

INSPECTION REPORT

BORINGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Plympton

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113315

Headteacher: Mrs J Pilkington

Lead inspector: Mr M S Burghart

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 24th March 2004

Inspection number: 255559

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	412
School address:	Courtland Crescent Plympton Plymouth Devon
Postcode:	PL7 4HJ
Telephone number:	01752 330424
Fax number:	01752 335489
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Moore
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average size primary school. It has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school is full and features fourteen classes each with only one age group of pupils. No pupil requires extra help for having English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving at times other than in reception or from Year 6 is below average. During the inspection two teachers were on maternity leave and their classes were taken by temporary staff on short term contracts. The attainment of children on entry to reception is below average and for a significant proportion well below average. The school received an achievement award from the DfES in 2001 for its performance in national tests for eleven year olds.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M S Burghart	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; Information and communication technology; Personal, social and health education.
9487	Dr F Hurd	Lay inspector	
32296	Mr W James	Team inspector	Mathematics; Music; Physical education.
32366	Mrs J Buttriss	Team inspector	Science; Art and design; Design and technology; Special educational needs.
20977	Mr RWG Thelwell	Team inspector	English.
32349	Mr J Horrell	Team inspector	Humanities.

The inspection contractor was:

MSB Education Ltd

Broomhill
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 7AR

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an excellent school. For below average spending and in accommodation with significant weaknesses in terms of quality, the school ensures that pupils achieve very well to move from below average when they first arrive to well above average when they leave. This is not at the expense of personal development which is also excellent. The school gives excellent value for money as a result of excellent leadership and management.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average when pupils leave the school.
- The school takes excellent care of pupils.
- Teaching is very good, based on excellent assessment and very good planning.
- There is an excellent, relevant curriculum well pitched at pupils' differing ability levels.
- Excellent provision is made for special educational needs (SEN).
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are excellent.
- Leadership and management of the headteacher, in partnership with the deputy, are exemplary.
- Much of the building is of unsatisfactory quality.

Although the last report was positive about the school as it was, considerable improvements have significantly raised standards and enhanced pupils' achievement. Developments include improvements to assessment, planning, management structures and the quality of teaching. Two new classrooms for reception, an information and communication technology (ICT) suite, and a new staff room, amongst other developments, have all improved provision.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	B	A*	A
Science	A	B	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Standards are below average when children join reception and for about a third well below. Pupils achieve very well, building on a very good start in reception (especially in personal, social and emotional development) to reach well above average standards in English and maths by the end of Year 2, and well above average in English, maths and science at the end of Year 6. A* performance puts the school in the top five per cent of all primaries for reading in Year 2 and maths in Year 6. Such added value is a superb achievement, especially in the light of above average levels of SEN. Impressively, standards in all subjects are judged at least above average, and in the cases of ICT, design and technology, geography and history well above expectations by the end of Year 6. This situation is a direct result of the efforts of the school and its very good partnership with parents.

Pupils' personal development is excellent as a result of moral and social provision. Opportunities for cultural development are very good and satisfactory (with still more to do) for spiritual. Relationships are excellent throughout as are pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school. There is a very strong emphasis on developing independence and on encouraging pupils to take responsibility. Attendance is very good being well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides an excellent standard of education based on a broad and relevant, very well planned and very well enriched curriculum. Teaching is very good throughout with particular strengths in Years 5 and 6 and in reception. All staff were seen teaching good lessons, thirteen staff recorded very good sessions and four teachers excellent. Highlights in teaching are in English, and in the Foundation Stage (balancing opportunities for structured play with more formal lessons). Astute questioning and very good use of assessment to provide challenge for pupils of differing abilities, result in excellent provision for special educational needs and very good opportunities for pupils who are more able. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to the quality of education provided and play a vital part in supporting the school's excellent ethos.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are very good and very effectively support pupils' high achievement in personal, as well as academic, terms. The headteacher's leadership is excellent, as is her management. She, in a very strong partnership with her very effective deputy, very successfully ensures that staff are a very good team. Subject co-ordinators play a very good part in managing and developing the curriculum. Senior managers make very good use of data to develop the school's educational direction in a strategic plan which takes the school forward. The governing body helps match funds to priorities of the plan. This process is effective in ensuring the school is well resourced, and notwithstanding considerable weaknesses in the quality of the building, that the learning environment is very good. Governors are in the process of redefining the way in which they work. Currently the governance of the school is satisfactory with governors giving good support.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school's efforts to educate their children. They particularly like high expectations, the quality of teaching, opportunities to encourage independence, and extracurricular activities. The school's reputation is high and it is oversubscribed. There were very few negative comments from parents, but a small minority feel that reports are too impersonal. Inspectors are pleased to agree with parents' very positive views, but do find that reports could be more informative. Pupils are very pleased with the school and were very keen to tell the inspection team about it. They especially like the ICT suite, and feel that the staff listen to them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In the context of this excellent school there are no major areas to address but to improve even further the school should:

- Continue to develop and further improve the role of governors.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards for pupils now in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. When taking into account the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), this represents outstanding achievement by the school. Pupils currently in Year 2 achieve very well to attain standards that are well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in ICT, design and technology, geography and history is well above that expected nationally for eleven year olds.
- Pupils with SEN, and those who are more able, achieve very well.
- Across the school, pupils make very good progress in their personal development.

Commentary

1. Children's performance reflects very good achievement overall when taking into account overall attainment on entry is below, and for a third of children well below, levels expected for their age. In recent years despite very good provision in reception where children make very good progress, standards at the end of the Foundation Stage have been below officially recommended levels in communication, language and literacy. As such, a significant minority of children have started Year 1 with below average standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing. However, nearly all have reached the expected levels in each of the other areas of learning¹ by the end of reception.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.3 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.5 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were fifty-two pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Despite an above average proportion of seven year olds with SEN, the school successfully maintained the high standards gained over the previous four years; an outstanding achievement. All pupils gained levels expected for this age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Whilst overall standards in writing, mathematics and science were well above the norm, performance in reading was very high ~ consistent with the top five per cent of schools nationally.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (28.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	30.7 (27.9)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.1 (29.8)	28.6 (28.3)

¹ The curriculum for children in reception comprises six 'areas of learning': Personal, social and emotional development; Communication, language and literacy; Mathematical development; Knowledge and understanding of the world; Physical development; Creative development.

3. Particularly impressive results for eleven year olds saw the school maintain the previous two years' high standards in English, with significant gains made in mathematics and science. Whilst overall standards in English and science were well above average, attainment in mathematics was very high ~ in keeping with the top five per cent of results for this age group nationally. When considering the above average proportion of pupils in the year group assessed with SEN, together with the very significant gains made in attainment since entry to the school, achievement for the year group concerned was excellent.

