

INSPECTION REPORT

BRIDGERULE C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bridgerule, Holsworthy

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113373

Headteacher: Miss L Swain

Lead inspector: Mr M Burghart

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th November 2003

Inspection number: 255605

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	47
School address:	Bridgerule Holsworthy Devon
Postcode:	EX22 7EN
Telephone number:	01288 381366
Fax number:	01288 381366
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	None
Date of previous inspection:	13 th March 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bridgerule C of E Primary is a small school in the rural village of the same name in north Devon. The school draws pupils from a wide area. Pupils' social and economic circumstances represent a range, but overall are slightly below average. There are 47 pupils on roll, all of whom are of British origin. Like many schools locally the number on roll is falling. Pupils' attainment on entry to reception features a wide range but overall is below average. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs list is above average but no pupils receive extra help as a result of formal statements. The percentage of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the start of reception and the end of Year 6 is above average and there is a significant proportion of 'looked after' children at the school. No pupils receive extra support due to having English as an additional language. In the last full inspection in 2000 the school was considered to be in need of 'special measures'. Her Majesty's Inspectors subsequently found that this was no longer necessary in 2001, and in February 2003 the school received an 'Achievement Award' from the DfEE for improvements to standards. For most of the week pupils are in three mixed age classes with an average of 16 pupils in each. Very recent extensions to the Victorian building have provided two new classrooms. This means that the hall is no longer used as a class base.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M Burghart	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects, Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Personal, social and health education.
13911	Mrs J Gallichan	Lay inspector	
22578	Mr D G Jones	Team inspector	English, Science, Geography, History, Religious education, Special educational needs.

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 a much improved school that currently gives pupils a satisfactory standard of education and is well on the way to being good. Teaching is good and the leadership and management of the school have gone from 'poor' three years ago to good. The school gives satisfactory, and much improved, value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good, based on good planning and assessment of standards and progress;
- The school takes good care of pupils, who respond with positive attitudes;
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good;
- The leadership and management of staff are good;
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough by the time pupils leave Year 6;
- Access and resources for the outdoors for reception are not good enough;
- Some elements of communication with parents need improving.

The school has made very good progress since being classified as needing special measures in 2000. All of the many key issues for improvement have been addressed resulting in much improved standards, planning, teaching and management. Improvements noted by HMI in 2001 have been maintained and the school was granted an achievement award from the DfEE in March 2003 for better standards. Substantial improvements to accommodation and resources have considerably enhanced the learning environment.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

In this school a succession of small and very small year groups make the comparisons of this table unreliable. 2003 apparently weaker results were not unexpected by the school. The small year group of only nine pupils had a higher than usual level of SEN and a variety of pupils joined the school other than in reception. Inspection evidence shows **standards are presently about average in English, mathematics and science.** This represents good improvement since the last full inspection, and sustained good progress from the HMI follow up inspection in 2001. Pupils achieve well from generally below average starting points. Reading standards are good throughout the school and there are strengths in music and two-dimensional art and design. The school has identified improving writing, investigative work in science, and using and applying mathematics skills as priorities for development. Standards are as expected nationally for seven year olds in ICT but below expectations for eleven year olds due to gaps in work in previous years. Standards for the few children in reception indicate children make good progress and are likely to meet the goals they are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1. Across the school pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Pupils' personal development in terms of moral, social and cultural aspects is good. It is now good in spiritual and cultural elements, and this represents very good improvement from

unsatisfactory in the last inspection. The school is good at encouraging pupils to take responsibility and show independence. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and there are good features in relationships throughout. Attendance is good being above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is satisfactory and fast improving. There are good features in the quality of planning which leads to a broad and balanced curriculum. **Teaching is good and never less than satisfactory and this is a big improvement.** Teachers manage mixed age and ability classes well as a result of now good assessment and good attention to the needs of individuals. Reception teaching is good, but there is insufficient access and resources for outdoor play. Of the 17 lessons observed over four-fifths were at least good. All teachers were observed unannounced on several occasions and all had good lessons. Two staff had very good lessons. Literacy and numeracy teaching is nearly always good throughout the school and science is well taught for Years 3 to 6. Teaching in ICT is being improved because of in-service training. Teaching strengths are in good questioning and consistent management of behaviour. The school still takes good care of pupils and, although some parents strongly disagree, maintains good links with parents about pupils' progress and the curriculum to be taught.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the head is much improved and is now good and she is well supported by all staff as a very good team. Development planning takes good account of contributions from all concerned and strategic planning is good. The quality of subject co-ordinators' management is good and continues to be developed. Day to day management of the school is good, but there is more to do to enhance communications with parents. Governors give good support and although limited by the continued lack of a chair person make a sound contribution to management, notably in financial, personnel and accommodation matters.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents respond positively about the school, especially about expectations and behaviour. However it is clear that a significant minority feel that communications are not good enough and that the school is not approachable. Overall the school's links with parents are satisfactory and the quality of written information is judged as very good. Most pupils feel positive about the school and have confidence in the staff. They say they enjoy school and raised very few negative comments.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are to:

