subject coordinator has developed her monitoring role and not only looks at the whole process of planning and teaching lessons alongside the work produced by the pupils, but has also started some checks that pupils retain the information at a later date. She has very good knowledge of and enthusiasm for her subject.

112. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. A policy for the subject has been completed, the rolling programme of study units introduced at Key Stage 2 and the reviewed topics at Key Stage 1 implemented. The time spent on the subject was reviewed and is due for a second

review shortly. Assessment tracking sheets have been set up, identifying the historical key elements, and the coordinator has trained staff to focus on these in their planning and teaching. The next stage of development is to ensure that these are used as the children move from one year to the next so that the starting points of children in studying the topics are known. The school's marking policy is in place but there is some inconsistency in its implementation. A subject portfolio has been used in staff training. There was evidence of some use of the internet in researching topics, in school and at home, but the school intends to purchase CD Roms in order to strengthen the use of ICT in History.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

113. Since the last inspection in 1998 there has been a considerable improvement in both the provision of and attainment in ICT. Throughout the school pupils are learning well and making good progress. Attainment is building as pupils move from class to class and for seven-year-olds is now above average. However, although eleven year olds have made similar good progress in a very short time, they have not benefited from the present provision for all their schooling and their attainment is average when compared to the exacting standards expected for their age. Given the present and planned provision for ICT in the school, and the drive and energy of the leadership, it is anticipated that attainment will rise still further in future. This is a good improvement on the last inspection where attainment at the end of both key stages was said to be 'in line with national expectations,' particularly since expectations are so much higher now.

114. The school, through its Governors and Headteacher, has made a major investment in successfully improving the ICT resources by the provision of a dedicated computer suite comprising 15 networked PCs, a laptop and projector. Other improvements in curriculum, planning, teaching and leadership have had a very positive impact on the development of the subject. However the school recognises that, despite this investment and the improvements made, present resources and accommodation for ICT are less than ideal. As noted by the Headteacher 'Space is a debilitating factor within the ICT suite. Children especially within the older years of Key Stage 2 are cramped and it is difficult for the teachers to adequately move around from group to group.' Plans to provide a new thirty place computer suite including an interactive white board, projector and laptop permanently in place and, using NGFL funding, Internet and server access throughout the school will address the shortfall in provision. This will also improve the ratio of children to computers in the school from 11: 1 to 8:1.

115. As pupils move through the school they successfully refine and build on their ICT skills. Pupils in Year 1 are confident in mouse control and selecting icons. They select appropriate tools for drawing, such as spray and flood fill, to create a park scene to include ponds, trees and grass. The older infants use Colour Magic to create pictures in the style of the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian, with most producing some quite complex designs. Pupils in Year 3 'search' a database to access specific information, such as the number of children who have blue eyes. Year 5 pupils use SUM as a shorter way of producing totals in a Spreadsheet using data from 'Traffic Outside My School'. Year 6 pupils create a spreadsheet, perform simple calculations and use data to construct a graph. They send and receive e-mails to correspond with other pupils in school or their homes.

116. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well, are enthusiastic and concentrate hard during IT sessions. They work well on their own and show initiative and resourcefulness in dealing with any difficulties that arise. They explain the purpose of their task and are happy to make suggestions or volunteer answers. Occasionally poor behaviour by a few slows the pace of learning for the rest which is not helped by the cramped accommodation.

117. Overall teaching of ICT is good. Of the lessons observed one was satisfactory and the rest were good or better. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory and in many instances good and has been strengthened by the national training. In the last Ofsted inspection no direct teaching of information technology was observed but, based on other evidence, teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Lesson planning based on the school scheme is clear, with specific learning outcomes well identified. In the lessons where teaching was good or very good, concise explanations were provided leading to challenging work. In the lesson where teaching was satisfactory insufficient challenge was provided for the range of abilities. On occasions, pupils who

had completed their initial task were not provided with challenging extension activities for the remainder of their time in the suite. As a result some pupils became restless and the pace of learning slowed. Teaching and learning are further affected by the shortcomings mentioned earlier which are inherent in the accommodation for ICT. The restricted nature of the suite makes it extremely difficult for teachers to properly monitor how well pupils are progressing or to identify those experiencing difficulties. Teachers do their best to 'squeeze' their way around the suite, but this inevitably slows the pace of learning.

118. Resources for ICT are much improved, but by present day expectations are only satisfactory. Infant classes are allocated one weekly timetabled slot in the computer suite, while junior classes have two, one for ICT and one for other areas of the curriculum. Each of the PCs in the suite has Internet access and is well used by the children to access information. In addition, 16 laptops are available to further support learning. However, the lack of permanently sited PCs in classrooms limits the opportunity to use them to develop learning across the curriculum outside the classes allotted time. The school has developed its own web site, which staff are waiting to re-launch. It addressed the lack of opportunity 'for the pupils to develop their knowledge and skills in controlling devices' mentioned in the last inspection. However, the co-ordinator recognises that opportunities for pupils to use sensors are limited.