4. Children currently in reception make very good progress and achieve equally well in their personal, social and emotional development. Whilst nearly all are on course to reach the officially recommended levels by the end of their reception year, nearly half will reach them earlier. Inspection evidence confirms good achievement results in children meeting required levels by the end of reception in mathematical development, in knowledge and understanding of the world, in physical and in creative development. Despite making very good progress, because of their low starting point on entry to reception, around a third of children will not meet officially recommended levels in communication, language and literacy.

5. An above average proportion of current seven and eleven year olds have special educational needs. As such, the fact that, with the exception of English where overall standards are well above average, attainment in all subjects for pupils now in Year 2 is above average, represents a very significant achievement. Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve exceptionally well to gain levels of performance that are well above nationally expected levels in all subjects with the exception of art and design, music and physical education where they are 'only' above average. Attainment in religious education for both year groups surpasses the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well because of the excellent support given them by teachers and learning support staff in lessons, or when they are withdrawn from class to work in small group or one-to-one sessions. Higher attaining pupils, together with those who are potentially gifted and talented, make very good gains because teachers carefully plan lessons and provide challenging tasks well suited to their needs.

7. The school missed the target agreed with the local authority for the proportion of pupils in Year 6 to reach level 4 and above in English in 2003. However, it should be noted that Boringdon's results far exceeded those gained nationally, particularly with regard to the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels². Whilst the targets set for 2004 are challenging, there is every indication that pupils are on course to attain them. The school's very positive attitude to maintaining and raising standards will ensure all pupils should achieve their full potential.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent overall, both in and out of the classroom.

Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils' personal development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good procedures in place to promote and monitor attendance: parents and carers make every effort to ensure pupils attend school and arrive on time.
- The school's community spirit, and the role the School Council plays within it, are excellent.
- The school has extremely high expectations of pupils' conduct. Teaching and non-teaching staff alike provide outstandingly good role models of teamwork, courtesy, and consideration.
- Provision for the cultural development of pupils is very good.
- Provision for the social and moral development of pupils is excellent.

² When assessed at Year 6, the nationally expected level is Level 4. The higher level of attainment is Level 5.

- Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0
National data	0.5

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

8. Attendance is above average by national standards, as at the last inspection. The figures would have been even higher had there not been a case of serious illness. Pupils really enjoy school and hate missing even a single day. Parents are well aware of the importance of regular attendance. Attendance could be further improved if parents could avoid taking holidays in termtime wherever possible. Detailed analysis of the attendance of individuals and groups is carried out weekly by the administrator, and monthly by the headteacher, and parents are sent their child's attendance record with their annual report.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background

No of pupils on roll
355
2
1
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

9. A spirit of mutual respect infuses the school. Pupils listen to each other (as one put it, "You should never rubbish other people's ideas.") and are used to evaluating and commenting on each other's performance in class. Even the youngest pupils quickly learn to share and co-operate. The level of debate in class, particularly in the older year groups, is outstandingly high, demonstrating not only high standards of academic achievement but the ability to empathise with others and describe abstract concepts clearly. Behaviour throughout the inspection was of exceptionally high quality, and consistently very well managed by staff. Playtimes and lunchtimes were happy and relaxed despite the rather small play area and the limited number of playthings provided. Pupils are proud of what they are learning, and willingly talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about it. They are aware of their learning targets and their own progress.

10. The School Council, with representatives from every year group, has a real sense of responsibility about the school: suggestions relating to safety and healthy eating have been implemented, and it is currently carrying out research intended to improve the school's parking problems. Older pupils regularly work with younger ones, looking after them at lunch and playtimes, as well as taking on a range of responsibilities around the school. The quality of pupil response to any opportunity to take responsibility is impressive, mature and sensible.

11. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by the wide range of visits and visitors provided: art, music and drama are very well supplemented by extracurricular activities. Pupils learn about the culture and faiths of others, and this is reflected in the wide range of pupils' work on display.

12. Assemblies observed made a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual development. However, there were few opportunities for reflection. The school is a practical, hard-working place, where appreciation of the intangible does not have a high priority: its development of compassion and mutual consideration, however, is outstanding. The celebration of achievement and the reinforcement of self-confidence take place not only through formal occasions like the weekly achievement assembly, but in every lesson, in simple, effective ways. The level of empathy and concern for every pupil's development and happiness amongst all staff is extremely impressive, from the senior management team to the lunchtime supervisors and the caretaker.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of the education provided by the school is excellent.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is very good throughout the school and this results in very good learning. The school's own evaluation of teaching is accurate and well founded. The contribution of excellent assessment to the quality of teaching is a significant factor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy is very well taught.
- English teaching and support is consistently very good.
- Teaching is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6 and in reception.
- Teaching was at least good in nearly nine out of every ten lessons observed. It was very good or better in over four out of every ten lessons. All staff had good lessons.
- There has been very good improvement in assessment since the last inspection with consistent and effective practices are in place
- Good target setting impacts on high quality teaching.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 67 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (6%)	27 (40.3%)	27 (40.3%)	9 (13.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

13. The very good profile of teaching is directly responsible for very good learning and high standards (particularly by the time pupils leave Year 6) and for pupils' very good achievement. This is especially evident in English, maths and science where standards have been consistently well above average by the time pupils leave the school. Considering most pupils' low starting points this is a superb achievement. During the inspection all English teaching was at least good with a very high seven out of every ten lessons very good or better!

14. Teachers and teaching assistants make very good use of excellent assessment procedures to set targets and modify planning. This leads to very good all round provision with work set to match pupils' ability and prior knowledge. For those pupils with SEN this results in excellent provision. In response many such pupils achieve very well to reach average levels, and some do even better. More able pupils are very well challenged and fulfil their potential to attain higher National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 2, and more notably at the end of Year 6.

15. Excellent examples of teaching were observed in one Year 2 class, one Year 5 and in both Year 6 classes. Reception teaching is very successful in helping children to learn through much hands-on experience in structured play.

16. High quality teaching is a combination of very good planning, excellent curriculum provision, staff knowledge and expertise and excellent relationships. There is a marked team spirit amongst the staff which results in much mutual support. There is a distinct commitment not only to raising and maintaining standards but to considering the child as a whole, conscientiously providing for personal as well as academic development.

17. Other strengths in teaching throughout include:

- Very good classroom and pupil management;
- Astute questioning which ensures all pupils are fully included and have to respond in full sentences on the basis of reason;
- Learning objectives made clear at the start of lessons and referred back to at the end to gauge progress;
- Good marking and use of target setting to show pupils how to improve;
- Good use of homework to extend learning and develop independence;
- Teaching assistants' strong contribution to the overall quality of teaching.

18. Areas which even in this very good picture could still be improved are in some teachers' expertise in ICT (this already features in the school development plan); and the pace and challenge of some lessons: for example where a minority of sessions in Years 1, 2 and 3 although satisfactory, did not demand enough of pupils in the time available.