- Raise standards still further in ICT and make more use of it to support other subjects;
- Increase as intended opportunities to improve pupils' listening and writing skills across the curriculum and develop still further the experimental and investigative aspects of mathematics and science;
- Continue to improve outdoor provision for children in reception, notably with regard to access, and climbing equipment;
- Improve communications with disaffected parents;
- Appoint a chair of governors.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good overall in the Foundation Stage (reception) and across the school. Considering the well above average levels of SEN and mobility this is a positive situation. Overall standards are satisfactory, being consistent with what is expected nationally. This is a big improvement over the last full inspection and continues the progress recorded in the HMI inspection of 2001.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of reading are above average, notably at the end of Years 2 and 6;
- Music standards are above expectation in response to the good teaching of the head as music specialist;
- There is strength in two-dimensional art work throughout the school;
- Standards in ICT are below expectations for older pupils as a result of gaps in their experience in past years. This is rapidly being addressed.

Commentary

1. Since the school was put into special measures in 2000 there has been a systematic improvement in pupils' achievement and in terms of standards reached. This has been brought about primarily by much better planning and schemes of work which have built upon much improved assessment and evaluation. Good work by staff acting as co-ordinators in monitoring and analysis of all subjects has led to now good teaching which promotes learning at different ability levels. This benefits all pupils, but most obviously those who are potentially higher attainers and those with SEN.
2. Overall standards are now satisfactory. This judgement is apparently contradicted by results of recent National Curriculum assessments (SATs), but as the year groups tested contained less than 10 pupils and in the case of Year 2 in 2003 only three children, statistics are not reliable. Nevertheless results over a four year period show progress which matches national trends in English, maths and science. Standards are negatively affected by above average levels of SEN and by the mobility of pupils being high. Over a third of pupils in Year 6 last year joined or left the school other than at the start of reception. Two of the nine Year 6 pupils entered the school less than two terms before the SATs, making it difficult for them to catch up.
3. The school has improving pupils' writing as a main aim of its development plan. Inspectors find this to be appropriate and that there is still a need to encourage pupils to extend their writing in other curriculum areas. Other areas for further improvement include experimental and investigative opportunities to use and apply maths and science skills. However, there has been substantial progress since the last full inspection.
4. Inspection evidence points to most children reaching the goals expected of them by the end of reception and this represents good progress from a generally below average start. The best progress is made in children's personal, social and emotional development, and the least is in terms of listening skills which were found to be below expectations throughout the school.
5. The school is aware of weaknesses in older pupils' ICT skills. This is the result of inadequate provision and teaching over a period of years and was reported in the inspection of 2000. There have been improvements to resources and planning which have raised standards to the satisfactory level for seven year olds, but there has been insufficient time for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to complete all work in appropriate detail to address the situation. There are indications that as a result of now very good management and improved assessment, standards will meet expectations by the time the

present Year 4 pupils leave the school. Inspection evidence confirms the school's conclusion that there is a lack of ICT to support other subjects.

6. In such a short inspection it was not possible, nor intended to make judgements on standards in all subjects. However strengths were noted in music, where pupils achieve well as a result of good and very good teaching and opportunities to work with the county music service to learn instruments, and in art where good work in all three classes in two-dimensions was observed.

7. The strong commitment to raising and maintaining standards (which was noted as lacking in the report of 2000) is central to the good progress still being made. The 'School Achievement Award' from the DfEE in March 2003, and this inspection's findings, are testaments to continued success.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have good attitudes to learning and most behave well during the school day. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. The overall provision for, and standards achieved in relation to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well motivated and interested in their lessons, although some find it hard to listen for sustained periods;
- Good behaviour results from teachers' high expectations;
- Pupils are keen and willing to take on responsibility and are given good opportunities to do so, particularly in Years 3 to 6;
- Pupils are punctual and attendance levels are above the national average.

Commentary

8. The youngest children have made a confident start in the first class. They work well together, share equipment and willingly tidy up. The teacher encourages independence. Two children, completely absorbed in exploring construction kits, chattered together happily and helped each other with their model making, which was very successful.

9. Through Years 1 to 6 pupils are keen to learn and participate in many activities with enthusiasm. The vast majority concentrate well and respond to their teachers readily during discussions. However, pupils are better speakers than listeners. Some find it difficult to keep listening if introductions are overlong and can miss vital instructions. Asking one child to repeat the instructions does encourage pupils to listen right up until the time when they start their own work.

