

# INSPECTION REPORT

**COOMBE BISSETT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Coombe Bissett, Salisbury

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126382

Headteacher: Mrs Jan West

Lead inspector: Paul Cosway

Dates of inspection: 27 - 29 April 2004

Inspection number: 255876

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	77
School address:	Shutts Lane Coombe Bissett Salisbury Wiltshire
Postcode:	SP5 4LU
Telephone number:	01722 718380
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Evans
Date of previous inspection:	16 June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Coombe Bissett Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School is a small village school that serves the surrounding area, including many isolated farms and small hamlets. It also attracts pupils from nearby army bases. The pupils range in age from four to 11. With 77 pupils on roll, it is much smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the average nationally, as is the proportion with statements of special educational need (those who receive additional help from outside specialists). The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is also below the average nationally. The attainment of pupils on entry is average overall, but rising as the school becomes increasingly popular, and draws from a relatively affluent local intake. Some pupils are from army families, whose mobility is one reason why a high proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 did not start their education at this school.

Because the school is small, every class contains two year groups.

Until 2001, Coombe Bissett was a first school, educating pupils from age four to nine. At the time of the inspection, the Year 6 pupils were only the second group of 11-year-olds to go through the school.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2734	Paul Cosway	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics Science Foundation Stage Special educational needs
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1085	John Laver	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Information and communication technology Geography History Citizenship

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

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**The school is providing a good standard of education for its pupils.** They achieve well because of the very positive attitudes that the school engenders. The friendly atmosphere, that is such a feature of the school, leads to the great majority of pupils enjoying learning, working hard, forming very good relationships and behaving very well. Overall, pupils attain well above average standards at the end of Year 2, benefiting from the good, often very good, teaching that the school provides. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 because of some lower attaining pupils who have joined from other schools. These pupils also achieve well during their time in the school. There are some weaknesses. For example, marking is not always used to help pupils to improve their work, and there is a need to ensure that the work set is always matched sufficiently to pupils' needs. However, the very good leadership of the headteacher is taking the school forward by identifying areas for improvement, and taking appropriate action. The school gives good value for money.

#### **The school's main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well.
- Good teaching helps pupils to make good progress.
- Relationships and behaviour are very good, partly because of very good care and guidance.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Very good links with parents and the community extend the range of learning opportunities.
- Very good leadership has led to good improvements in the school.
- The work set is not always appropriate for all pupils.
- Marking does not always make clear to pupils what they must do to improve.
- The accommodation is cramped and unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good, with particularly good progress made in the management of the school, and with its links with parents and the community. The key issues from the last report have been resolved.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

#### **Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2, and average at the end of Year 6.**

Pupils achieve well. In the Foundation Stage, children in the Reception class make good progress; almost all are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. At the end of Year 2, pupils are well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. There are only a small number of pupils in Year 6. Some are fairly new to the school, and arrived with low levels of attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 2. Standards overall are close to average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, with the higher attaining pupils reaching above average standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who have been at the school for a relatively short time, make good progress.

In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2003, the pupils were well above average. They were above the average for similar schools in reading and writing, and average in mathematics.

In 2003, the school's results in the national tests for Year 6 pupils were well above the national average in English and mathematics, and average in science. The results were below those attained in similar schools, but only three pupils were involved in the tests. Only one had begun her education at the school, and the other two had been at the school for a relatively short time. The school met its targets.

Pupils' personal development is very good, as is their spiritual, moral and social development. Their cultural development is also good. **Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work are very good, overall.** Almost all pupils behave very well and form very good relationships, although some of the younger boys can be excitable. Attendance is well above the national average. The pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is also good** and pupils learn well, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers plan their lessons to interest their pupils, and this motivates them to learn well. In some lessons, however, work is not always planned to challenge all pupils equally.

The school offers a broad curriculum that is appropriate to the needs of pupils. It has a very good partnership with parents and local schools, and very good links with the community, which contributes to the effectiveness of the education it provides. Assessment systems are good, but marking does not always give sufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. The pastoral system gives very good support to pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the school by the headteacher is very good** and has led to significant improvements in the school since the last inspection. The management is efficient. It runs smoothly; parents are kept well informed of its work, and there is a feeling of unity – teachers, governors, parents and the local community working together. However, the headteacher's workload – almost that of a full-time class teacher – is too great to allow her sufficient time to keep all policies and systems reviewed and up-to-date. The governing body is effective and is strongly committed to the school. The governance of the school is good.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Almost all parents are pleased with the school and believe that it is helping their children to make good progress. They are pleased with the communication between school and home, the running of the school and the ways they are encouraged to help their children to learn. Inspectors agreed with their views. Almost all pupils are happy at school, and have no serious criticisms of it.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that the work set is always matched to the different abilities of pupils.
- Ensure that marking makes clear to pupils what they must do to improve.
- Seek ways to improve the accommodation, which is cramped and leads to one class losing teaching time when the classroom is used for assemblies or as a dining hall.