19. Assessment was a key issue in the last report but the establishment of an overall system which applies to all subjects and age groups indicates very good progress. There is now an excellent whole school approach with formal systems for assessing and recording academic progress in the majority of subjects. The standardised system enables teachers to analyse performance and set specific targets for improvement. This has had a direct impact on teachers' planning and the quality of their teaching. This, in turn, has contributed significantly to the high standards achieved by pupils. The school now plans to further develop the expertise of staff and involve pupils more in their own self assessment.

The curriculum

Provision for the curriculum is excellent and has improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is very good.
- ICT has been improved considerably.
- Provision for SEN pupils is excellent.
- The use of assessment is excellent.
- The role of the subject co-ordinators and their impact on their subject areas is very good.
- There is a need to improve the school's accommodation.

Commentary

20. The school has made very good progress in overcoming the key issues from the last inspection with regard to the curriculum. The school now provides an excellent curriculum for pupils, that is broad and active. Teachers have a commitment to an integrated curriculum that makes very relevant links between subjects. As a result pupils' understanding in lessons is developed and enhanced, allowing skills learned in one area to be applied in another. This aspect of the curriculum

is very impressive and has a considerable impact on the very good standards that are being achieved in the school. All subjects were judged to be good or better during the course of the inspection. This fact illustrated the strength in depth of the curriculum that offers pupils the very best of both opportunity and experience.

21. The curriculum is very well planned and very well delivered by teachers; learning objectives are clear, activities are relevant and learning is very good as a result. The school builds well on the very good provision provided in the Foundation Stage, which prepares children very well for entry into the National Curriculum. Literacy and numeracy are strengths in the school, with many examples of these subjects planned in other subject areas and witnessed during the course of the inspection. Similarly the use of ICT has made significant improvements and there are systems in place to maintain and develop the provision still further. The school provides for the teaching of two foreign languages for older pupils (French and German) and this shows the school's commitment to a dynamic curriculum.

22. Provision for SEN pupils is excellent. Teachers have a very well developed understanding of pupils' needs and the effective use of learning support assistants has a significant impact on the pupils' progress and learning. This leads to an inclusive curriculum where all pupils are valued and have equal access to learning. Good curriculum monitoring and excellent systems for assessment ensure that the curriculum offered is dynamic and evolving. The school complies fully with the requirements of the code of practice for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator is very well supported and provides very good leadership. Teachers have a very well developed understanding of these pupils' needs. Very good support is given by learning support assistants and visiting staff. This has a very significant impact on SEN pupils' learning and achievement. Individual education plans are well written, with clear targets and regularly updated reviews. SEN pupils make very good progress throughout the school.

23. The curriculum has excellent opportunities for enhancement, with an outstanding range of events that support and develop the curriculum. These opportunities are woven into the heart of the curriculum ensuring very effective opportunities for pupils' learning, accompanied by high quality, cross curricular links. Resources for the curriculum are good and are used effectively.

24. Evidence from the inspection illustrates that the provision for homework is good, it is well supported by parents and pupils have a clear understanding of its purpose.

25. The provision of extracurricular activities is excellent, providing a range of activities that emphasise diversity and quality. They are very well attended and this illustrates the commitment of the school to provide pupils with a rich experience of opportunity and excellence.

26. The school copes very well within the limits of its accommodation. The school wishes to develop a library for the older pupils and wants to replace the external, temporary classrooms that are now beyond the manufacturer's recommended life span.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is excellent overall. The provision for support, advice and guidance is excellent. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good.
- Relationships within the school community are excellent.
- Induction arrangements are excellent.
- The governing body currently plays no part in monitoring health and safety or risk assessment.

Commentary

27. The school's site perimeter is securely fenced, and very good arrangements are in place to control access. The provision for risk assessment is clearly understood by all staff and uses well designed checklists. Assessments are carried out before any offsite visit and on all areas of the school. Site inspections are performed by the headteacher and the caretaker, who is permanently on site and deals with any unexpected hazards with great efficiency. He carries out a visual inspection of the site each morning, but the school's position, and the vigilance of its neighbours, ensure that it suffers little vandalism. Some portions of the elderly mobile classrooms which were identified as hazardous have been replaced. A high proportion of the staff are first-aid trained, and at least one of the fully-qualified first-aiders is on duty at all playtimes. Staff are fully briefed on pupils' long-term medical problems and how to respond to particular emergencies. Training on child protection issues is regularly updated at the start of each school year. However, the governing body currently plays no active role in ensuring the health and safety of the school community.

28. Much of the day-to-day support and guidance for pupils is carried out by teaching assistants, whose sensitivity and intelligence is greatly appreciated by parents and pupils. Detailed records of pupils' personal development are maintained, and teachers work closely with parents to ensure that children's individual abilities are identified and supported. Support for pupils with special needs, and for the gifted and talented, is very good.

29. Children joining the reception classes, and those joining higher up the school, receive excellent support through a programme of visits to their new classes, and home visits for all children.

30. The School Council is strongly encouraged to express its views about any aspect of school life, and there are well understood procedures to ensure that other pupils can put ideas forward through their representatives. However, pupils do not comment on their progress on their annual reports.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good overall. There are no extended services or educational support programmes at present. Links with other educational establishments are very good. Links with the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and deal with concerns and complaints are excellent.
- The provision to parents of information about the school and about pupils' standards and progress is very good overall.
- Parents are very supportive of their children's learning and do all they can to help them at school and at home.
- Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary education are very good.
- The quality of pupils' annual reports does not truly reflect the school's high standards of assessment and care.

Commentary

31. Parents are very pleased with the school and with the quality of the education their children receive. They are delighted with the standard of behaviour, the quality of teaching and with the very high expectations the school has of its pupils. Parents were confident that they would always be welcome, that any problems would be quickly dealt with, and that they would receive full feedback. The school makes a special effort to welcome grandparents and other family members as well. Many parents help in school, either generally in class, or by providing expertise in particular circumstances. The school never has any difficulty recruiting help wherever it is needed. There is no parents' association: the school sees no need for fundraising, and parents feel little need for organised social events. Parents are asked to contribute to the school's improvement plan annually, and informal suggestions are always welcomed.

32. There is a constant flow of information to parents about their children's progress throughout the year, and parents feel well informed about how to support learning and help with homework. The homework diaries are well used as a means of communication between home and school, and the targets mutually agreed at parents' evenings are subsequently discussed and modified informally in consultation with parents. The prospectus and governors' report fulfil statutory requirements and are clear and helpful. Newsletters, letters from individual teachers, and the school's website keep parents well informed about school activities. Pupils' annual reports are written using a computer database, and their impersonal tone does not provide an accurate reflection either of the school's excellent assessment procedures in all subjects, or of its passionate concern about its pupils' personal development. A variety of parents expressed some disappointment over the style of reports. Reports do not include comments from pupils on their progress.

33. The school premises are regularly let to community groups; local elderly people have come in to talk about their life experiences and watch school performances. Pupils have visited a care home for the elderly to entertain the residents. Representatives of several Christian denominations and a Hindu priest have come in to take assembly. Police and fire personnel regularly give talks on drugs and safety issues. Colebrook Community Association gave £1000 towards new books. The school regularly fundraises for local and national charities.