10. Good behaviour is the norm during lessons and around the school, with very good behaviour during the celebration assembly. Teachers' clear guidance and pupils' involvement in setting their own standards by agreeing class rules ensure the whole school community is aware of the high standards. There is clear teaching of right and wrong. Teachers model very good relationships, which encourage mutual respect and politeness. Relationships are good and pupils work together well in pairs and small groups. The fixed term exclusion rate is high but these exclusions are for very short periods of time, for example, an afternoon. Parents feel behaviour has improved and that bullying, if it does occur, is dealt with well. Inspectors agree with their views: standards have been sustained and built upon.

11. Pupils' personal development is fostered well. Pupils have 'jobs' to do such as watering plants, organising the hall for assembly, photocopying and collecting dinner numbers, promoting a sense of responsibility and citizenship. Older pupils act as play leaders at breaktimes, librarians enjoy devising competitions, and a number of charities are supported throughout the year. Pupils are taught about different faiths and festivals and learn about music and art from other cultures. Books and artefacts are used well to help raise pupils' awareness of different cultures but opportunities are limited for pupils to explore first hand the multicultural nature of British society. Good use is made of

the local area to enhance understanding of pupils' own culture. Assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fully meet requirements.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.5
National data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

No of pupils on roll
47

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
8	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is very much improved since the last full inspection and is now satisfactory, moving towards good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is substantially improved since the last full inspection and is now good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is good and ensures work builds on what pupils of all abilities already know and can do;
- Staff manage mixed age classes effectively;
- Teachers make good use of assessment to set targets;
- Support staff make a good contribution to the quality of teaching, especially for pupils with SEN;
- Teachers make learning objectives clear so pupils understand how what they are doing will help them;
- Staff manage behaviour consistently, notwithstanding a minority of pupils who could and sometimes do present problems;
- The pace of a minority of lessons is too slow and some lessons overrun;
- ICT is not used sufficiently to support other subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	12	3	0	0	0

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

12. All staff were observed unannounced on a variety of occasions teaching a range of different subjects. All three teachers had good lessons and two teachers very good. Particular strengths were in literacy and numeracy as a result of good planning using national guidance; good quality questioning making good links with learning objectives and involving all pupils in oral work; promoting

pupils' independent work; positive relationships; and careful consideration of pupils' individual needs. Very good lessons were in music taken by the head as a specialist in this field, and in Years 3 and 4 gymnastics where pupils were extended mentally as well as physically to work together to create sequences on apparatus.

13. Teaching is much improved since 2000 where, especially for Years 3 to 6, it was a major cause of the school's classification as being in need of special measure. Improvements are the direct result of better planning, use of now good assessment to highlight targets and modify plans; and much better monitoring by head and subject co-ordinators. The school's procedures for performance management of staff are very effective in identifying and prioritising areas for development and linking these to in-service training.

14. With better teaching and assessment pupils are challenged more effectively at their own levels. They respond with good learning and good achievement, and this is continuing to raise standards. In Years 3 to 6 where this academic year pupils are taught in two classes for almost two thirds of the week (with only 9 pupils in the Years 3 and 4 class, and 20 in Years 5 and 6) pupils often achieve very well because of good teaching.

15. Some parents expressed concerns over aspects of teaching, particularly over homework, information about the curriculum and pupils' progress, and approachability of staff. Inspectors find that homework meets expectations and is used satisfactorily to support the curriculum. Information available to parents about what is to be taught and in annual reports of how well pupils are doing, is good. It is apparent that some of parents' negative comments raised in the Ofsted questionnaire and at meetings with inspectors may well be historical without taking current practice into account. The judgement that teaching is good is based on more than simply performance in the classroom.

16. Areas for development even in this good profile of teaching are in the use of time. Some lessons go on too long, negatively affecting the following activity, and the pace of some lessons is too slow with staff spending too much time over-explaining before pupils get started.

The curriculum

The broad and well balanced curriculum enables all pupils to achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum shows very good improvement since the last inspection;
- The curriculum is now well planned, ensuring pupils build on what they have previously learned;
- Opportunities for enrichment are good;
- Pupils with special educational needs receive equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the curriculum and achieve well;
- Resources for music are good and there are good features in the resources for physical education;
- Provision for the outside play area for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is unsatisfactory;
- Aspects of ICT have not ensured pupils reach the required standards.

Commentary

17. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been improved considerably. There are policies for all subjects and areas of learning. At the same time good improvements have been made to planning, so that not only does planning reflect national advice but in many cases this advice has been adapted to suit the particular needs of the school. For example, classes are of mixed age groups and as a result, planning now reflects the needs of these different groups. At the same time, the good provision for pupils with SEN ensures that they receive full access to the broad curriculum and with good support they achieve well.

18. Whilst all curriculum subjects meet statutory requirements, in information and communication technology, the area of control, sensing and measuring is underdeveloped and as a result, pupils are not yet reaching the required standards in their work.

