

INSPECTION REPORT

CHARMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Charmouth

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113662

Headteacher: Mr Chris Vincent

Lead inspector: Mrs E W D Gill

Dates of inspection: 29 September – 1 October 2003

Inspection number: 255761

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:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	176
School address:	Lower Sea Lane Charmouth Dorset
Postcode:	DT6 6LR
Telephone number:	01297 560591
Fax number:	01297 560591
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Charmouth Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Howard Wickes
Date of previous inspection:	May, 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Charmouth Primary School serves the large village of Charmouth as well as the surrounding area. It is oversubscribed in most year groups. The school is located overlooking a beautiful beach and cliffs that are rich in fossils and part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The socio-economic factors are broadly average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average with a wide range of abilities. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has doubled since the last inspection and is broadly average. The range of needs covers mostly moderate learning difficulties and complex speech and language problems. The number of boys with special educational needs is high and most are in Years 3 to 6. The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is small and confined mostly to pupils from other European countries. The number of pupils who have joined or left the school other than at the usual times of joining and leaving is broadly average. The school received an Achievement Award from the Department of Education and Skills in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17766	Mrs Eira Gill	Lead inspector	English, art, music, foundation stage curriculum and special educational needs
9646	Mrs Geraldine Osment	Lay inspector	
2756	Mr Michael Barron	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology and physical education
20951	Mr Philip Littlejohn	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history and religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Charmouth Primary School provides a good education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good and enable all pupils to make better than expected progress. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and the small number from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well. The curriculum is enriched by effective use of the school's location. Leadership and management are good and have had a considerable impact on raising achievement since the last inspection. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision for the children in reception is good and the use of assessment to record their progress is very good.
- Standards throughout the school are above average and achievement is good in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and geography.
- Teaching is good overall and very good for the oldest pupils, although a few aspects of the teaching of writing need improving.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The headteacher is a very effective leader and manager; he is ably assisted by the deputy headteacher.
- Good links with parents and very good links with the community and other schools in the area have a considerable impact on the good achievement of all pupils.
- The school's strong caring ethos and good provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development are reflected well in the pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour.
- Pupils' attainment is not recorded formally in Years 1 to 6, except in English and mathematics, where assessment is used very well.
- Pupils' skills to be prepared for living in a multicultural society need to be developed further.

There has been very good improvement since the school was inspected in 1998. The headteacher and governors have had significant staffing problems to deal with and these have now been resolved successfully. The significant number of key issues has been tackled very successfully. These related to leadership and management, standards and achievement, teaching and learning and several other aspects of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	Year 2000	Year 2001	Year 2002	Year 2002
English	C	B	B	B
Mathematics	B	A	E	E
Science	B	A	C	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Caution is needed in interpreting data because the numbers of pupils in a year group are smaller than national averages, and results can thus fluctuate from year to year.

Achievement is good throughout the school. A significant majority of pupils will exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in all the areas of learning. In Years 1 to 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. In Years 3 to 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, and average in religious education, although standards in writing are not as high as in reading. By the end of Year 6, standards in geography are above average. The results for mathematics in the above table for 2002 show well below average attainment compared to similar schools in 2002. However, results in 2003, although yet to be ratified, show that this weakness has been addressed due to the school's more focused teaching of the skills of enquiry and investigation. This is also the case in science, where results were average in the above table compared to similar schools. Pupils achieved well in mathematics and evidence from the inspection confirms this.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning and behave **well** in lessons and around the school. Attendance is **satisfactory** and pupils arrive at school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is good in reception and good overall in Years 1 to 6. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching in one in three lessons is very good. However, the teaching of writing needs more focus, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In reception, children achieve well because they are provided with an interesting variety of very well planned experiences across all areas of learning. The use of assessment information to meet the children's individual needs is very good. In Years 1 to 6, teachers' use of assessment information to plan work for pupils of different abilities is satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good and meets their individual needs. The curriculum is good and enriched by the inclusion of aspects of the local coastal features. Good levels of care help pupils to feel secure and happy in school. Effective links with parents and very good links with the community and other schools have a positive effect on achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Very effective leadership and management by the headteacher have had a significant impact on achievement for all pupils. The leadership and management of other key members of staff are good. The work of governors is satisfactory. Although the Chair is experienced and effective in his role, a few governors are new and not all play a full part in strategic management.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents are satisfied with all aspects of the school. A very few voiced their dissatisfaction at the parents' meeting before the inspection with the school's provision for SEN. These concerns were investigated fully and found that the school had followed its agreed procedures. The new SEN co-ordinator has raised the level of parental involvement significantly. Pupils are happy with all aspects of the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Include more focus and rigour in the teaching of writing in Years 3 to 5, particularly in marking, in order to raise standards.
- Ensure that pupils' attainment is recorded formally in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Develop further the pupils' skills for living in a multicultural society.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage and for Years 1 to 6 is **good**. Standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and geography are **above average** by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve **average** standards in design and technology, physical education and religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in reception because the quality of education provided is consistently good and meets their individual needs;
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 owing to good teaching;
- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 due to good and, sometimes, very good teaching;
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress because they receive effective and regular support from the assistants.

Commentary

1. The school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 declined in 2002 in reading and writing but improved to well above average in reading and above average in writing in 2003. The school's trend in performance for pupils in Year 6 is in line with the national trend although, in mathematics, in the national tests in 2002, standards of attainment fell to below average. However, in 2003, standards have improved significantly and are above average. The results for that year have yet to be ratified.
2. By the end of reception, children exceed the expected standards in the early learning goals in all areas of learning in **personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development**. This good achievement is due to the good induction procedures and effective teaching as well as the very good relationships between all the adults that work in the reception class and between the children. Very good planning and assessment also has a positive effect on the good achievement.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.1 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.0 (14.2)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	17.1 (17.0)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (28.4)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.5 (28.4)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	28.8 (30.1)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics and this is in line with the results indicated by the provisional analysis of the 2003 national tests. These showed a good improvement from the results in 2002 in the above table. In Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, ICT and geography. Standards have improved significantly in science, ICT and geography at the end of Years 2 and 6 since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be below average and achievement was unsatisfactory. In design and technology also, standards have improved to average from below average. In English and mathematics, above average standards have been maintained.
4. Pupils have achieved well in reception and at the end of Years 2 and 6 when average attainment on entry is taken into consideration; standards since the last inspection have significantly improved in science and ICT; the trends in performance are in line with the national trend and the school's analysis of pupils' progress shows that the pupils with special educational needs made better than expected progress in the national tests in 2003.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and this, again, is an improvement from the last inspection when this group of pupils were identified as not making good progress. The needs of all pupils are now supported well in lessons by good planning and imaginative methods of teaching. In addition there is good use of teaching assistants throughout the school and very good use in Years 3 to 6. A few of the assistants are very well qualified and show significant skills in their teaching. Improvement in achievement is also due to the good leadership and management shown by the subject leaders of English, mathematics, ICT and geography. They have been effective in monitoring and implementation of planning. However, in science, ICT and geography, formal assessment to fine-tune planning even further is not in place.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their attendance is **satisfactory**. Other aspects of pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very interested in school life;
- Pupils are very willing to take responsibility;
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good and a high degree of racial harmony is promoted by the school;
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem is good;
- The school stimulates well a desire to learn in the pupils and sets high expectations for their conduct;
- The school deals very effectively with all forms of harassment;
- Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong and show respect for the beliefs and feelings of others;
- Pupils' awareness of cultural diversity needs developing.