34. The school works closely with the secondary school attended by most of its leavers: Year 6 pupils visit the school for specialist science teaching and have language tuition from its staff. Transition arrangements are detailed and intended to make transfer to this, and any other secondary school, as straightforward as possible. The presentation pack made up individually for each leaver is an apt symbol of the school's continuing concern for its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the school is very well run. The leadership and management of the head, in partnership with the deputy, are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head leads the staff as a very effective team.
- Strategic management is highly effective in achieving the school's ambitions and goals.
- Subject co-ordinators play a very good part in managing the curriculum.
- There are very good procedures for self evaluation. The monitoring of data, closely linked to the school's excellent assessment procedures, is used very effectively to identify strengths and relative weaknesses.
- There is scope to develop the role of governors and how they shape and influence the management of the school.

Commentary

35. The leadership and management of the head are exemplary. She ensures that the educational direction of the school is balanced with consideration of each child as an individual and that personal and academic development are given equal consideration. She leads the staff as a very effective team, delegating responsibility and ensuring accountability. This has given rise to:

- A very effective school development plan that covers all aspects of the curriculum built on the contributions and vision of all staff;
- Much improved planning and resources which underpin the school's excellent curricular provision;
- Excellent procedures for, and very good use of, assessment to set targets, gauge progress and modify the curriculum where necessary;
- An excellent partnership with the deputy head who has a very strong influence in the performance management of staff and school evaluation, as well as in day to day management.

36. Subjects are very well led. There is very successful management of provision which commendably results in pupils' achievements and standards being above expectations in every curriculum area. This represents excellent improvement since the last inspection and is a superb team effort.

37. Highlights in the very good profile of leadership and management are in:

- English, maths and science where standards have been well above average for several years and put the school in the top five per cent of all schools for reading in Year 2 and mathematics in Year 6;
- Special needs, where arrangements and support are excellent as a result of high quality management;
- Provision for the Foundation Stage (reception) where very successful management results in children making very good progress and achieving very well;
- Staff induction where teachers new to the school, and in many cases new to the profession, are supported extremely well. A testament to this is the stability of the staff with many staff choosing to remain at the school. In addition to this the school's involvement in initial teacher training is judged excellent as part of a two way process which benefits the school as much as students in training.

38. Governors are very supportive of the school and have played a strong part in efforts to improve the building. The effectiveness of the governing body has been less obvious in recent years. This is a result of a variety of changes in governors and, until recently, a lack of a structure in terms of the way in which governors are proactive in taking responsibility for different aspects of management. Currently the hard working chair of governors is working closely with the head to redefine how governors work to further improve their contribution. Overall the governance of the school, heavily supported by the headteacher, is satisfactory.

39. Finances are extremely well managed to support decaying buildings and ensure the school is well staffed and resourced. Spending is carefully considered against best value principles and always set against curriculum needs.

40. The school and the headteacher in particular are to be congratulated for managing high quality, all round provision, leading to pupils' high standards and very good achievement. This is a considerable success story given pupils' below average (and often well below) attainment on entry, above average proportions of pupils with SEN, and the potential negative effect of ageing buildings, many of which are temporary.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	862549	Balance from previous year	64700
Total expenditure	874506	Balance carried forward to the next	51743
Expenditure per pupil	2092		

41. Currently the school carries forward a slightly higher proportion of its budget than is recommended. This is in anticipation of considerable improvements to be made to accommodation. Overall the school makes highly effective use of below average funding and delivers excellent value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and much improved. This is a combination of accommodation and resources new since the last inspection and a very strong commitment to balancing more formal activities with learning through firsthand experience in structured play. The leadership, management and teamwork of the Foundation Stage are very good and have very positive effects on children's achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching from teachers and teaching assistants is very good.
- Children make very good progress. They achieve very well from below average standards on entry.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good.
- Reception provides children with a very good introduction to school life. Their response is excellent.
- An undercover, outdoor area would be an advantage.

Commentary

42. Staff set great importance on introducing children to the routines and values of school. Provision in children's **personal, social and emotional development** is very good. There are lots of opportunities for working and playing together (and with staff) and as a result children are considerate, tolerant and learn the importance of sharing and taking turns.

43. Relationships are very good and there is an excellent ethos built on trust in which children are not afraid to express themselves and learn from making mistakes. It is obvious that children are extremely well cared for and enjoy the challenge of school.

44. Children demonstrate high levels of social awareness, behaviour is excellent and children, even at this young age, are keen to take responsibility: for example in tidying up and managing their own activities. This results in children developing independence and prepares them very well for future study.

45. Many children start school with well below average **communication, language and literacy** skills. Although they achieve very well most are unlikely to reach all the required learning goals before Year 1. However, most are emerging as readers and writers, making good progress in developing phonic skills to sound out and identify letters and blends. All children are able to recognise their own names and are beginning to read simple words and sentences. They benefit from very good teaching: for example making very good use of 'big books' and familiar stories such as Jack and the Beanstalk to focus attention on reading and to encourage children to make meaningful marks on paper. More able children are able to read and write simple sentences and are very skilfully helped to fulfil their potential.

46. Oral communication has a very high profile and is conscientiously promoted in all activities: for example describing the texture of wet sand; playing out situations in role play; and discussing toys and their owners. Children are very successfully encouraged to talk and to listen to each other.

47. **Mathematical development** is good with children learning to count, sort by different characteristics such as shape and colour, and begin to appreciate simple addition and subtraction by playing a variety of games. Very good teaching provides lots of firsthand experience of simple measuring and weighing, leading to a good understanding of comparisons of size, heavier and lighter than. Children achieve well and most are on line to reach the expected early learning goals by Year 1, with the more able doing better than this.

48. Children respond very well to very good opportunities to develop their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They are on line to reach the early learning goals in appreciating different materials, developing skills of using computers and listening stations, and becoming aware of how they have changed since they were babies. Reception lays down a valuable foundation for National Curriculum work in ICT, humanities: history, geography and religious education.

49. **Physical development** is good with children learning what their bodies are capable of both in terms of handling simple tools and equipment and in riding, balancing and climbing. Most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals before entering Year 1. Teaching is very good, guiding and instilling confidence without inhibiting children's hands-on opportunities. Good use is made of the school hall and its apparatus, and the clearly defined outdoor Foundation Stage space. However, the lack of undercover outdoor space is a restriction in bad weather.

50. In **creative development** children make good progress, achieve well and reach expected goals before Year 1. Very good teaching enables children to express themselves in using paint; making things choosing their materials and equipment; joining in singing and learning simple composition; and using language creatively in role play, acting out rhymes and stories as well as inventing conversations to match various situations.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English for pupils now in Years 2 and 6 are well above average and reflect outstanding achievement.
- Because of excellent support, the majority of pupils attain levels at least expected nationally for their age.
- Teaching is very good and never less than good. It was very good or better in nearly seven out of every ten lessons seen.
- Assessment is used very well to promote pupils' learning.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very effective.
- Teachers extend the teaching and use of literacy skills very well across the curriculum.