19. Although there are only three regular teachers, including the headteacher, the range of curriculum enrichment provided by the staff is good. It is very good in the range of sporting opportunities it offers to pupils. For example, in the appropriate seasons, there are netball and football clubs, with pupils having further opportunities to take part in cross-country and swimming. For the class with the youngest pupils, there is even a club activity so that they might participate further in games and gain extra skills.

20. Visits and visitors are used well to enliven the curriculum and the residential visit is used not only to further pupils' personal and social development, but equally to give them opportunities to explore adventurous activities, which the school would not otherwise be able to offer.

21. Overall resources are satisfactory. However, resources in music are good and give good support to the development of the subject across the school. Resources for gymnastics are good, even though it does take some time for apparatus to be retrieved from storage and set out.

22. A weakness, in terms of resources and accommodation, is that the youngest pupils have poor access to a safe secure outside play area in which they should be able to climb, run and play with a wide range of wheeled toys and other apparatus designed to improve their physical development. The school is aware of this, but has not yet been able to make this provision.

Care, guidance and support

There is good provision for the welfare, health and safety of all pupils. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance based on good assessment and teachers' very good knowledge of each individual pupil. Pupils' views and opinions are sought and valued.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well cared for during the school day;
- Good relationships across the whole school ensure pupils feel confident they will receive the help they need with their work or with any concerns;
- The school council gives pupils the opportunity to contribute their ideas to how the school is organised;
- Younger children are given good opportunities to get to know the school before they join the reception class.

Commentary

23. There is good attention to matters of health and safety. The premises are checked regularly for possible hazards and staff are trained in first aid procedures. Child protection procedures are in place and the designated teacher has received appropriate training. The highest priority was placed on the pupils' safety during their visit to 'The Mill'.

24. All adults know pupils well and give them good levels of support and guidance throughout the school day. Teachers have an accurate knowledge of pupils' levels of attainment and set them appropriate targets. Pupils know their targets and feel these, together with marking comments, help them to improve their work. Pupils are encouraged to talk to teachers, or write down their feelings if they have concerns, so teachers can follow this up and give appropriate support.

25. The inclusive nature of the school means teachers listen to and value pupils' ideas and opinions. The celebration assembly is organised by pupils, celebrates their achievements, is appreciated by them and well attended by parents. The school council is well established and the

specific school council assemblies give every child the opportunity to put forward ideas for discussion and to hear about decisions being made. Pupils are involved in deciding upon their own class rules.

26. Inspectors agree with those parents who report that their children are encouraged to become mature and independent, are treated fairly and that induction arrangements are good. Thoughtful arrangements are made for children as they join the school. Each week three year olds are invited to the 'shooting stars' group which is supported by the school and four year olds are offered part-time places. Parents say how welcome younger siblings are into the classroom at the beginning of the school day and this helps them to make a confident start when it is their turn to join the class.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established a good partnership with the vast majority of parents, but still has to win the confidence of others. Overall the partnership with parents is satisfactory. Links with the community and other schools are good and enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many parents give the school their full support;
- Parents are provided with very good quality information;
- There is still a significant number of parents who express concerns which relate to communication;
- Sporting opportunities are enhanced through working with other schools in the area.

Commentary

27. The school has worked hard to gain the confidence and support of its parents and to a large degree has been successful, with many parents expressing their satisfaction with many aspects of the school. However, some parents feel they are not well informed, their views and concerns are not addressed, and they are not comfortable about approaching the school. Inspection evidence does not fully support all these negative views.

28. The quality and range of information supplied to parents is very good. There are regular and interesting newsletters, detailed curriculum information and advice about how to help at home. The prospectus contains all that is required in sufficient detail. Reports in all classes are comprehensive and give a clear picture of how well a child is progressing, and make suggestions for the next stage of learning or areas where improvements can be made. There are regular formal consultation evenings and recently teachers have starting going down into the car park at the end of the day giving parents another opportunity to speak with them informally if they wish. Parents of infant children bring them right into class at the beginning of the day. The home-school book provides a good overview of children's work over the year. The school seeks the views of parents through a questionnaire annually and this year held a follow-up meeting to discuss the two main issues arising, homework and behaviour.

29. Members of the strong parents' association (FOBS) organise a number of events which receive support from the wider community. Pupils perform concerts in a local old people's residence as well at the village hall. The opportunity is taken to work with other schools, particularly to enhance sports opportunities. Good liaison and an organised programme of visits to secondary schools ensure pupils make a smooth transition to their next school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school is good overall. It is much improved and still improving. The leadership of the headteacher is now good. Although still negatively affected by the lack of a chair and a full quota of governors, the governance of the school is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good educational direction is guaranteed by the much improved school development plan and good strategic planning;
- Subject co-ordinators manage the curriculum well, making good use of monitoring opportunities;
- Special educational needs provision is well managed;
- The continued lack of a chair of governors has negative effects on governance;
- Communications with a group of disaffected parents have not been well managed.