Commentary

6. The attendance rate at the school is satisfactory. However, during the inspection a higher than usual number of pupils was absent due to a virulent sickness bug. Parents and carers show good support for the school in the way they endeavour to get their children to school regularly and on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
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
White – any other White background
Mixed – any other mixed background
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
152
5
2
5

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
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.

7. Pupils show great interest and curiosity in lessons and most concentrate very well on their work. There has been a significant improvement in the way teachers plan their lessons and this is having an impact on learning, which is good. The several after-school clubs as well as those that take place during the school day are very popular with the pupils and 39 pupils attend the French club. Behaviour is good in lessons, around the school and on the playground. Playtime is a happy, enjoyable occasion. Pupils write their own classroom rules, have a democratic vote to decide on those that are most important and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. Their moral development is good. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them from all the teachers, who are consistent in their expectations of behaviour. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting, parents confirmed that behaviour is good and that if there is any bullying or intimidation, the school quickly acts to resolve the problems. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with each other and with all the adults in the school. Pupils from different backgrounds mix well together.
8. The older pupils have several opportunities for taking on additional responsibility and they respond well to them. Pupils look after the younger children during open assemblies as well as in the 'Monday Club', which is attended by the pre-school children. In addition, the school vegetable garden needs daily attention and the pupils show good attitudes towards the need for watering and weeding. Although there is no School Council as yet, the older pupils are mature and say that the teachers give them plenty of chances to offer ideas to the school and to be enterprising. Their work as junior wardens in the coast heritage centre raises their awareness of the need to be creative and to think for themselves. All these responsibilities give the pupils confidence and impact on their achievement, which is good. As a result of the school's good provision in all these aspects, most pupils are becoming mature and responsible members of the school community. The children in reception will exceed the early learning goals in the area of personal, social and emotional development.
9. Pupils show a good level of respect for the feelings and beliefs of others and are given time to reflect on these feelings in assemblies and in class lessons. The school is involved in a charity called 'Food for Thought' that is concerned with sustainability and farming. The deputy headteacher visited Uganda in the summer, setting up links with the school, and teachers from the Ugandan school will arrive shortly after the inspection. This is already having an impact on the pupils' cultural development and will link very positively with the gardens created by the school. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and the influences acting upon it, such as the recognition that they have a national heritage coastline on their doorstep. In addition, they have been involved in drama and musical productions that celebrate English traditions. However, there is little opportunity to experience or to have an understanding of life within a multicultural society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The strongest features of the provision include a high percentage of very good teaching and learning for the older pupils, very good assessment and planning in the Foundation Stage and an enriched curriculum. In addition, the use of the accommodation is good and there are very good links with the community and other schools. Areas needing improvement are the use of assessment to inform planning and teaching in Years 1 to 6, aspects of the teaching of writing in Years 3 to 5 and the annual reports to parents that do not give enough information about their children's achievement.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. It is **good** in reception and in Years 1 to 6 with **very good** teaching for the oldest pupils. Assessment in reception is **very good** and, in Years 1 to 6, it is **satisfactory** overall and good in English and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach;
- Planning is very good in reception and good throughout the rest of the school;
- Teaching methods are effective and help pupils achieve their capabilities;
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupil behaviour;
- Teaching support staff are used well and work effectively with teachers to aid learning in Years 1 to 2; they are used very well throughout the rest of the school;
- Assessment is very good in Reception and good in Years 3 to 6 in mathematics and English but is not used fully in other subjects;
- Pupils are treated equally and with respect and are given good opportunities to apply themselves to their learning;
- Pupils are given few opportunities to work independently in lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	6 (17%)	22 (63%)	6 (17%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

10. There are a number of good features of teaching in the reception class that contribute to pupils' good achievement. The teamwork between teacher and assistants is effective and ensures that each morning's activities are well organised and run smoothly. All adults who work in reception are knowledgeable about the curriculum and are effective at encouraging and engaging the children in learning. As a result, children acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate and develop their capacity for concentration. Activities are planned very well and this provides opportunities for children to work and play both collaboratively and independently. Very effective use is made of ongoing assessment to track children's progress in each area of learning.
11. The headteacher has worked very hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning since his appointment five and a half years ago and has been very successful. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection and this has been a key factor in raising standards, especially in English and mathematics where ongoing assessment to track pupils' progress has been used well to plan future learning, especially that of older pupils. Teaching methods are effective and lesson planning builds on pupils' previous learning. Teachers now have better subject knowledge than that reported in the last inspection and, as a result, standards and achievement have improved, sometimes quite markedly, for example in science.
12. Most teaching observed during the inspection was at least good and no lessons were less than satisfactory. It was evident that pupils worked well and productively and had good attitudes to learning. When teaching was judged to be very good or better it was stimulating and consistently challenging. In

these lessons, teaching methods were imaginative and engaged the full attention of all pupils. For example, learning and achievement were both very good in a Year 6 ICT lesson about using spreadsheets because the teacher ensured that the tasks were very well matched to pupils' capabilities and the inventive teaching methods made pupils *think* about what they were doing at all times.

13. A strong feature of teaching throughout the school is the way in which very effective partnerships have been developed between teachers and teaching support staff, especially teaching assistants whose skills and expertise are used well to support the learning of all groups of pupils. This has had a beneficial effect on achievement and has helped to raise standards. For example, a teaching assistant taught ICT to groups of Year 2 pupils in the school's suite in an observed session. Her secure subject knowledge and teaching skills were used to good effect and pupils' understanding of how to present data in graph form increased as a result.
14. Whilst teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and ensure that all pupils, regardless of their individual circumstances, are treated equally and with respect, pupils are given few opportunities to work independently or collaboratively and, as a result, sometimes find doing so difficult. This was evident in some observed lessons. For example, in a Year 5 physical education lesson, a minority of pupils found working as a group nearly impossible and became noisy and inattentive. As a result, the teacher had to intervene several times to bring the lesson to order and this affected the flow of the session and the achievement of other pupils.
15. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is a mixture of assistants giving support alongside pupils in lessons and a few occasions when pupils are withdrawn for very focused work on literacy and numeracy skills. As a result of good use of the individual education plans, the work is very well focused on pupils' needs and they achieve well.
16. Assessment is used very effectively in the reception class to track pupils' overall progress. Very good school tracking systems are in place to assess pupils' learning in English and mathematics in the end of year tests and teachers use this assessment well to plan future work. However, the school has no systems in place to formally assess pupils' achievement in other subjects, including science and ICT. As a result, teachers rely on their day-to-day knowledge of the pupils' progress. Whilst regular marking of work was evident, there was little evidence of it being used to indicate to the pupils what they need to learn next although examples of good marking were in evidence in Year 6, and in Year 4 last year. The use of assessment at all levels to inform provision was criticised by the previous inspection and the school has yet to fully address this issue.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided at Charmouth Primary School is **good**. The provision the school gives to support pupils' learning outside of the school day and to develop their range of interests is **good**. The **very good** accommodation and **good** resources support the implementation of the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Breadth and balance of the curriculum is now good; a significant improvement since the previous inspection;
- The school environment and its location are used imaginatively to enrich the curriculum;
- Provision for science, geography and ICT has significantly improved since the previous inspection and is now good;
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors who support learning;
- The provision for personal, social and health education is good and aids the pupils' development well;
- The school's staffing in terms of teachers and support staff is good and assists the teaching of the curriculum;
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and ensures that their good achievement matches that of other pupils.

Commentary

17. The school has reviewed effectively its curricular provision following the change to single aged classes this term. The new planning documents reflect this and are detailed and thorough.