Commentary

51. End of Year 2 and Year 6 assessments in 2003 saw the high standards gained by seven and eleven year olds over the last four years maintained. A similar picture is seen for pupils now in Years 2 and 6, where standards are well above average for both year groups. When taking into account around a third of pupils enter Year 1 with below average communication skills, progress made in Years 1 and 2, together with achievement, is outstanding. With an above average proportion of eleven year olds with SEN, the high standards at which pupils work reflects exceptional achievement. Standards show a marked improvement on those reported at the last inspection when attainment at Year 2 was 'in line' with expected levels, and 'above' at Year 6.

52. Across the school, the high quality support given to the above average proportion of pupils with SEN results in the majority reaching levels expected nationally for their age. Inspection evidence confirms a significant number of pupils at Years 2 and 6 achieve exceptionally well to perform at above the expected levels.

53. The ongoing focus on speaking and listening skills results in above average levels of performance by Years 2 and 6. Pupils are articulate, speak confidently, and listen attentively. In

class, pupils contribute enthusiastically and explain ideas clearly. This was evident in an excellent lesson where pupils in Year 5 discussed the rhythm, structure and vocabulary of Tennyson's 'Lady of Shallot'. Pupils have many opportunities to speak individually to larger audiences: for example, one pupil in Year 6 was seen to give a confident, well paced and clear explanation and demonstration to the rest of the class as to how they could enhance their computer presentations by incorporating animation and sound.

54. The school's efforts to instil a love of literature in all pupils is seen in the very good use of a wide range of texts in lessons to support further learning. Much investment has been put into the library for Years 1 and 2, and towards the improvement of fiction and reference books for older pupils. All pupils benefit from a wide range of reading activities in school and good parental support at home. As such, standards in reading are well above the norm. Pupils in Year 2 summarise stories, and predict events as they read, using the full range of cues to help them decode unfamiliar words. Nearly all read expressively and fluently. Pupils now in Year 6 discuss events, characters and story settings confidently. They have a very clear understanding of how punctuation determines the way a text is to be read. Pupils discuss favourite authors and give considered reasons for their preferences. They infer and deduce meaning beyond the text, and explain clearly how to gain information from a book or from the Internet.

55. Standards in writing in Years 2 and 6 are well above average. Pupils' very good opportunities to write for a range of purposes, result in work that is frequently thoughtful and imaginative. Such examples were seen in Year 4's use of imagery to set the scene for their space adventure, and in Year 5's ability to convey mood in their well presented 'Night Poems'. By the end of Year 6, pupils show a very good understanding of persuasive letter writing. Following initial drafts, the final letters are set out correctly with paragraphs that contain well ordered points that lead to a considered conclusion. Presentation is good, and pupils use an appropriate degree of formality and breadth of vocabulary. Across the school, the teaching of spelling and grammar is woven well into lessons. Regular handwriting sessions result in pupils across the school achieving good standards. By the end of Year 6, nearly all pupils write in a neat, well formed cursive style.

56. Teaching is very good across the school, and results in pupils' very positive attitudes to all learning. The high quality of teaching is characterised by:

- Very thorough planning that takes account of previous learning, has clear objectives that are shared with pupils at the start of lessons;
- Interesting activities and tasks that are well matched to the needs of pupils at different stages of learning;
- Teachers' very good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupil performance;
- Very good use of classroom support assistants, together with high quality support for pupils with SEN.

57. Leadership and management of English by an experienced and knowledgeable teacher are very effective. A wide range of assessment procedures is used to very good advantage to monitor and track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils, to modify curriculum provision, and set targets for learning. Monitoring of the quality of teaching results in good practice being identified and shared.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Most subjects contribute very well to the development of language and literacy. For example, in mathematics, pupils discuss tasks with partners and 'write up' their findings, whilst in science pupils produce written reports on their investigations. In history, geography and religious education, pupils often write detailed accounts of events and lifestyles, and write up their research notes gained either from reference books or the Internet.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good** and this has improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are good.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 are very good.
- Achievement of pupils including those with SEN is very good.
- The provision and planning of numeracy within the mathematics curriculum is very good.
- The challenge for the more able pupils is very good.
- Assessment is very good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The monitoring of the subject needs further focus on standards.

Commentary

59. The provision of mathematics in the school has improved since the last inspection and it is now very good. The standards achieved by pupils are good by the end of Year 2 and very good by the end of Year 6. This is as a result of a very good mathematics curriculum that builds on the strong focus on numeracy applied in all the other areas of the mathematics curriculum.

60. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop a good understanding of the number system as a result of focused teaching on numeracy. There is an emphasis on number bonds and calculations both in written work and mental agility. Pupils have a very positive attitude to mathematics and have good opportunities to apply their skills in problem solving.

61. By the end of Year 6 pupils have successfully built on previously learned skills and they can apply their skills in an array of other subject areas. Results of 2003 national tests put the school in the top five per cent of all primaries. The curriculum is very well balanced with opportunities to cover the full range of the attainment targets including the opportunity to use and apply skills. SEN pupils receive very good support and their achievement is very good. Lessons are inclusive, support staff are used very effectively and they have a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. There is very good challenge for the most able pupils and this is reflected in high percentages of pupils gaining the highest scores in national tests.

62. Planning in mathematics is very good, with very good use of learning objectives that are effectively explained to pupils. Work is appropriately matched for the different ability levels and good quality activities provide a clear vehicle for learning and understanding. Teachers use evaluations effectively to inform future planning and this is reflected by their clear understanding of 'where pupils are'.

63. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good with some lessons very good or excellent. There is an emphasis on mental agility and tables, and this together with very good questioning skills, allowed pupils to achieve above the national expectation in almost all lessons observed. Teachers had good subject knowledge and they used resources effectively.

64. There are very good procedures for assessment, which has a significant effect on the standards that are being attained. Data generated by assessments is very effectively used to improve both teaching and learning. Individual teacher assessment is very effective and pupils are aware of the skills and knowledge they need to improve.

65. The subject co-ordinator is a good role model for her colleagues. She manages the subject effectively, which includes the monitoring of teaching and learning, planning and pupils' work. This

she does to a high level. However, her effectiveness could be further enhanced by focusing on standards when work sampling.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. There were many instances of mathematics being used very effectively across the curriculum during the course of the inspection. There was evidence of its use in ICT, science, history geography, physical education and music. The provision of mathematics across the curriculum is consequently judged as very good.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are well above average by the time pupils leave the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to science are very positive.
- Teaching and learning are very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Assessment is a very strong feature.
- Skilled teaching assistants provide excellent support, leading to excellent inclusion.
- Work in scientific enquiry, whilst strong in Years 3 to 6, is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, this is identified by the school as an area for improvement.