Commentary

30. Substantial improvements to leadership and management since the school was put into special measures in 2000 have had very positive effects. As a result of much better management of the curriculum and assessment, teaching is much more effective, and consequently pupils are achieving appropriately, and in the case of pupils with SEN and those in Years 3 to 6, well.

31. The head ensures the school has good educational direction by drawing together contributions from staff and governors into a good development plan. This is well costed and prioritised and is proving a good tool to take the school forward. Good use is made of finance and considerable improvements to accommodation, resources (notably for ICT), and the learning environment have been achieved through very good use of grants and the budget. Two new classrooms, a revamped library and the release of the hall for PE, assemblies and lunches, are having very positive impacts.

32. There is evidence of the staff working very well together in planning and monitoring as a very good team towards the primary aim of raising standards. This shows very good improvement since the last full report and that the positives of the follow up HMI report are being sustained. Good examples of more effective leadership and management are in:

- The consistent approach to behaviour through rewards and sanctions, with a very low incidence of bullying;
- Good SEN provision with good systems to assess and set targets for pupils in individual education plans;
- The school's now good curriculum, with all requirements now met (including very good improvements to Foundation Stage planning) from a situation described as poor two years ago.

33. Whilst governors give the school good support and are effective in their work in committees, contributing to the management of finance, the buildings, and personnel, the continued absence of a designated chair person leaves the school vulnerable. For example lack of a chair to act as a mediator between the head and a minority of parents with negative comments about approachability and the effectiveness of management, has contributed to weaknesses in communication. This has had a negative impact on the school's reputation, which in the light of very good improvement, is unjustified.

34. All issues raised by previous inspections have been, and continue to be, addressed with considerable success. Staff and governors are to be congratulated on turning the school around within a relatively short time. There is a good appreciation of strengths and areas for improvement and a common commitment to raising and sustaining standards. With good relationships and positive attitudes from the vast majority of pupils for most of the time this contributes to the school's

good, and much improved, ethos. The school is aware that access and providing more resources for outdoor Foundation Stage activities (especially for climbing equipment) are areas for further development.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	172318
Total expenditure	159653
Expenditure per pupil	2705

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	7318
Balance carried forward to the next	16098

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 **good** and still improving. The majority of children are on line to reach the goals expected of them by the time they complete reception. Teaching is good and sometimes better with good contributions from learning support assistants.

During the inspection there were only five children in reception and only two of these were full time, consequently it was not possible to draw detailed conclusions about standards and teaching from direct observation in all areas of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children now in reception achieve well, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and in communication skills, although there is room to develop skills of listening further;
- Teaching is consistently good. Staff manage reception children well as part of a class with Years 1 and 2;
- Accommodation is satisfactory but children's achievement in physical development is hampered by the lack of direct access to the outside and suitable climbing equipment;
- Most children will achieve the goals expected of this age group by the time they are six.

Commentary

35. Achievement is good in **personal, social and emotional development** and children make good progress. Even after only a few weeks they have settled quickly into the routines of school because of effective teaching and good support from the learning support assistant (LSA). Good relationships and good questioning from adults help children understand the difference between right and wrong, and what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Staff set up a good range of activities that encourage children to share and take turns: for example in making group firework paintings. Children respond well and show consideration for others. They are already able to work and play 'unsupervised' in ways that demonstrate a growing independence. Children behave well.

36. In **communication, language and literacy** achievement is good. Children are taught the importance of speaking carefully and taking turns in discussions. Although their listening skills are below expectations they are making good progress in communicating with other children, some of whom are older than themselves. There are opportunities for children to speak with and listen to adults and each other. For example as part of literacy time children listened carefully to a story from a big book and tried hard to suggest what would happen next. Well chosen texts, together with a programme of sounding out letters and blends (phonics), are used very well to help children 'read' words in familiar contexts. Children are taught the correct way to shape letters and all attempts to commit ideas to paper are encouraged and valued. Copy writing helps to improve control of writing implements. By the end of reception children can write their names unaided and the more able can write and recognise simple sentences.

37. Achievement in **mathematical development** is satisfactory and children make sound progress. Children learn to count and sequence numbers to ten and through weighing, counting and measuring begin to make comparisons such as smaller than and more than. They sort by shape, size and colour and are beginning to identify characteristics. Children are introduced to correct mathematical vocabulary for simple shapes and are introduced to simple addition and subtraction through games such as 'What's missing?' and rhymes and songs. Teaching is good and helps children to reach the desired goals from a generally below average start.