Teachers, from this term, will teach all the subjects of the curriculum. This is a significant change because specialist teachers taught several subjects. Due weight is given to teaching subjects, where possible, linked to themes, such as transport, while ensuring that individual subjects are taught in sufficient depth. These changes have been managed very well by the deputy headteacher, who is the leader of the curriculum. Teachers' planning is good and shows appropriate coverage of the curriculum. The design of the curriculum takes full account of the needs of the pupils with special educational needs as well as those from different ethnic backgrounds. High attaining pupils have every opportunity to shine either in lessons, where their needs are met well, or in the many extra-curricular activities that cover languages, music, care of the environment and sport.

18. The curriculum for children in reception is varied and interesting, incorporating all areas of learning successfully into broad topics and themes. It is very well planned and carefully monitored by the Foundation Stage manager. It makes a significant contribution to the children's good achievement.
19. The school environment is used very effectively to enhance the quality of the curriculum particularly in science and geography, and there are very good links with all aspects of the school's provision:
 - Pupils grow their own flowers and vegetables;
 - Pupils learn how to make soup with the vegetables and serve it appropriately to the staff;
 - Pupils have planned and created a butterfly garden;
 - Groups of pupils collect data about which birds and butterflies are feeding in the gardens;
 - Pupils display the results of their findings effectively in the school entrance using ICT;
 - Pupils are learning to be 'Heritage Coast Centre Young Wardens' and contribute to conserving the environment.
20. These activities are having a significant impact on pupils' personal development as they are given the responsibility to water, weed and grow flowers and vegetables for the gardens. In addition, there are links with the healthy eating programme adopted by the school and supported by the parents. Aspects of personal and social education are taught as a discrete subject and incorporated within circle time when the pupils sit in a circle with their teacher and are able to share any successes they may have achieved or air problems they may be experiencing. Teachers promote pupils' personal development through their teaching and one good example was observed in Year 6 when the pupils were refining their interviewing and spoken language skills before they interviewed visitors to the beach.
21. The number of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is good. There are several clubs organised either after school or at lunchtime to enhance the curriculum including yoga, French, netball, football, gardening, recorders and the young wardens club at the heritage centre. These clubs are very popular with the pupils and well attended and 39 pupils attend the French club. Regular visitors to the school include local clergy who take part in school assemblies as well as groups of professional musicians and actors. Day visits that link with units of work in history and geography are organised for different year groups and the residential visit is particularly effective in enhancing learning in several subjects of the curriculum. The residential visit is organised every other year for the pupils in both Years 5 and 6 classes.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has a generous number of teaching assistants and support teachers and this enables pupils' needs to be well met throughout the school. As a result, there is very good access to the curriculum and opportunity for all pupils to make progress. The new manager has changed the emphasis of the individual education plans (IEPs) significantly. The IEPs are now organised by the teachers with her support. Although they have improved, and parental and pupil input is given far more emphasis, the targets are too general and the success or otherwise of pupils reaching their targets will be difficult to judge. However, the manager is already aware of this and intends to review all IEPs. All parents with children who have IEPs have been invited into the school to discuss them with the teachers and SEN manager.
23. Opportunities to develop the use of literacy in other subjects are satisfactory and have been used, for example, in history where last year's Year 6 pupils have written about life in Britain since 1948. Good use of literacy skills was observed during the inspection when pupils were given opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills while pretending to be tourists searching for a holiday site. The school is

emphasising the need to develop speaking and listening skills in all year groups and this was evident in DT and art. The use of numeracy skills in other subjects has included scientific recording of data in pupils' observations of birds and butterflies visiting the flowers and feeders in their garden. In ICT, pupils were using the 24 hour clock to produce graphs.

24. The school is housed in a very attractive modern building that is maintained to a high standard and fully accessible to any disabled adults or children. Even the gardening plots are raised and easily reached by a person in a wheelchair. The staff use all areas of the building effectively to improve the quality of education and to raise pupils' achievement. A good example is the change of use of the kitchen to a cookery room adapted for young pupils. The attractive Seashore Garden was designed by the children and funded by the The Dorset Gardens Trust and the school's PTA. The ICT suite is networked to computers in the classrooms enabling the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects. The headteacher has developed the school website that gives potential parents useful information. Parents can also download newsletters giving information on school activities. Resources to aid pupils' learning are good and pupils, in conversation, make it very clear they are proud of their school.
25. The headteacher has been the driving force to enrich the curriculum further. His initiatives to ensure that good use is made of the coastal environment have had a significant impact on raising achievement in several subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support for pupils are **good**. Health and safety procedures are **satisfactory**. Achievement and personal development are monitored **well**. The involvement of the pupils in the school's work and development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good relationships with the adults in the school;
- Adults know pupils very well and provide good levels of care for their well-being;
- Pupils' involvement in the work and development of the school are satisfactory;
- The induction arrangements for the children in reception are good.

Commentary

26. The headteacher and caretaker take responsibility for routine health and safety checks. Governors make the required risk assessments of the site and school building. The school is clean, tidy and in very good condition. Arrangements for child protection are good and have improved since the previous inspection. First aid procedures are appropriate and pupils are well supervised at lunch and break-times.
27. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a high percentage of pupils show that they feel very confident to go a specific adult in the school if they are worried. This confidence was confirmed in discussion with a group of older pupils during the inspection. Throughout the school there are very good relationships between pupils and adults. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good and teachers and assistants know the pupils very well. Pupils receive appropriate support for the improvement of their work on a day-to-day basis and teachers' marking is consistent and often gives pupils praise for their efforts. However, marking rarely gives pupils an understanding of what they need to learn next. The school has very good systems to monitor the pupils' standards and progress in English and mathematics and uses data well to analyse strengths and weaknesses. However, the pupils are not given personal targets to improve their standards in those subjects.
28. The headteacher recognises that the school needs to set up a forum for seeking pupils' views. Nevertheless, the pupils in Year 6 are involved in a variety of very responsible tasks that range from helping out in the crèche for open assemblies to looking after younger children who arrive on the bus in the morning. The induction arrangements for the youngest children in the school are good. A Foundation Stage assistant organises a pre-school club each Monday afternoon in the school hall throughout the year and parents are also invited to spend time on three afternoons with the Foundation Stage teacher at the end of the summer term before the children are admitted. As a result, the children and their parents are very familiar with the school and their classroom assistant before they start school, and this has a very good impact on their personal, social and emotional development. As yet, no formal links have been set up between the school and the pre-schools in Charmouth and Lyme Regis.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **good**. Links with the local community and other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents have positive views of the school;
- The school encourages parents to be involved in their children's education;
- Very good links with other schools help prepare pupils for the next stage of education;
- The school makes very good use of the local and wider community.

Commentary

29. The school fosters a close partnership with parents and carers to support learning at school and at home. Parents are invited in to help and several do so by listening to readers and helping with cooking. The parent-teacher association is a very active group that raises a lot of money for the school. Funds have been used to pay for music and swimming lessons, to refit the kitchen for cookery lessons and to purchase books for the library and for lessons. Teachers send letters to parents explaining what homework

they can expect and how they can help their children. Ninety-four per cent of parents agree that the school provides appropriate homework.