Commentary

67. Standards in science are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and are consistently very high in national tests in Year 6. A very large proportion of pupils achieve the higher level in the national assessments at the end of Year 6. This indicates very good achievement and is a great improvement since the last inspection. Overall, standards and achievement in science are at least good throughout the school.

68. Six science lessons were observed. Teaching and learning were judged to be good overall in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is very good throughout the school.

69. Scrutiny of work in pupils' books and folders and on display identified evidence of good work across all attainment targets. Good marking by teachers helps pupils understand what they can do to improve their work.

70. Teachers plan effectively, demonstrating good subject knowledge. Work is set at appropriate levels for pupils of different abilities, offering high levels of challenge for the most able pupils. Children with special educational needs are very well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants and have full access to the curriculum. The inclusion of all pupils is excellent throughout the school.

71. Very good resources are used highly effectively and provide considerable enrichment to the scientific experiences of pupils. Year 6 pupils are given opportunities to work in the science laboratory at the nearby secondary school with a specialist science teacher. This results in some outstanding written accounts of chemistry experiments, using sophisticated resources and techniques.

72. Science lessons observed were practical sessions involving good learning of skills and concepts and very good use of vocabulary. Pupils were encouraged to predict and hypothesise, to test ideas, to record and evaluate outcomes, and to research key principles.

73. An excellent lesson was seen in a Year 2 class where a nurse had been invited to tell pupils about her role and to discuss medicines. Follow up activities included: a question and answer

session with the nurse; a role-play session; filling in 'prescriptions'; trying out items such as the stethoscope; and classifying medicines and discussing who should give them. The teacher managed and rotated all of these group activities with impressive confidence, adding pace and challenge appropriate to pupils' needs. This was an exciting and inspiring session for the whole class, resulting in very good standards and achievement by all pupils.

74. A very good Year 6 lesson challenged pairs of pupils to predict and test the weight-bearing resistance of a range of elastic bands, to analyse outcomes and to plot their findings on graphs. This was a very challenging and enjoyable learning experience for all pupils.

75. Both literacy and numeracy contribute very effectively to science lessons and very good links were made with geography and history projects. However, even greater use of computers would further enrich pupils' interpretation and understanding of evidence.

76. The co-ordinator regularly monitors provision, planning and teaching. She has good subject knowledge and provides effective support for her colleagues. She has a very good idea of areas for development: principally developing pupils' skills of experimental and investigative science in Years 1 and 2. Overall, the management of the subject is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and are reaching well above expectations by the time they leave.
- Resources are very good with a very good wireless, networked system connecting all classrooms.
- There is a very good ICT suite which is centrally located and very well resourced. However, the lack of blinds can make it very difficult to see projected images in sunny weather.

Commentary

77. The last inspection found 'pupils' progress in IT to be unsatisfactory with significant weaknesses in planning, resources and management'. Considerable effort and expense has been very successful in rectifying the situation. The deputy head as co-ordinator has radically improved planning, overseen dramatic improvements to resources, and created a very good ICT suite. Leadership and management of the subject are excellent. For example, systematic assessment and good recording of pupils' work have been introduced very effectively. Staff can now be confident that they can prove how well pupils are performing as well as cataloguing what has been covered. All pupils are regularly involved in ICT, which means that not only is it taught as a subject in its own right, but used effectively to support other curriculum areas: for example history and geography.

78. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 building on good work in reception in getting children familiar with the keyboard and mouse. By the end of Year 2 pupils are confident in using and controlling programs: for example to create repeating patterns in the style of William Morris. Pupils are beginning to enter their own data which is presented as pictograms; and using the Internet for simple research. Pupils' skills and understanding at the end of Year 2 are above national expectations.

79. Pupils are making rapid progress in Years 3 to 6, making the most of developments to provision to reach well above national expectations by the time they leave. They respond very well to interesting and challenging work, and demonstrate very good basic skills and understanding. All pupils, including those with SEN, produce work of at least good standards, with more able pupils doing particularly well. Examples of very good work observed feature:

- Year 3 experimenting with different fonts and importing pictures to create themed cards for Valentine's Day and Easter;
- Year 4 using spreadsheets to enter, sort and present data;
- Year 5 producing very good, well presented books of their own stories;
- Year 6 excellent travel brochures and multimedia presentations in work linked to a study of Kenya.

80. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on making use of CD-ROM and the Internet for research and developing communication through safe use of the Internet.

81. It is clear from the few lessons observed, a review of pupils' past work and discussions with pupils, that teaching is good with very good features evident in Years 5 and 6. This is underpinned by thorough planning and very good support from the subject co-ordinator. The school is aware that some staff still lack confidence in ICT. A good rolling programme of in-service training is proving successful in improving teachers' knowledge and understanding as well as introducing new hardware and software.

82. A very good feature of how ICT is being promoted and used to support other subjects is the highlighting of a weekly ICT focus on all year group planning sheets. This acts as a constant reminder of the cross curricular nature of the subject as well as identifying how resources such as digital cameras and audio equipment can be used in addition to computers.

83. There is an urgent need to install blinds across the skylights in the ICT suite to improve the clarity of images from the data projector.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. Good use is made of ICT: for example producing and presenting data in maths; using sensors in science; appreciating colour and tone in landscapes for art and design; and in word processing and editing written work in literacy. The school sets an excellent example in the way planning is produced and records are kept using ICT.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are very good.
- Standards are above national expectations.
- There is an established, effective assessment procedure.
- Resources are good.
- Pupils produce good quality work
- Cross curricular links are very good.

Commentary

85. The school has developed and extended its provision in geography since its last inspection making very good progress. The last report described standards at 'Key Stage 1 and 2 as satisfactory'. Since then standards have improved to above national expectations. The subject co-ordinator has established:

- Good schemes of work;
- The recording of attainment and effective use of assessment.

These have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and resulted in raising standards.

86. No geography lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6 and only one in Years 1 and 2. However, work sampled and on display in every year group indicates above average attainment. In the lesson observed Year 2 pupils received a short talk from a visitor describing Barnaby Bear's trip to Roscoff in Brittany on the Plymouth ferry. This was a good example of how the school uses outside stimuli such as guest speakers, school trips or visiting drama experts to 'fire' pupils' imagination. Skilful questioning from the teacher introduced appropriate geographical vocabulary whilst exploring Barnaby's adventures and the pupils were very keen to share their own travel experiences. They were then challenged to find the names of certain places and countries by using a simple atlas. This they all did with enthusiasm including pupils with special needs. The teacher used one of the comments from the pupils when she asked them if they could find Denmark, the place 'Emma's nanny was going'. This extended into a discussion about why she couldn't go there by car. The lesson introduced geographical concepts such as islands, cities, countries, bodies of water called a channel or a sea, the channel tunnel and ferries. The high standard of behaviour and enthusiasm of the pupils and the teacher facilitated good discussion about passports, tickets, currency, and even insurance.

87. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has been successful in providing a very good level of support for the teaching of geography throughout the school. The effective assessment procedures support the quality of planning and teaching. The co-ordinator has conducted a scrutiny of the standard of work in each year group on a termly basis. This has enabled him to ensure that all areas of the geography scheme of work are being taught. Opportunities to observe lessons have been used to focus on pupils' learning and appropriate feedback given to colleagues. Good resources are provided and a programme of visits and trips encouraged.

88. The quality of links with other areas of the curriculum is very good. For example Year 5 pupils made very good use of their ICT skills when recording the results of their 'High Street Survey' producing tally charts and graphs on the computer. The same topic involved them in writing letters to the Environmental Health Department to complain about the level of noise from passing lorries. Good displays in every year group enhance the learning environment and provide opportunities for work to be celebrated. This is of a high standard.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of leadership and management are very good.
- There are good assessment procedures.
- Teaching is good.
- Staff have a good skill level.
- There are very good cross curricular links.
- Resources are good.
- Pupil response is excellent.

Commentary

89. The school has developed and improved provision for history making very good progress since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator has established good schemes of work, the recording of attainment and effective use of assessment. This has had an impact on the quality of teaching and resulted in pupils throughout the school achieving standards above national expectations.

90. The quality of teaching is good overall. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 but evidence collected from assessment, work samples and displays indicate that pupils respond very well. Lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 contained good and very good teaching. Teachers used effective planning with clear expectations. The management of pupils was very good and this contributed to excellent attitudes and behaviour which were a feature of every lesson observed. Pupils with special educational needs were always included and good use was made of additional adult help. Enthusiastic and well informed teachers motivated the pupils who readily engaged in discussions about aspects of historical enquiry. This was well illustrated in a Year 5 lesson where pupils learnt about techniques used by archaeologists. In connection with their topic on Aztec life pupils were asked to excavate a mini trench in a tray containing buried artefacts. A grid of string helped them record their finds and they made good suggestions as to the categories into which they could be ordered. The activity was well planned and resourced and generated great excitement, good co-operation and a high level of debate managed by the teacher's skilful use of questioning.

91. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject co-ordinator has been successful in providing a very good level of support for his colleagues. The simple but effective assessment procedures have a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has been given time to conduct a termly work scrutiny with each year group and this has enabled him to monitor standards and ensure that all aspects of the history curriculum are covered. Opportunities to observe lessons have been provided and the co-ordinator has used these to focus on the quality of learning that is taking place. The quality of teaching and learning has been well supported by good resources provided from an adequate budget. The co-ordinator has begun to collect and buy a school collection of artefacts to support those borrowed from museums. Yearly subject development plans ensure that new issues can be addressed. The lack of training opportunities in general history teaching has been identified as an issue.

92. The quality of the links with other areas of the curriculum is very good. This has been incorporated in the planning, and results in an enrichment of the curriculum. Pupils are enabled to make connections with other areas of learning whilst maintaining the motivation provided by a museum trip or visiting drama teacher. For example the visit to a Victorian museum in Year 1 inspired some very good writing on how the children's lives would be different in Victorian times. Many links with the art and design curriculum were observed. Work on the Aztecs in Year 5 has inspired 3D work on clay pots incorporating Aztec designs and woven with special coloured thread. The same year group converted their boxes made in design and technology to 'wish' boxes linked with Aztec beliefs. In Year 3 good quality 2D work was observed inspired by dolphin frescoes from Ancient Greece. In Year 6 pupils were involved in using their literacy skills in preparing questions and taking notes in connection with a topic on World War II. Friends of the school who were alive during the war had been invited to be interviewed and share their experiences. A high level of understanding was demonstrated by pupils as they adapted their questions to take account of the information they were being given.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in RE is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment procedures are effective.
- Pupils' attitudes are excellent.
- There are insufficient opportunities for the development of spirituality.

Commentary

93. The school has improved provision since the last inspection. In the last report attainment was in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. It is now above expectations and is good throughout the school. Assessment was judged to be unsatisfactory but is now well established and

effective. Pupils' attitudes are extremely positive and evidence from lessons in other subjects supports this.

94. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and only one lesson in Years 3 to 6. However from the work scrutinised, the standard of displays and an interview with pupils, good standards are being achieved. In the lesson observed in Year 6 all pupils were involved in a stimulating discussion about slaves and human rights in connection with a study of the Jewish faith. Good teaching resulted in good levels of learning and achievement within the aims of the RE scheme of work. At the end of Year 6 pupils show a good grasp of the main tenets of the Christian faith and know about other religions such as Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. Pupils found their experiences in assemblies and exploring the Christian faith most helpful in guiding future life decisions although they did not think they had many opportunities to reflect on spiritual questions. The subject makes a significant contribution to the excellent attitudes and behaviour observed.

95. Although the subject co-ordinator was on maternity leave there is evidence to suggest that the leadership and management of the subject are good. An effective assessment procedure has been implemented and is evident in all teachers' files. The co-ordinator has in the past moderated work from each year group each term. Evidence in the co-ordinator's file coupled with the quality of work observed indicates that the management of the subject has had a positive influence on standards. There was evidence that the co-ordinator has planned to observe lessons in other year groups but as yet this has not taken place. Assemblies observed supported the aims of the RE curriculum, but opportunities were missed to encourage pupils to reflect, and develop a sense of awe and wonder.

96. There are good links made with other areas of the curriculum. In Year 4 in connection with visits to a traditional Church of England church and a more modern Methodist church the pupils studied the history of churches in order to increase their understanding. Year 6 pupils developed their writing skills when they retold the story of the birth of Jesus in the form of a modern newspaper feature. A very good standard of writing was achieved as well as a mature grasp of the biblical facts. Visitors and trips have been planned into the scheme of work. Pupils were recorded enjoying dressing up in Hindu clothes during a visit from a Hindu priest.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

Provision and standards in art and design are **good** throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of ICT to enrich the art and design curriculum is very good.
- Standards of teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Assessment of art and design is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during art and design lessons are very good.

Commentary

97. Standards of work seen during lessons, on display and in scrutiny of pupils' work are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well. The consistently good teaching in art and design is demonstrated in the great care pupils take over their work. Teaching assistants and voluntary helpers provide very good support for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.

98. The art and design curriculum is broad and balanced. Some very good examples of art and design work were seen and imaginatively displayed around the school. Year 2 pupils were observed

working on impressive collages of leaf forms in a variety of media. Year 6 pupils had undertaken a project on the pottery of Clarice Cliff, producing some vivid and original plate designs.

99. Very good use is made of ICT to enhance the art and design curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils used computer software to explore colour, tone and composition, designing striking landscape and seascape silhouettes, as a basis for larger colour-wash paintings.

100. Very good links are being made across the curriculum. Examples of these include shield decorations and dolphin frescoes as part of Year 3's Greek history project, and a variety of designs inspired by Year 6's geography work on Kenya.

101. Pupils' sketchbooks contain a wide range of observational drawing and design work. A Year 4 sketchbook project was the development of portraiture skills, such as how to draw correctly proportioned faces. This shows good learning of appropriate skills and techniques.