38. In **knowledge and understanding of the world** children's achievement is satisfactory and good progress is made. Topics like 'Special places', contribute very well to children's awareness,

and art work on drawing themselves and each other helps children to explore their bodies and individual differences. Children are encouraged to use their senses and gain lots of hands on experience. Although limited by lack of access appropriate use is made of the outdoor space to explore, play and search for patterns and shapes in buildings and nature. Children have sufficient opportunities to use computers and develop mouse and keyboard skills: for example to dress teddy on screen. ICT teaching observed with this age group as part of a mixed age class was good.

39. Achievement in **physical development** is satisfactory. Children make use of tools, scissors, writing equipment, paint brushes, and construction toys with increasing control with positive effects on their fine control skills. In an outdoor play session children made good use of space and showed satisfactory awareness of what their bodies could do in running, kicking and throwing. The lack of equipment and ready access to the outdoor space restricts what children can do. However the class timetable shows that appropriate use is made of the hall in formal PE lessons with Years 1 and 2 pupils.

40. From as far as the limited opportunities to observe in this aspect would allow it is possible to say that in **creative development** children's achievement is at least sound. Children enjoy drawing, painting and making collages. They make use of dressing up clothes to get into role play, readily taking turns. There are good links made in planning between creative play and language development and this indicates teaching is good. In music lessons staff encourage children to handle and play a range of percussion instruments and 'perform' to classmates. They are able to follow a rhythm and obviously enjoy singing rhymes and songs.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving well in English overall;
- Pupils' standards of reading have been maintained since the last inspection;
- The co-ordination of English in the school has improved since the last inspection and is now good;
- Assessment has improved and now leads to targets being set carefully for individual pupils and classes;
- Teaching of English is good overall;
- Pupils do not listen carefully enough to instructions, neither are they able to bring their previous learning to bear on current work in writing.

Commentary

41. Although in the national tests the school was seen as well below the national average, the group of Year 6 pupils was very small and comparisons against other schools were inappropriate. Standards seen in classes during the inspection show that reading is at least satisfactory in both Year 2 and Year 6, with a significant proportion of pupils reading above national standards. More importantly, when considering the below average level of communication and language skills noted when pupils enter the school, pupils have achieved well by the end of their time in the school.

42. Part of the success in the levels of achievement noted is the improvement noted in the teaching of English. Teachers have a good command of the subject matter and work well to the suggestions of the National Literacy Strategy. They plan well for the range of abilities and ages in their classes and work very hard to engage pupils and encourage them. As a result, pupils' attitudes to English are good and pupils enjoy English lessons. In a lesson observed in the Years 3 and 4 class pupils were

fully involved in a lesson to improve their spelling and as a result they made very good progress in their learning during the lesson.

43. The co-ordination of English has seen very good improvement since the last inspection and now ensures the quality of teaching and learning are both good. The curriculum is now better adapted to the needs of pupils and assessment is now an important tool for helping pupils' improve. Regular half termly assessments in writing lead to target setting which often focuses on weaker areas of the subject such as spelling and punctuation. More general class targets for English are noted on display in classrooms, ensuring pupils see them on a daily basis.

44. A weakness in English, but more importantly a general weakness throughout the school, is that pupils do not listen careful enough when teachers or their classmates are speaking. As a result they often begin their work without understanding what they have to do and then have to ask questions or get further advice. At the same time, they often miss important points of information, which they could have used in their work. The school does not yet have quite enough strategies to cope with this problem.

45. A further area of concern is that whilst pupils have good instruction on spelling rules and how to use punctuation, when they are faced with an opportunity to write freely, they appear to forget the rules and make far too many mistakes. Whilst teachers try to consolidate learning by recapping on previous work at the start of lessons, this is not yet sufficient to ensure pupils can recall and use skills which they have previously learned. Writing is still an issue to be improved by the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

46. Pupils use their language and literacy skills satisfactorily in other subjects. Opportunities exist for them to write notes, letters, informative text and descriptions of important people: for example in history work. However, even being given extra writing opportunities, pupils still make far too many basic mistakes in both spelling and punctuation.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**. Much improved planning and teaching having positive effects on standards, which have moved from unsatisfactory to broadly average since the last full inspection in 2000.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Numeracy standards are average and for higher attaining pupils above average;
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall with good features in numeracy, and good throughout the subject for pupils with SEN;
- Teaching is good based on good planning which adapts national programmes and guidance well to the needs of pupils and seeks to provide work at differing ages and ability levels in the same class;
- The school is aware of the need to extend opportunities for pupils to use and apply basic skills in problem solving.

Commentary

47. Standards are consistent with what is expected at ages seven and eleven. Inspection evidence from both last and this year shows that pupils have plenty of experience in handling numbers and that the effects of much improved planning, assessment and teaching have led to greater accuracy and clearer understanding. For example Year 2 pupils have a sound awareness of place value to 100 and can solve simple problems of addition and subtraction involving money. Most Year 6 pupils are able to use the four rules to work out answers and the more able are readily checking their work using a combination of estimation and logic.