30. Parents are kept well informed about what is happening in school through meetings, questionnaires, informative newsletters and the school's website. Information about the progress their children are making is satisfactory. Parent and teacher consultations are held regularly and teachers are willing to meet parents at other times. Annual reports provide satisfactory information about what children know, understand and can do. A few teachers include comments about the progress pupils are making but not all.
31. The school has very good links with the local community. The local church is used for Christmas celebrations and the vicar and a member of the Coastguard Mission take assemblies in school. The beach is used regularly to enrich the curriculum and the very good links with the heritage centre are having an impact on the pupils' achievement, particularly in geography and science. The parents who run the parent/teacher association ensure that the school involves local people in their fund raising events.
32. Links with other schools are very good. Pupils play sport such as football against other local schools. However, the school's somewhat isolated location creates problems with transport as many pupils are dependent on cars or buses to take them to and from school. The Lyme Regis cluster of schools has worked together very effectively to develop ICT skills. The headteacher and staff meet staff of other schools regularly as part of the local cluster group. Through the local pyramid of schools, the arts curriculum has been a focus for joint work and has greatly enriched music and drama as well as the speaking and listening skills of the pupils. Very good links with the secondary school help pupils to prepare well for the next stage of their education. Staff and pupils make visits to the secondary school prior to transfer, which allows the children to adjust to the changes easily.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and is supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher who was appointed last April. Other key leaders are good managers, although a few subject managers are new in post this term and have not yet had an impact on standards. The management of the school is **very good** and has improved significantly in the provision of the National Curriculum and the school's self-evaluation systems. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The Chair of the Governing Body plays a prominent role in the day-to-day life of the school and individual governors give generally good support. Significant staffing problems have slowed down the professional development of subject managers. This issue is now resolved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the headteacher and his deputy are pivotal to the effectiveness of the school, both as role models and in their relationships with the school community. Both have a keen vision and very high aspirations;
- Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good;
- Provision for SEN by the deputy headteacher is good;
- The school has been very successful in ensuring there is very good inclusive practice in all aspects of its work;
- The headteacher, supported effectively by the chair of governors, has been successful in guiding the school through a difficult period of staffing changes and has followed very good induction procedures for new staff;
- Very good systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating performance data and the quality of teaching and learning;
- The performance management of staff is thorough and links very appropriately with the tightly focused and effective school improvement plan.

Commentary

33. Since his appointment five and a half years ago, the headteacher has worked very successfully to change the culture of the school and to create one where all staff work as a team towards a common goal, which is to raise achievement for the pupils. He has a keen vision and very high aspirations. He is a very good role model as subject manager of ICT and as a teacher. The headteacher has been successful in creating a school in which most classes are smaller than average, the teaching and learning is now good and

standards have improved considerably since the last inspection. In addition, he has ensured that the curriculum is now enriched by the inclusion of many aspects of the stunning seashore environment on the school's doorstep.

34. The headteacher has created a school leadership group (SLG) with significant expertise this term, although both the deputy headteacher and the Foundation Stage manager, who is also responsible for Years 1 and 2, have been making plans and rehearsing their role in the group for some weeks. The group has been effective in creating a learning environment where pupils can succeed and achieve well. The deputy headteacher has taken on responsibility for the curriculum and the provision for pupils with SEN. The role of subject managers was a key issue for improvement in the last inspection and they now fully understand their roles and responsibilities. A few subject managers are new to the job but have a very clear understanding of what is expected. More experienced managers have good or very good skills in leading their subjects. The deputy headteacher has been very energetic since her appointment and has put into place an effective curriculum for Years 3 to 6 to match the new class structure. Her work with this initiative has impacted well on the quality of resources for learning and their accessibility. She has also made good improvements to SEN provision by ensuring that individual education plans are accessible to all staff, pupils and their parents.
35. Strategic planning is good and focuses on achievable but challenging targets that are linked well with the performance management strategy and continuing professional development of staff. Individual action plans for the core subjects as well as SEN have had a considerable impact on raising achievement for all groups of pupils. The three members of the SLG recognise that best practice from outside the school can contribute to improvement and have been on appropriate courses and have taken advantage of the very good links with the cluster and pyramid of schools locally to develop pupils' learning further. The SLG has formed very good relationships with staff and pupils. They actively promote equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils through discussion and praise. All pupils said that they could always turn to their teachers or to the leaders of the school for help if they had a problem. The leaders are very good role models as teachers and managers of subjects.
36. All teachers are actively involved in discussing and determining the school's strengths and weaknesses, led by the SLG, and in agreeing priorities for improvement. The headteacher and a few of the established subject managers have undertaken classroom observations and have made good use of the local education authority consultants to improve their own practice. Monitoring of teaching practice is followed up very rigorously by discussion and in writing also. In addition, the weaknesses identified are then checked out after a reasonable length of time to ensure that the teachers have taken the advice seriously and have improved their practice. The self-evaluation processes the school has put into place are impacting on standards and achievement very well. Most weaknesses have been identified.
37. The school is well ahead in its systems of analysing its performance data obtained from the national tests at the end of each year from Year 2 onwards. Progress of individual pupils and those in different groups, for example, the pupils with special educational needs, is monitored and tracked very carefully. The headteacher prepares very helpful graphs showing the percentage of pupils who have made better than expected progress or otherwise. He also writes an easily digested analysis of results annually in a booklet, which is then shared with the governors.
38. Financial management and administration are good. The priorities in the school improvement plan guide the setting of the budget, which is carefully monitored throughout the year. The administrative officer has very efficient systems for financial control and keeps the headteacher and governors informed from month to month. As a result, the curriculum is well resourced and the school is well staffed. These factors have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	430,206
Total expenditure	354,561
Expenditure per pupil	2, 098

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39,341
Balance carried forward to the next	75,645

39. The decision to re-organise into single-aged classes is benefiting the pupils as curricular planning is now tailored more closely to their needs. It also means that pupils with SEN receive more focused support and this helps them to make good progress. The governors have carefully planned for this increase in the number of classes. The high budget surplus will be reduced considerably by the end of the current financial year by funding the induction process of the two newly qualified teachers as well as employing full-time assistants to work with two statemented pupils who arrived unexpectedly this term. In addition, a large amount of money has been earmarked to pay for a new outside classroom environment for the Foundation Stage children. The plans that are in place will reduce this surplus considerably by the end of the financial year, while still maintaining an appropriate contingency fund to cover the costs of continuing to provide for single-aged classes.
40. The Chair of the Governing Body meets weekly with the headteacher, is aware of the strategic development of the school and is very focused on standards of attainment. The Chair has been particularly supportive since the last inspection when staffing problems were time-consuming. In addition, three new appointments were made to the teaching staff. Other governors are supportive and committed to the school and know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. A few governors have a limited understanding of their role. However, the Chair of Governors works very closely with the headteacher to provide clear direction for the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good** and has improved since the last inspection. Good leadership and management, very effective curricular planning and good teaching all combine to provide children with varied and interesting experiences, which promote good learning and help them to make good progress. There is very good provision for the children in the group who have specific learning problems and they are making good progress. The Foundation Stage manager provides good leadership for the assistants, who work together effectively as a team. The quality of teaching is good across all six areas of learning, which are planned effectively to link together in order to make it more relevant and meaningful for the children.
42. At the time of the inspection, the children were attending in the mornings only and had been in school for four weeks. It was possible to judge teaching and learning in most areas of learning and the very good assessment of the children's progress also contributed to the judgements. A significant majority of children will exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception in all the areas of learning. However, in writing, the children show less confidence and are likely to meet, rather than exceed, the writing goals.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good induction procedures;
- Well-planned activities that link several areas of learning;
- Good provision for those children with SEN and very good inclusion of all children in all aspects of school life.