119. ICT is well led by a suitably qualified subject leader, who is committed to developing the subject. She has strong subject knowledge and provides very good support to her colleagues. She is Platinum trained for training purposes. Since the last inspection the school has introduced the national scheme of work to help structure ICT skills development. It covers all strands of the Programme of Study and identifies a suitable progression of computer skills to be covered by each year group. This is already helping to raise standards. Some good cross-curricular links have been established with other subjects and the ways skills can be applied are identified in the scheme of work. However the school recognises the need to further integrate ICT with other areas of the curriculum.

120. Work is regularly scrutinised and teaching observed by the headteacher but the coordinator does not have enough non-contact time to directly monitor teaching at present. Lesson plans are evaluated by the planning teams and monitored by the subject leader, who also keeps a portfolio of pupils' work. Assessment arrangements are good. The school uses the tracking sheets to identify high and low attainment matched against expected levels for the age group.

MUSIC

121. The very experienced music coordinator has worked very hard over the years to provide a very well developed range of structures and support materials to help her colleagues to plan for and teach music. The school's scheme of work based on a commercial scheme but matched to national expectations ensures coverage and provides a basis for planning teams to develop termly plans with specific year group targets. All these are monitored by the coordinator who has also had the opportunity to observe lessons in a limited number of classrooms. A simple but effective tracking sheet makes it possible for teachers to record whether pupils are meeting targets, exceeding them or not doing very well. She provides advice, ideas and support, sometimes by teaching alongside whenever she can and has been responsible for collecting together an impressive array of very well organised and maintained musical instruments to match the scheme of work.

122. In the three lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was very impressive and pupils achievements during the lessons were good. In a Year 1 lesson, very young pupils showed a very good grasp of dynamics using the correct terminology for and showing good understanding of such concepts as crescendo and diminuendo and knowing that the 'f-rightening' f means loud and the 'p-eaceful' p means soft. Pupil's easy confidence in the subject was shown when the teacher's request for a way to make a diminuendo was met by the suggestion that 'we all make a noise and stop one by one'. With the volunteer as 'conductor' the diminuendo was achieved with great control. Slightly older pupils were learning to recognise various structures in compositions related to songs sung in hymn practice and a recording of 'Listen to the Band in the Square'. Pupils recognised the ABA structure, which the teacher called a musical sandwich or burger and showed

they understood it by making their own, alternating percussion with body sounds. By carefully placing less musical pupils with more musical, each pair 'composed' a burger and 'wrote' a rudimentary score.

123. Year 6 pupils in one class thoroughly enjoyed putting together a two-part version of 'The Rock Island Line' after listening to a medley of American railroad songs and discussing their social and chronological setting. The teacher's confidence and enthusiasm for the music rubbed off on the children and their performance levels and ability to follow a score were good. However, of the six other Key Stage 2 classes, one had music last thing on Thursday afternoons, three had music on Friday afternoons with two of these alternating with religious education and two did not have music on the timetable. When combined with the fact that no pupils are currently learning orchestral instruments as an extra in the older classes, this indicates that provision for music in Years 3 to 6 does not have the highest priority.

124. Standards were said to be 'in line with national expectations' when the school was last inspected. Although good achievement and improving standards were observed in the lessons observed and pupils in both key stages sang tunefully and with some enthusiasm in singing assemblies, it is impossible to say that standards in Years 3 to 6 have improved despite the efforts of the coordinator. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are doing well and if this were built upon, the profile and performance levels of music in the older classes would be much better.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

125. Inspection evidence, based on observation of lessons in gymnastics, dance and games, talking with the children and discussion with the subject leader, indicates that overall standards in Physical Education are average in both key stages. This is slightly down on the judgement made in the last Ofsted inspection when pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages was said to be 'above national expectations'. This, at least in part, is as a result of less time being available to teach the subject following the implementation of national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies. There is little difference in standards between boys and girls.

126. As pupils progress through the school they consolidate and extend their skills in PE. In a dance lesson, Year 2 pupils demonstrate a traditional dance, the Cumberland Reel, in a longways set including right and left hand stars, casting off with the top couple forming an arch at the bottom of the set for the rest to go through to form a new set with new top couples. In games pupils show good skills dribbling a ball between cones using a hockey stick. However in Year 3 pupils show lack of control in passing a football to classmates often resorting to 'toe punting.' In Year 5 pupils display good awareness of the appearance of the Minotaur and perform a suitable sequence of shapes in response to the music. The oldest pupils demonstrate a range of movements in gymnastics to create a sequence including two explosive jumps with a variety of body shapes. Pupils are encouraged to use their increasing subject knowledge to evaluate their efforts.

127. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They have a positive attitude to the subject and nearly all participate fully and enjoy the opportunity to take part in physical activity. Pupils work hard and show obvious pleasure during their PE lessons. Usually, pupils enter the hall in good order and quickly become engaged in purposeful activities. They respond vigorously to warm-up exercises. Behaviour is almost always good, although occasionally the poor behaviour of a few slows the pace of learning. Pupils share the use of apparatus fairly and co-operate well in team games.

128. Overall teaching of PE is good. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, while in the infants teaching was very good in two lessons and satisfactory in another. In the very good lessons teachers had good subject knowledge, had high expectations and planning was thorough, ensuring a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to practise and explore movements. Demonstration was used effectively and the lesson moved along at a good pace. In satisfactory lessons teachers lacked adequate subject knowledge and made few teaching points to improve performance. They tended to provide opportunities for physical activities to take place rather than teach the skills required to help the children improve. None the less, in most lessons pupils are

encouraged to improve and refine skills at a good pace with suitable expectations of their performance. A good feature of most lessons is the use of demonstrations to share pupils' work and to illustrate where the work is good or, indeed, needs improving. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and other pupils' performance. Teachers use the correct terminology when talking about the pupils' work.

129. The curriculum covers all six areas of activities identified in the National Curriculum. Additionally the school provides an adequate range of extra curricular activities at different times through the year including football, netball, cross country, cricket, tag rugby, hockey and Junior Ten Tors. The school's football, netball, cross-country and cricket teams participate successfully in local tournaments and competitions. Indeed, the successes of the cross-country team in a recent locally organised event were celebrated in assembly during the inspection, with one pupil coming first in her race. The oldest children have the opportunity to participate in some adventurous activities during the residential school trip to Mount Batten. Provision is further enhanced by specialist dance teaching, funded by the Academic Council, in years 5 and 6. All children have equal access to the subject.

130. The subject is well led by a suitably qualified coordinator. As the Primary Link Teacher she has helped develop strong links with the local Sports College in sharing policies, and providing access to other sports, such as 'basketball taster sessions.' She recognises that there are gaps in some of the teachers' subject knowledge, and although planning is monitored the teaching of PE is not directly observed. Accommodation for physical education is good. The school has a swimming pool, a large hard area adjacent to the school, and a grassed area for games and athletics. The hall is sufficiently large to accommodate a class of 30 children for indoor physical education. However there is no fixed PE apparatus and this restricts the learning opportunities particularly of the younger children. Otherwise resources for physical education are good and are well used.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131. Standards in religious education are broadly as expected and most pupils are making satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to retell religious stories and recognise some religious beliefs and teachings. They are beginning to describe how some features of religious life are practised. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the Christian story of the creation. Younger pupils retell the story of 'Zacchaeus' and discuss the importance of 'friendship'. This was also illustrated well in a class assembly performed for the whole school about 'friendship' They have also studied the festival of 'Divali' as part of a unit of work about festivals. However, many pupils have limited knowledge and understanding of aspects of the other five world religions.

132. Most Year 6 pupils have a reasonably secure knowledge and understanding of Christianity and two other world faiths and they are beginning to explain how religious beliefs, ideas and feelings are expressed through a variety of forms. Most pupils in Year 3 and 4 are able to interpret some religious metaphors. For example, they produce detailed drawings of their interpretation of statements from the Bible such as 'God is my rock' and 'The Lord is my Shepherd' and find these statements, using references, in the Bible. They share their emotions and write accounts of a childhood experience. In Year 5, pupils understand the significance of special clothes worn by members of the Jewish community and why the story of Moses is significant to them. Pupils in Year 6 understand the meaning of the Passover meal to the Jews and the rituals observed before and after the meal. They understand the importance of signs and symbols in different religions, such as 'The Cross' to Christians. Most are also beginning to recognise some of the signs and symbols associated with Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism.

133. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and as a result most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Lessons are appropriately planned and most teachers are using the units of work from the Revised Locally Agreed syllabus for the first time. Year 6 teachers are working from the previous scheme of work, which ensures that all areas will be covered by the end of the year. The good, revised scheme supports teachers effectively with their planning. The school also makes satisfactory use of the national suggested scheme of work and together this is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are satisfactory.

Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory but few are confident enough to provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The school has adopted a simple system to record evidence of pupils who exceed or do not achieve the key objectives and the coordinator has identified the need to evaluate whether this system is effective.

134. Management is satisfactory and the coordinator has worked hard to increase her own subject knowledge in order to support her colleagues. She has successfully led training on the revised syllabus and monitors teachers' planning. However, no monitoring of the quality of the teaching of religious education or any analysis of samples of pupils' work has taken place. Good resources are used effectively for displays. There are currently few visits or visitors to support the religious education curriculum.