48. Throughout the school pupils have satisfactory skills associated with shape, space and measures. There is room to further develop the use of ICT in data handling: for example in graphs and pie charts, and to provide more opportunities for pupils to work out strategies to solve problems by applying what they know. However, scrutiny of past work and reference to previous reports show considerable progress has been made.

49. With few pupils in each year group (three in Year 2 and nine in Year 6 in summer 2003) statistics generated from SATs tests are unreliable, particularly when SEN levels are high and there are large proportions of pupils who join the school at times other than in reception. Consequently results of national tests are not included in this report. However the school does analyse trends and use information to help modify planning and set targets for improvement and this is an indication of good management in maths. There is a strong commitment to raising and consolidating standards and good levels of co-operation amongst staff in assessing and recording to ensure continuity year on year.

50. Improvement in maths since 2000 is judged very good, not least of which is in the quality of teaching, now seen as good. This is underpinned by a good scheme of work and teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Big improvements to expectations and the clarity of learning objectives ensure that staff and pupils know what will bring about further improvement. This continues to have positive impacts on the quality of pupils' learning, which is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. Maths is used satisfactorily to support other subjects: for example in measuring in design and technology and in presenting data for geography and history.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good;
- The subject co-ordinator leads science well and to good effect;
- Standards have improved since the last full inspection and nearly all pupils achieve well;
- There is a good assessment system for science;
- Few pupils reach levels above those expected nationally for their age;
- The school is right to focus further development on pupils' investigative skills;
- Not enough emphasis is placed on the use of literacy skills in science.

Commentary

52. As the inspection was quite early in the school year, there was only a limited amount of work available by current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. However, examination of this, together with work from the previous year, indicates that the vast majority of pupils were working at levels expected nationally for their age. Bearing in mind that many of the pupils enter school with below average attainment, this shows that they are achieving well by the time they leave the school. At the last full inspection, standards were noted as 'well below' the national average. Classroom observations and the scrutiny of work show that the situation has improved and most pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach the expected level 4 next year.

53. At this stage of the year, whilst it is difficult to predict how many pupils may achieve standards higher than the national average, over the recent past only a small percentage have accomplished this. Planning sheets indicate that there is not yet enough emphasis placed on directing work specifically for the very small number of pupils who may reach the higher level. It is often left to

revision time before the national tests are taken and not built upon systematically throughout the year.

54. In spite of this, observation of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work show teaching is satisfactory overall, but better in the two classes of older pupils. Key features of the good teaching are good coverage of the scheme of work, regular opportunities to carry out investigations, good questioning techniques and good emphasis placed on the use of technical vocabulary. Strength across the school is noted in the assessment procedures put in place by the subject co-ordinator. These allow, on a unit by unit basis, class teachers to see how effective both teaching and learning have been and, where appropriate, to make changes to planning and teaching to take account of the information they gather.

55. The area for further development is that of investigational science. Whilst this does take place in all classes, pupils make insufficient progress in this aspect and its links with pupils' literacy skills are not yet good enough. Pupils are not yet able to make clear hypotheses or predictions about what might happen in their experiments. They have difficulty in recalling other aspects of science in order to help them with this. Their writing and use of literacy skills is fragmented. Pupils are not given enough support, through the use of writing frames, so that not only might they approach their work more methodically, but that they might write in a clearer and more concise way. The effective subject co-ordinator is aware of this and the lack of ICT used to support science. She is looking to make improvements during the course of the year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT continues to improve and is currently **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are good;
- The subject is very well managed and is rapidly improving as a result;
- Because new initiatives have not had time to work through, older pupils have not covered all required aspects of the subject in enough detail;
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are below expectations, most notably in the elements of 'control and modelling';
- Too little use is made of ICT to support other subjects.

Commentary

56. The last full report noted that standards at Year 2 were below expectations and well below for Year 6. Very good improvements to management, planning, teaching and resources are having significant improvements on provision and outcomes. The very good co-ordinator makes a substantial contribution in moving the subject forward and provides a good role model for staff and pupils alike.

57. Standards are now satisfactory for seven year olds. Most pupils have at least sound keyboard and mouse skills and can load, control and save programs and their work before printing. Pupils appear confident in their own ability and the more able can talk about how computers contribute to everyday life.

58. Eleven year old pupils have had too little opportunity to use computers and have not covered all elements in sufficient depth to reach the standards expected of this age nationally. For example they are not able to describe how to interrogate information on a database, and have had too little chance to use sensors to control events and work with simulations to explore patterns and relationships. There are good features in moves to create multimedia presentations and make use of the Internet and CD ROMs for research. Pupils use video conferencing successfully with other schools. This is a very good application of ICT, and a very good example to pupils in how information technology can be used very effectively in communications.