Commentary

43. The school has good induction procedures for children and parents that go a long way towards ensuring that children settle in quickly and happily. A strong feature of the good teaching in this area of learning is the strong emphasis on planning and assessment that ensures the children are involved in interesting and linked activities that are moving them forward well in all areas of learning. This, in turn, leads to the children gaining confidence daily and very good relationships are developing between children and adults. Children are given plenty of opportunities to work and play together in small groups and to develop independence by managing their own personal hygiene. Adults set high but clear expectations of behaviour and give praise and encouragement to reinforce these. Most children will exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year and their achievement is good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning of language and communication skills;
- Good resources that are used effectively to push learning forward;
- Effective links with other areas of learning.

Commentary

44. Teachers and assistants model spoken language well, talk to pupils frequently, question them and repeat phrases and sentences to ensure their understanding. During direct teaching sessions, assistants sit near the children and ensure that they are listening and responding and do this unobtrusively and sensitively. There is good teaching of phonics and the children are taught letter sounds effectively. Most could choose the correct hoop in which to place objects with the same initial sound. A good variety of methods help children to learn and remember sounds effectively and their achievement is good. Children enjoy listening to stories and some join in with the words they have remembered. Their levels of concentration are good. The teacher is very skilled at ensuring that all the children are involved in discussion and moving forward in their speaking and listening. The children enjoy making marks in the writing corner and a few are beginning to write very simple words. Most can write their first name. Good teaching in this area of learning impacts well on the children's progress and most will exceed the goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good resources that are attractive and effective in engaging the children;
- Good teaching and learning includes an imaginative use of the environment;
- Effective use of everyday routines to further the children's learning.

Commentary

45. The teacher uses number rhymes and number puzzles effectively to teach the children to count and learn the names of numbers. Most of the children can count to ten confidently and several can count to 20. Each morning the children place their own name (as part of their self-registration skills) under a certain sentence that denotes their place in their own family. The teacher then uses this as a counting activity. During registration, when the teacher was encouraging the children to find out how many children were present, one child knew that, 'there will be one more tomorrow when so-and-so comes back.' Another pointed out that there were more boys than girls. The teaching is good in this area of learning and very good links are made with tasks and learning. For example, when the children eat their morning snack, the teacher creates a very simple bar graph and encourages the children to count how many are eating a grain bar or an apple. Most children are likely to exceed the goals in mathematical development by the end of the reception year and achievement is good.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with other areas of learning;
- Very good resources used well to ensure the children's understanding;
- Good use of assistants;
- Good teaching and learning ensures that the children enjoy their activities.

Commentary

46. The teacher uses the big book, 'Handa's Surprise' very well to further learning. Several of the children know the names of the tropical fruits featured in the book and were given the opportunity to handle and feel the same fruits in the following session. With support, the children cut up oranges, mango, pineapple, passion fruit and banana into small pieces to make fruit salad. They described the fruit as prickly, hard, soft, bumpy and spiky. A few children ate some fruit salad for their snack but several were reluctant and preferred their own familiar snack from home. Very good links were made with mathematics and the children printed patterns with the cut side of the fruits and counted how many prints they had made. In

addition, they talked about their patterns of red, blue, red, blue, etc. The computer in the reception classroom is always switched on to an appropriate program and the children are encouraged to learn to use the mouse and to click on icons to move pictures around. A few children are becoming proficient at moving a toy floor robot in different directions with the help of an assistant. The very good resources for this area of learning also include a giant jigsaw puzzle of the world and the children were observed successfully solving the puzzle. The good teaching in this area of learning has an impact on achievement, which is good. Most children will exceed the goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of the outside learning environment;
- Very good use of the digital camera and assistant to record children's progress;
- Good links with other subjects;
- Good teaching and learning ensures effective use of the assistant to assess achievement.

Commentary

47. Very little extended observation was carried out in this area of learning. However, it was very evident that the children were moving about confidently in the hall copying the teacher's star jumps. All the children are able to undress and dress themselves again without too much help. Although the outside classroom environment is small, good teaching ensures that it is used very effectively. The skilled teaching assistant was assessing the children's success at finding the shiny pineapple. Children were able to go through the tunnel, climb over the frame as well as carrying out other directions in order to find their present. This had been carefully planned by the teacher to further their directional skills and extend their vocabulary. Most children will exceed the goals in this area of learning by the end of reception and their achievement is good.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**. Although the children were not observed painting or constructing pictures from materials, there were displays of previous work and it was evident that their skills are developing well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good organisation and use of the imaginative play areas of a café and a writing corner;
- Good teaching and learning ensures that the skills of the teaching assistants are used effectively.

Commentary

48. The children are very excited when it is their turn to go to the café as the area is built on a higher level than the classroom floor and a ladder has to be climbed. The café is linked to the story about Handa and there are menus and a telephone as well as all the usual practical equipment of plates and cutlery. An assistant was intervening appropriately to further their language development and imagination and the children used the telephone to order more equipment and food. This is having an impact on the good progress they are making in their speaking and listening skills. Good teaching ensured good organisation of the creative areas and pupils are eager to be either in the café or in the writing corner, usually writing invitations to parties. Most children will exceed the goals in the creative area of learning by the end of reception and their achievement is good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching of reading and writing was observed in Years 3 and 6;
- Good organisation of guided reading and writing sessions;
- Good emphasis is given to speaking and listening skills across the curriculum;
- Good links with other subjects in Year 6;
- Very good analysis of end of year tests;
- Good focus on boys' achievement, particularly in reading;
- Pupils are not given individual targets for improvement;
- Teaching of handwriting in Years 3 to 5 is not rigorous enough;
- Generally, marking of pupils' writing is not focused enough on what the pupils need to learn next.

Commentary

49. Standards in reading and writing are above average in the current Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good. Pupils at all levels of attainment read simple texts accurately and know how to sound out unfamiliar words. Pupils' work from last term shows that they use this knowledge effectively when spelling words independently in their writing. The higher attaining pupils read confidently and independently and can retell a story capturing the main points of the plot. A few of the higher attaining pupils understand how words such as, 'can't' and 'won't', are formed and they are confident at using the context of a story to guess what unusual words like 'brazen' means. Their reading is expressive and they understand that they need to emphasise words in italics. When being taught in a group, one or two pupils are eager to read.
50. Although standards in writing are above average the number of pupils attaining Level 3 in 2003 is not as high as in reading. An analysis of their work from last year shows good pieces of extended writing with mostly accurate sentence construction and good use of capital letters and full stops. However, very few pupils joined their writing in stories. The work of the present Year 2 shows higher attaining pupils can write in sentences using appropriate punctuation. They are also beginning to use more interesting words to ensure their stories engage the reader, such as, 'They swoop down from the cliff', and 'scrumptious apple crumble.' Their handwriting script is neatly formed.
51. The quality of teaching of reading and writing in Years 1 and 2 is good. The school has invested heavily in reading books; this outlay is proving to be good value for money and teachers have good skills in organising their literacy lessons to include group reading and writing. Pupils are making better than expected progress in these sessions, planning is effective and the assistants are used well to support small groups. Planning is good and is matched to the needs of all the pupils, including the higher attainers and those with special educational needs. The quality of teaching and learning in a Year 2 lesson was good when effective links were made between reading and writing followed by interesting activities that engaged the pupils. Following the opening session with a big book, the pupils were given challenging but achievable writing tasks. Pupils are well motivated to work hard; they respond immediately to the challenge and produce good writing in a fairly short time. Effective use was made of the teaching assistant and pupils' achievement was good in the lesson.
52. Speaking and listening skills are above average throughout the school and good attention is paid by the school to develop the pupils' skills further. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are confident and happy to speak to visitors. They can express their ideas clearly and are very quick to respond to questions. A very few pupils are reluctant to speak and, often, this is because they may be having difficulty thinking of the answers. Most pupils in Year 6 can talk fluently in a range of situations and use accurate technical vocabulary in different subjects. They are very keen to answer questions and are happy to be put into situations, such as role-play, where they are learning the skill of asking questions to solve problems. Very good teaching of speaking and listening skills was observed when pupils were asked to compose questions to ask visitors to the beach to gather information for a newspaper article. This activity contributed well to the pupils' personal development as they grew in confidence.
53. Standards of reading in Year 6 are above average overall and several higher attaining pupils are attaining well above average levels. Achievement is good for all pupils. Pupils can talk confidently about the books they are reading and explain their preferences. Higher attaining and average pupils are reading a wide

range of books by Philip Pullman, Jacqueline Wilson and J. K. Rowling, among others. The lower attaining pupils are making considerably better progress in reading than might be expected due to the small number of pupils in the class (17) and the very good support they are given by the teaching assistant who is a qualified teacher. The school has focused on buying non-fiction books to interest those pupils, particularly the boys, who may not have developed a love of reading and the books are clearly engaging the pupils' interest.