102. Work is assessed on a regular basis. Good resources are provided and pupils are encouraged to make independent choices in their use. The well informed co-ordinator provides good leadership and support for her subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is **very good** throughout the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Support for SEN pupils is very good.
- Assessment is very good.

Commentary

103. Examples of very good work seen during the inspection cover a wide range of skills and techniques. Standards and achievement are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. In all year groups, pupils are encouraged to make their own choices regarding techniques and media and to undertake a variety of investigations in design and technology.

104. An impressive project in Year 1 included designing, making and evaluating playground equipment. Pupils demonstrated imagination and care in making their models out of a range of materials, experimenting with joining techniques to make their models work. In Year 5, pupils had designed and made some outstanding working musical instruments from a range of materials. In Year 6, pupils were working on a highly sophisticated group of motorised and pulley-driven models including a large scale Ferris wheel and a beam ride with a swinging arm.

105. All aspects of the design and technology curriculum are covered very well and teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge in their planning. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes and they work very effectively with each other on co-operative projects. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and personal development.

106. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by dedicated teaching assistants and voluntary helpers. This gives SEN pupils excellent access to all opportunities in design and technology lessons. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and more able learners are very well challenged. Assessment procedures are very good and result in staff being well aware of what pupils know, understand and can do.

107. The co-ordinator for design and technology was on maternity leave at the time of the inspection, but she has maintained a comprehensive subject file, including a range of pupils' work. There is evidence to suggest that leadership and management of the subject are good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning for physical education is good.
- The subject co-ordinator provides a good role model for staff.
- Standards in physical education are good.
- Provision for dance is very good.
- The provision of outdoor education is an area identified by the school for further development.
- The small size of the school hall is a limiting factor in a large school.

Commentary

108. The standards attained by pupils by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are good and above the national expectation in the overall quality and quantity of the physical education curriculum offered. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very positive, pupils respond well to teachers and behave very well during lessons.

109. The planning of the physical education curriculum is good providing the full coverage of the different aspects of the subject with an emphasis on activity. Pupils are expected to be very active during lessons and this is complemented by very good warm up and warm down sessions. Relationships are very good and teachers provide good role models; their understanding is good as is their subject knowledge. As a result pupils make the required progress in lessons by firstly practising their skills and then applying them.

110. Overall the standard of teaching is judged to be good. Teachers create a learning environment where pupils practise and improve their skills, with an emphasis on self improvement. Pupils are given the opportunity to evaluate their own work and that of their peers. As a consequence pupils are confident and reflective. They work very well co-operatively and achieve well in lessons. In one Year 6 dance lesson the teacher allowed the pupils to practise, refine and develop a complicated dance sequence that was made up of several sub-sequences, motifs with changes of pace, interpretation and co-ordination. It was really very impressive. The subject leader was able to provide supporting evidence to illustrate that this lesson was not untypical of the standards achieved by pupils.

111. Assessment is well developed and teachers assess children in the different elements of the physical education curriculum with reference to national expectations. These assessments are then used to inform future planning and identify the most able pupils. All pupils attain at least the national expectation in swimming and are provided with the opportunity to do so in Years 5 and 6 if they do not attain it in Year 4 when swimming is covered.

112. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and direction for the subject. He is a good role model who has good subject knowledge and has a good understanding of how to develop the subject. The monitoring of the physical education curriculum is good, lessons are observed, planning is evaluated and annual assessments provide the basis for future developments. The subject is well resourced and teachers make good use of equipment. However the size of the school hall is rather limiting for such a school.

113. The provision of outdoor education is an area that has recently been a focus and this is identified as an area to be further developed and evaluated. There are excellent opportunities for sporting activities outside of the school day. The quantity and quality of activities offered are

impressive. These are very well supported and valued by both pupils and parents and contribute to the overall standards achieved in the school.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of music is good.
- The planning of the music curriculum is good with good cross curricular links.
- The subject co-ordinator provides a good role model for the staff.
- Pupils' attitudes to music are good.
- The visible profile of music in the school could be improved.

Commentary

114. The provision for music in the school is good with standards achieved by pupils above the national expectation overall. The standards of singing in assemblies is good and this is a reflection of pupils' attitudes and enjoyment. Children in the Foundation Stage are able to recognise changes in pitch and dynamics of a piece of music and react to it accordingly as well as follow actions to convey meaning. These skills are built upon by the end of Year 2, where pupils are encouraged to create their own music and perform it to an audience. As pupils progress through the school they are encouraged to record their work in a variety of ways, leading eventually to musical notation. Pupils are exposed to a wide range of musical genre incorporating both classical and more contemporary pieces.

115. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. This is as a result of a good music curriculum that is well delivered. Pupils undertake musical activities on a regular basis covering all aspects of the music curriculum. This was evident from lesson observations that showed pupils working co-operatively on both composing and performing.

116. The teaching of music is good throughout the school. Lessons are active and stimulating, with good teacher interventions backed up by good subject knowledge and enthusiasm. Pupils are encouraged to experiment and refine their compositions and then record them for future use. As a result pupils have very positive attitudes towards music, they are confident and they appreciate its importance. Pupils have a good knowledge of the language associated with music and can name not only the instruments but to what part of an orchestra they belong. Lessons are inclusive with pupils of differing ability levels equally challenged.

117. Assessment procedures are well developed and teachers keep records of achievement in the individual aspects of music. This ensures that pupils receive sufficient challenge and that the most able pupils can be identified. There are very good opportunities for the most talented musicians including peripatetic music teaching, the school orchestra and the Plymouth Music Zone.

118. The subject co-ordinator is a good role model and provides good leadership. She has a clear understanding of the direction of the subject and she provides good support for her colleagues. The subject is monitored effectively through lesson observations and planning and this has been developed to include staff training. Resources are good but a replacement programme is being implemented alongside further supplementary guidance on their use. The visible presence of music in the school is an area for improvement; there is very little display or visible celebration of the good work that is being undertaken. The subject is enriched with a number of musical activities throughout the year including performances of year groups at assemblies, a variety of visiting musicians, and good opportunities for extracurricular involvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A new scheme of work ensures continuity throughout the school.
- PSHE makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and supports the school's excellent ethos.

Commentary

119. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) was not a major focus for inspection and few lessons could be observed. However, school documentation and the obvious impact of intentions noted throughout the inspection in pupils' attitudes and behaviour show that provision is very successful.

120. Pupils are very tolerant and show excellent consideration for others. From reception they are learning to play a part in the school and understand how they can contribute to the greater good of the community. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a well developed awareness of issues which can lead to antisocial behaviour such as smoking, and drugs abuse. There is an effective programme of sex education.

121. Two teachers now take responsibility for PSHE. They have introduced a new scheme of work which is a balance of the recommendations of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance and the school's own established good practice. This provides good support for staff which is effectively planned for and resourced.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	1
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	1
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	1
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	1
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	1
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).