59. There was little opportunity to observe teaching in ICT with only one lesson seen. Consequently it is not possible to judge the overall quality of this aspect of provision. However in the lesson observed (for younger pupils) teaching was good. The teacher had good confidence, knowledge and understanding and made good use of resources. Her questioning was good and all pupils were involved in the activity. Scrutiny of planning, records and the school's good intentions for assessment, points to teaching being at least satisfactory, and improved, throughout the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. The school is aware that too little use is made of ICT to support other subjects and has plans to improve this. However there is as yet insufficient reference in schemes of work as to how ICT will be utilised for other curriculum areas.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject has been developed well over the recent past;
- Pupils achieve well in geography;
- Teaching of geography is good.

Commentary

61. Standards in geography match expectations for pupils' ages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, an improvement since the last inspection. Almost all pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve well, including pupils with special educational needs. The subject co-ordinator has developed the subject well over the last two years, putting in place a four year scheme of work, taking into account the mixed age classes. She has introduced an assessment system which helps track pupils' progress and has started a portfolio of work to illustrate standards.

62. Teaching in the two lessons observed was good. Strengths of teaching are teachers' subject knowledge and emphasis on questioning and enquiry. For example in a lesson on settlement, the teacher had prepared a map of an imaginary island and let pupils recount where they would settle, based on having water, trees and safety. Pupils responded well to this, although some were more interested in speaking than listening.

HISTORY

63. No history lessons were seen. However, there is every indication from the previously completed work, that standards are broadly average, but that the development of historical skills is not as far advanced as the development of geographical skills. These standards are similar to those which were noted at the last inspection. There are indications that provision in history is satisfactory.

64. Previously completed work on Victorians shows that pupils have had good opportunities of using their literacy skills as they describe life in Victorian times from photographs. They have a sound sense of the chronology of the period and have had opportunities to examine artefacts when their own classroom was converted into a Victorian class for two weeks. Pupils have been able to link work in information and communication technology with their work in history by using the Internet to find out about education in this period of history.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The subject and pupils' standards have improved since the last inspection;
- Good opportunities exist for links between religious education and literacy;
- The subject has been enlivened by a visit and by visitors;
- Resources for religious education are not as good as they should be.

Commentary

65. Standards of work seen during the inspection in Year 2 were in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Previously completed work for the remainder of pupils indicates that here too, work was in line with expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are now achieving well and making at least sound progress in gaining knowledge about religion and learning from religion.

66. Good links are made between work in religious education and pupils' growing literacy skills. For example, one class wrote letters to Noah, writing as if they were God warning Noah of what was going to happen. Year 6 pupils re-wrote two different accounts of the Creation, whilst later they looked and wrote about the way different painters represented the Easter story.

67. A visit to Exeter cathedral gave pupils a very good opportunity to see a place of some significance to local Christians. Pupils mapped the building, wrote about their Top Ten favourite parts and drew pieces of furniture or decorations. Christian and Hindu visitors to the school have shared their views of religion with pupils so that they might understand how different people worship. This gave good support to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

68. Many of the resources which the school possesses are getting a little old and regularly have to be supplemented by loan material and books from the library service. The school would do well to audit the stock and begin to replace its old material with new.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. This curriculum area was not a focus for the inspection and as a result there is insufficient evidence to make detailed judgements about provision or teaching. Two lessons were observed in art, one in music and one in gymnastics. No lessons were seen in **design and technology** although there were good examples of pupils designing, making and evaluating shoes on display.

70. From limited evidence of the two lessons, pupils' work past and present and displays around the school it is possible to conclude that standards in two-dimensional **art and design** are good. Particularly good work was noted in observational drawing for older pupils making excellent use of the opportunity to visit the local mill, and good standards were evident in still life studies of shoes and bridges.

71. Strengths were seen in the teaching of **music** by the head with reception and Years 1 and 2, making very good use of her specialist expertise. Pupils were provided with plenty of hands on experience. They achieved well and made good progress to reach above average standards in work on short and long sounds. There is a good portfolio of pupils' work in music to help the school gauge standards and progress.

72. In a very good gymnastics lesson for Years 3 and 4 the teacher showed very good awareness of **physical education**. Pupils were extended mentally as well as physically and significantly improved their performance and control because of the input from the teacher and observing others' efforts. Planning shows all required elements of the subject are covered and that there is strength

both in provision for extracurricular activities and in the school's commitment to join with other schools to promote sport.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

73. Although this was not an area of major focus for the inspection and there was insufficient evidence to make judgements in detail, it appears that provision in personal, social and health education is **good**. The appointment of a co-ordinator and the introduction of a scheme of work which takes good account of personal development, and drugs and alcohol misuse awareness, whilst making appropriate provision for sex education, are positive features and link well with the school's noted good care of pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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