54. Standards of writing in Year 6 are above average but are not as high as standards in reading, although the higher attaining pupils in the current Year 6 are reaching very secure average levels of attainment in the fourth week of the school year. Achievement is good for all pupils. None of the pupils who took the 2003 tests last June attained the higher level in writing whereas 50 per cent of pupils attained the higher level in reading and this reflects the very good teaching of reading overall and the good links with parents who are very supportive with homework. From a scrutiny of the work of those pupils, it is evident that a very few write inappropriately using everyday speech and others end their stories too abruptly. Not many pupils were joining their writing and this slows down the whole process of composition.
55. The quality of teaching and learning in reading and writing is good overall in Years 3 to 6. There is good coverage of a wide range of writing as well as good planning that meets the needs of all pupils, including the higher attainers. This is good improvement from the last inspection. All teachers have very good management and control of pupils and no time is wasted. In a Year 3 lesson, very effective methods were used to teach the pupils how to write using powerful language. The teacher's very high expectations of behaviour and effective questioning resulted in a few pupils giving responses that show they are beginning to understand the difference between a metaphor and a simile. These pupils are reaching high levels of attainment and this reflects their above average attainment in the end of Year 2 tests in June. Teaching and learning was very good in Year 6 when pupils were learning about the journalistic style of writing. Different styles of newspapers had been downloaded from a website and the pupils quickly showed they knew which papers were broadsheets and which were tabloids. Good links were made in this lesson to the interviews the pupils would be engaged in the next day when their task was to prepare notes on how to question people for a newspaper article. Several pupils in Year 6 are able to write in different styles at the expected level for their age and the teacher's good skills of assessment ensure that they know exactly what they need to do to improve their work
56. A model of very good marking was observed in the work scrutiny from the Year 3 pupils last year when pupils' final drafts of empathetic writing in history showed above average standards. Pupils were given clear guidance in order to improve their writing and the final drafts showed good progress. However, from the scrutiny of work throughout Years 3 to 6, it is evident that, generally, teachers' marking is not rigorous enough to improve writing significantly. Pupils' work is marked and levelled conscientiously but the weaknesses in the writing are not followed up immediately and pupils do not have individual targets. Although teachers in Years 3 to 5 teach joined handwriting well in specific sessions, nevertheless, they accept writing in other lessons, including English, that is not joined.
57. The subject leader manages the subject well and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Together with the headteacher, she has carried out a detailed analysis of pupils' achievement, measuring their progress against their attainment when they started school. This analysis has led to a clear focus throughout the school on raising boys' attainment in reading and appropriate strategies are now in place to address this weakness. The subject manager and headteacher have monitored teaching throughout the school and have worked hard to improve the consistency of teachers' delivery of the literacy hour since the last inspection. The school has a very good system for tracking pupils' progress in reading and writing, but the process of setting targets for individual pupils is not yet rigorous enough. Provision for homework in English is good and parents are very supportive and hear their children read regularly. This is having an impact on the above average standards attained by the pupils throughout the school. The school is well resourced for English and pupils have a wide choice of reading materials.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Overall, the development of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. The development of speaking and listening skills across the curriculum is good. The school has made good efforts to include role-play and drama into different lessons across the curriculum and has been successful. The use of writing skills across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is good in Year 6 and pockets of good practice were observed in the scrutiny of work in history and ICT from last year.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall;
- Pupils show positive attitudes to mathematics;
- Good coverage of all aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy including using and applying mathematics;
- Classes are well organised and take account of pupils' differing abilities;
- Teachers manage and control classes well and this results in good behaviour and attitudes from pupils;
- The subject leader has carried out extensive analysis of pupils' work and monitored teaching to further improve standards;
- Marking, although conscientious, lacks suggestions for improvement in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

59. Standards of attainment are above average in the current Year 2. This is similar to the 2003 test results where the number of pupils attaining the expected level was above average. Pupils' achievement, taking into account their capabilities and previous levels of attainment, is good. Results in mathematics have steadily improved since 1998. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good and teachers plan activities that are well suited to pupils of all abilities. Scrutiny of pupils' work showed evidence of pupils working at above average levels, good coverage of all aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy. Most tasks are worksheet based but well matched to the ability of the pupils. The quality of teaching and learning was good in a Year 2 lesson when pupils showed good understanding of giving change from fifty pence and one pound. Effective use of real coins made the task more relevant and pupils could give change using coins of equivalent value, or the least number of coins to make the correct amount.
60. Standards of attainment are above average in the current Year 6 and pupils' achievement is good. This matches the results of the 2003 tests when the number of pupils attaining the expected level was above average. The trend in results since 1998 has been upward overall and the school has responded well to the dip in attainment in 2002 when pupils' standards of attainment were well below average. Small numbers in year groups can result in considerable differences in percentages and therefore care should be taken in interpreting results in any one year. As a result of the dip in standards, the school focused more on teaching the skills of enquiry and investigation in mathematics and this has proved to be successful. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 ranges from satisfactory to good and is good overall. Teachers have established good classroom routines and expectations and, as a result, pupils behave well and work hard. For example, the quality of teaching was good in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were confident in correcting the teacher's deliberate mistakes. She encouraged pupils to identify the key information required to solve problems and they made good progress in this aspect of the subject. Similarly, the subject leader in Year 4 encouraged pupils to look for patterns when colouring in multiples of numbers on a hundred square. Pupils found the activity fascinating and their achievement was good in their understanding of sequencing of numbers and multiples. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 expect the pupils to assess their own work by a 'traffic-light' system and colour in a square in red, amber or green to indicate how they have succeeded in completing the task. This indicates that the school is encouraging the pupils to self-assess their progress and will have a better understanding of their own learning.
61. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory and consistent. However, teachers tend to use praise, such as 'well done', rather than suggestions on how the work can be improved. Leadership in the subject is good. Extensive analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in all aspects of the subject has been carried out consistently. The subject manager has monitored teaching regularly and this has had an impact on achievement. She has ensured the full implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and balanced coverage. ICT is being used appropriately to support the curriculum and pupils enjoyed the challenge in a program that expected them to set a cracking pace to complete a series of sequences against the clock. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. The development of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory. There is evidence of pupils using mathematics in other subjects, such as ICT, but this is inconsistent across classes.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** and this has had a positive impact on the very good standards the school has achieved in national tests for pupils, especially at the age of eleven.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry has helped to raise and maintain standards in science;
- Good teaching and thorough coverage of all areas of science has resulted in most pupils achieving well in Year 2 and Year 6. Results in national tests are very high;
- Resources are used effectively to aid learning;
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good;
- Good links between science and other subjects have aided learning although the use of ICT to enhance pupils' understanding of the subject has not yet been fully developed;
- No systems are in place to formally assess and record pupils' achievement and attainment on a regular basis.

Commentary

63. Standards in science in both Years 2 and 6 are above average and pupils' achievement is good overall. This contrasts markedly with the findings of the previous inspection, which reported that standards attained by pupils in Year 6 did not meet the national average and that pupils' progress throughout the school was unsatisfactory. This very good improvement is the direct result of far better provision and the school's emphasis on building up skills related to scientific enquiry and investigations as a keystone of work in science. This sustained improvement is not only reflected in pupils' work but also in results from the 2003 national tests for pupils aged eleven, which are above those expected from similar schools with **all** pupils reaching average standards expected for their age and several exceeding it.
64. Key factors in the school's improvement in standards and achievement has been the good quality of provision in science and the good quality of teaching. An analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning showed that pupils are taught all aspects of the subject as they progress through the school with work set at levels aimed at promoting high standards. Year 2 pupils are able to name the different parts of a plant and have a good knowledge and understanding of their bodies and the importance of their different senses. Year 6 pupils are given opportunities to measure the speed of sound and complete high quality investigations into, for instance, shadows. Although there was evidence of linking work in science to other subjects such as geography and mathematics, there was little evidence of the use of ICT to enhance pupils' understanding of science in observed lessons or in pupils' previous work.
65. This lack of use of ICT was evident in what was a well-taught lesson for Year 6 pupils who were using the environment skilfully to investigate the effect of the force of waves on the movement of stones on the nearby beach. Pupils worked well in small groups in a well-planned and structured lesson, which was well matched to their previous learning and experiences. As a result nearly all pupils made good progress in their understanding of the nature and impact of forces and this was evident in the pupils' responses to searching questions set by the teacher to assess learning at the end of the lesson.
66. The subject manager has only recently been appointed to the position and has not yet had time to address the issue of the underdeveloped use of assessment and assessment information to further increase standards in science. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, there is little evidence of diagnostic or formative marking or of pupils' achievement and attainment being recorded on a whole school basis in order to aid curricular planning. For these reasons the management and leadership of the subject is presently satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good** and this has had a positive impact on raising pupils' attainment and achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good use of teaching support staff has a positive impact on learning;
- Imaginative teaching methods aid achievement;
- Lessons are well planned and small group sizes aid learning;
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good;
- Leadership and management are very good but assessment of pupils' progress has yet to be developed on a formal basis;
- The breadth of the curriculum is very good;
- The use of ICT is inconsistent in different classes and different subject areas.

Commentary

67. The school makes very good use of its well-equipped computer suite and pupils are taught effectively in small groups, sometimes by a well-trained teaching assistant and often by the curricular coordinator whose knowledge and understanding of the subject is high. As a result, standards of attainment in ICT in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and pupils' achievement is good overall.
68. A feature of teaching is the way in which skills are developed through topic-based activities. Year 1 pupils use simple word programs to develop understanding in literacy whilst Year 2 pupils use the Internet to find out about snails in science and are able to draw graphs and pie-charts using a range of mathematical programs. Year 6 pupils use spreadsheets to solve simple formulae and the effect of brackets in equations. For example, a mixed ability group of pupils worked confidently copying formulae from one cell to another during an observed lesson. The standard of their understanding was high and their achievement very good.
69. The use of ICT within individual classrooms is inconsistent, although the use of the interactive whiteboard linked to a website was very effective in a geography lesson in Year 6. Pupils have developed very good attitudes to the subject and have the skills to use ICT to enhance their understanding of other areas of the curriculum. However, they are rarely given opportunities to develop this area of their learning whilst in lessons.
70. The quality of teaching of ICT as a specific subject is good overall and the quality in lessons taken by the subject manager is consistently very good. For example, the achievement of Year 4 pupils in a lesson on generating graphs on computers was very good because the manager's expectations were very high. The learning of Year 6 pupils benefited from his imaginative teaching techniques, which made them *think*, and from the very good structure to the lesson. All pupils made very good progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding of spreadsheets.
71. Standards and provision in ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of very effective leadership and management in the subject. Concerns then regarding standards in Year 6, a lack of whole-school planning and a variable quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 have been fully addressed but issues concerning the lack of assessment systems are still current. As a result, the competencies of individual pupils are still not recorded and the school has only informal means of assessing pupils' progress in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent in different classes and different subject areas.

HUMANITIES

Inspectors observed two lessons in geography and two in religious education. Inspectors arranged discussions with groups of pupils, looked at teachers' planning documents and held discussions with subject leaders. No lessons in history were seen, consequently, there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in Year 6 or the quality of teaching and learning. The time allocated to history throughout the year is sufficient to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning documents and scrutiny of pupils' work show that,

by the end of Year 2, pupils' understanding of historical concepts meets expectations. They have studied generations of families using photographic evidence and constructed their own family tree. As part of their study of the Victorian era they have studied the life of the fossil gatherer, Mary Anning, and her work in the classification of local fossils on the beach nearby. Discussion with Year 6 pupils and comments made by parents at the pre-inspection meeting showed some concern over the number of times the Victorian era had been studied. However, discussion with the subject manager showed that a different aspect had been studied on each occasion. The organisation of classes containing mixed age groups in the past has had an effect on the coverage of the subject but this has now been addressed through the establishment of single year group classes.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good** and enriches the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership of the subject area is very good;
- Very good use of the local environment as a resource;
- Very good improvement since the previous inspection;
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very positive;
- Imaginative use of ICT to support the curriculum.

Commentary

73. The standards of attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and achievement is good.
74. No teaching was observed in Years 1 to 2. However, from the analysis of work in pupils' books it is clear that pupils have a good understanding of the world around them and show good skills in their maps of the local area. They have made a comparison of life in a town and a village, using their literacy skills to describe a place to which they would like to travel.
75. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils in Year 5 are developing a good understanding of the value of fieldwork and how to collect data in the study of geography. Good teaching encouraged pupils to formulate their own questions for use in a study of the effects of traffic in Charmouth High Street. Pupils' questions showed an awareness of the needs of various groups and the effect that traffic restrictions might have on trade and tourism. Pupils of all abilities were fully involved in the study due to the guidance received from the support teacher.

Example of outstanding practice

Excellent teaching and learning in a Year 6 practical geography lesson, linked to the local environment, planned to develop pupils' knowledge of coastal erosion and to increase their understanding of its effect on people's lives.

Using an interactive whiteboard linked to a website, the teacher demonstrated to pupils how coastal erosion had affected a Norfolk village. Very skilful questioning by the teacher developed pupils' understanding of how people's lives were affected and they gasped at the images of houses at the cliff edge. Teacher and pupils moved outside to a model of the local coastline in sand. Pupils identified features, recorded these in cross-section and planned, viewed and then placed a model house on the 'cliffs'. Pupils' learning was developed far above expected standards. They created wave action by adding water to the sand and noted each step in the erosion process including a demonstration of undercutting by wave action. The teacher provided a rock sample showing the different hardness of rock that had been eroded at different rates. The demonstration ended perfectly when the eroded sand caused the model house to collapse into the sea. The lesson was recorded by pupils using a digital camera. Returning to the website, pupils examined the conflict between environmentalists supporting wildlife and homeowners wanting sea defences to protect their homes. There were very good links between geography, ICT, use of the local environment and conflict situations.

76. The subject leader is newly appointed but has very good clarity of vision and sense of purpose to develop the subject throughout the school. The school's location offers excellent opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of coastlines and tourism, and staff reflect this in their planning. Improvement in the subject, since the previous inspection when standards were reported to below average, has been very good.

Religious Education

Provision in Religious Education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision meets fully the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus;
- Pupils show positive attitudes towards the subject;
- Pupils' knowledge of aspects of the Christian faith including important festivals is good;
- Pupils' knowledge of other world faiths is patchy and lacks depth.

Commentary

77. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment in RE is average. Their achievement is satisfactory in their understanding of religious concepts and ideas as defined in the locally agreed syllabus. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils showed sound understanding of the importance of harvest in the Christian calendar and the relevance of the Harvest Festival in giving thanks to God. The teacher had organised good resources for the pupils to look at, such as photographs of a local harvest before the days of tractors. Pupils were given opportunities to reflect on the importance of harvest in other countries and showed concern over others not having sufficient food to eat. A display of wild autumn fruits resulted in pupils being eager to show their knowledge of which were edible.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher linked the use of music effectively to the use of colour to illustrate a mood. A newspaper article was used imaginatively for pupils to interpret a situation in which the use of colour was unclear. Pupils, having been shown a video of the Hindu festival of Holi, were able to draw the correct interpretation of the article. Teaching was good in helping pupils to study all the facts before coming to a conclusion. However, pupils showed limited knowledge of the Hindu faith and confused Hinduism and Sikhism. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with Year 6 pupils showed that study of other world faiths has been superficial in previous years and a more structured approach is required.
79. The school has a satisfactory number of resources for RE, which are of good quality. A start has been made on a display showing four major world faiths. The organisation of the school into single year group classes is aiding coverage and progression in the subject. The newly appointed subject leader agrees that developing pupils' sensitivity for the beliefs of other faiths is a priority. As a result of the school's location, it is very difficult for pupils to visit places of worship or to organise visits from representatives of other faiths.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Inspectors saw only two very short lessons in **design and technology**. One of these lessons was supported by a parent helper and was not representative of teaching in the subject. Judgements on attainment and achievement in the subject are enhanced by information gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work and from planning and records in the subject manager's file. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. One **art** lesson was observed as well as a limited sample of pupils' work. Planning documents and the displays around the school were scrutinised but it is not possible to make judgements on standards and achievement, or teaching. No **music** lessons were observed, although the Years 3 to 6 pupils were heard singing well in assembly. Three **PE** lessons were seen. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work and held discussions with subject managers in order to make reliable judgements concerning standards.

In the **art** lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good with several strengths. The lesson, in Year 3, was one of a series where the pupils had produced drawings of themselves with a favourite friend, relation or pet. A high proportion of the pupils showed good skills of drawing and painting and had used their observation skills well to look at the body proportions of the two figurines in the classroom. The pupils were taught effectively how to use water colours to create the impression of light and dark. Several pupils were successful and a few were able to produce shade in the joints of their figures. The pupils made good progress in the lesson and standards of attainment for drawing and painting were above average. There were very good links with speaking and listening when the teacher encouraged each pupil, in turn, to talk about the feelings they had

created in their pictures. The pupils were quite reticent to begin with but the teacher questioned them sensitively to allow them to think of the appropriate words and sentences they needed. Good links with ICT enabled a few pupils to go into the National Gallery website and view water colours by famous artists. Management of the subject has improved since the last inspection as there is now an up-to-date policy as well as a scheme of work that shows appropriate coverage of the curriculum.

Design and Technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes towards design and technology;
- The quality of provision has improved since the previous inspection;
- Pupils' skills of evaluation are good in Year 1 and Year 2;
- No assessment procedures are in place to measure pupils' progress;
- Too little use is made of ICT to enhance learning in the subject.

Commentary

80. Pupils attain standards in design and technology in line with those expected for their age in both Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement is satisfactory in building up their knowledge, skills and understanding of all aspects of the subject by Year 6. This contrasts favourably with the findings of the last inspection, which reported that the attainment of older pupils was below the national average, that teachers lacked subject knowledge and that the school had yet to develop a scheme of work. Many of these concerns have now been addressed effectively and, as a result, standards have improved. This was evident from the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, which showed that, by Year 2, most pupils had developed the skills needed to use and handle a range of tools safely and effectively and were able to select appropriate materials for tasks. Work in folders showed that pupils had developed a good understanding of the importance of evaluation when modifying the things they had made in order to improve them.
81. Year 4 pupils develop their expertise by constructing shelters whilst Year 6 pupils design 'Fairgrounds', and are given the opportunity to prepare lunches for invited guests and school staff as part of their work in food technology. From an analysis of evidence of pupils' work around the school and from photographs in the manager's file it was possible to judge that standards are average and the breadth of coverage of work were satisfactory.
82. Links between design and technology and other subjects are good. For example, pupils in Year 6 had used their knowledge of science when designing and constructing moving vehicles. However, there was only limited evidence of the use of ICT, for example, computer aided design, to enhance learning in the subject. Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are good but the school has yet to develop assessment procedures for recording their achievement and progress.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education (PE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Games lessons are well structured;
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour;
- Resources are used effectively to aid learning;
- Good leadership and subject management;
- Time is not always used effectively in group activity lessons;
- The use of assessment to aid learning has yet to be developed.

Commentary

83. Standards are average in both Year 2 and Year 6. This represents satisfactory achievement, which is in some ways a reflection of the quality of teaching and learning in the subject, which are good overall in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.
84. All the pupils are taught how to swim and begin their lessons during the reception year. They learn about water safety and most pupils in Years 3 to 6 swim confidently. Year 5 pupils display an appropriate level of development in ball skills when dribbling and passing a football whilst Year 6 pupils are able to use tactics effectively in games of touch rugby. No teaching of dance or gymnastics was observed during the inspection. Provision for PE is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils such as netball, yoga, football and athletics. Good links to local sports associations and dance workshops ensure that a wide range of activity is available to pupils. As a result, pupils' attitudes towards a subject that they enjoy are good.
85. Strengths in teaching include good control of pupils, well-structured and well developed lessons and the effective use of resources. When teaching is less successful, tasks are less challenging and the pace of lessons is slow. For example, some pupils in a Year 2 session on parachute games lost interest because they became bored with the activities. This resulted in the teacher having to constantly interrupt the session to keep order and valuable learning time was lost and affected overall achievement.
86. The manager has led and managed the subject well through a period of change even though present standards of attainment are not as high as those reported by the previous inspection. The school's accommodation is good and has improved whilst resources are also good and are used well to aid learning. However, the monitoring of pupils' performance and the use of assessment data to aid achievement is presently unsatisfactory. There have been many improvements in the provision of PE since the last inspection, such as the introduction of a scheme of work for the subject, but these are not presently reflected in overall standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Appropriate planning is in place for personal, social and health education (PSHE) that is both linked to other subjects and taught in its own right. In a very short observation of a lesson in Year 3, teaching, learning and achievement were good. Good links with literacy were made as pupils discussed in pairs the importance of behaving responsibly. Although these young pupils show respect for their friends' comments, their responses do not always relate to responsibility but to their own experiences. The success of the school's personal, social and health education is reflected in the very good attitudes and relationships evident in the school. The school's provision for health education includes visits from the school nurse who organises lessons about problems the pupils may experience as they grow older. In addition, links are made between PSHE and the healthy eating programme. Each month, a group of pupils (two from each class) prepare a Healthy Eating dish which is sampled by all the pupils and staff. During the Summer Term, Year 6 pupils design menus, prepare and serve lunch for parents and staff. The management of this aspect is coordinated by a mixed key stage team.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3

Attendance	4
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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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