All statutory requirements are met.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is good for all pupils. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2. The high numbers entering or leaving the school in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 make it difficult for the school to build on this high level of attainment. However, the pupils who join the school late settle in quickly and make good progress.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average in English and mathematics and are above average in science.
- Pupils who have stayed at the school since the age of four usually reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.

#### Commentary

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

1. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school varies from year to year. This is partly because the intakes are small – only four or five pupils in some year groups – and partly because there is a high mobility factor. The movement of families in and out of the nearby army base means that pupils are frequently entering and leaving the school between Years 1 and 6. The intake is rising, and this effect is not as marked at the end of Year 2 (where there are currently 12 pupils) as in Year 6 (where there were three pupils last year and are currently six). Another factor that has an effect on attainment is the accommodation. The Year 5 and 6 pupils are taught in the small school hall; they lose teaching time at lunchtime and before and after assemblies whilst tables and chairs are set out and then cleared away.

2. The trend over time of results in the national tests for seven-year-olds has been below the national average, but the fact that there are only small numbers of pupils in each year group makes statistical analysis unreliable. The inspection found that standards have risen since the last inspection. Because the national test results for Year 6 in 2003 were the first in the school's history, there is no trend to report.

##### Attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.2 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.1 (15.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.4 (18.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 9 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In 2003, the pupils were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The results were in line with the average for similar schools in mathematics; they were above average for reading and writing.



4. In mathematics, boys' results have been consistently above those of girls for the last three years, but the difference is only marginally greater than the difference nationally. In reading and writing, over the same period of time, there is almost no difference between the results of boys and girls.

Attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 6

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.0 (n/a)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.0 (n/a)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (n/a)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 3 pupils in the year group. There were no pupils entered in the previous year.*

5. 2003 was the first year that the school had pupils in Year 6. They achieved well. Results were well above the national average in English and mathematics, and were in line with the national average in science. Compared with results in similar schools, the pupils' achievement was not as good, but the numbers involved were too small to be statistically valid. Only one of these pupils had had all of her education at this school.

**Children in the Reception class**

6. Children in the Reception class achieve well in most aspects of their work. Attainment on entry to the school has been generally average, but tests indicate that the current Reception children are above average overall, especially in knowledge and understanding of the world, numeracy and communication skills. They make good progress in all areas of their learning, benefiting from the good provision for developing literacy and numeracy skills in the class, and also because they work alongside Year 1 pupils, which helps to improve their speaking and listening skills. Their achievement in personal, social and emotional development is good; when they enter Year 1, standards are above those expected of children at the end of the Reception Year. Again, the example set by the Year 1 pupils in their class helps them to learn quickly. From the very beginning, within a calm and settled environment, children are taught to be considerate and obey rules. There is a strong focus on numeracy. Children achieve well because of this, and almost all reach the standards that children are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1, and many achieve above expectations.

7. Achievement is also good in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. The planning for teaching and learning is good, and the very good induction of children into the Reception class prepares them well for the future.

**The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6**

8. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 in English is well above average, and the pupils are achieving well. In Year 6, attainment is average; there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, and achievement is good. The pupils are making steady progress from their previous, overall low levels of attainment. Lower attaining pupils achieve well in English and are making good progress. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils reach well above average standards in writing, but some weaknesses remain in the writing of some children. Standards in reading are above average. The good teaching and the increasing effort across all subjects to teach and reinforce literacy skills ensure that they achieve well.

9. In mathematics, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 is well above average. In Year 6 it is generally in line with that expected nationally, but some pupils are well above average. Almost all pupils are good at mental arithmetic, and the majority have at least average levels of numeracy. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress and are achieving well.

10. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have satisfactory skills, knowledge and understanding in science. Pupils' achievement is also good. At the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound grasp of scientific knowledge, including an understanding of living processes – such as the ways that plants grow and reproduce. Attainment is also in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. Most have secure skills in practical work and investigation, and the higher attaining pupils have a very good grasp of scientific concepts.

11. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 in history and geography are average. In information and communication technology (ICT), standards are average and rising, and pupils are achieving well.

12. The work seen in music (especially singing) and art at the end of Year 6 was of a very good quality. However, these subjects were not inspected in depth, and definitive judgements were not possible. In the time available for inspection, it was not possible to gather enough evidence to give secure judgements on standards in the other subjects of the curriculum.

13. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress as a result of the very good provision. They achieve well and reach the targets set for them. There are no pupils at an early stage of acquiring English.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' personal qualities are developed very well. The attendance rate is very good and the pupils arrive at school on time.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Almost all pupils behave very well as a result of the school's high expectations of their conduct and manners.
- The quality of relationships is a particularly strong feature of the school.
- Pupils' personal development is very good because the school gives a high priority to nurturing it.
- Parents are very supportive of the school's attendance policy.

14. The school expects high standards of courtesy and conduct from the pupils, who are happy to do all they can to follow the example set by adults and led by the headteacher. Pupils' moral development is sound, and reflects the high priority that is given to their understanding of, and obedience to, school rules. Teachers and pupils discuss rewards and class rules together. As a consequence, the pupils have an interest in them, and they behave very well both around the school and in lessons. This was evident in a very good Year 4 numeracy lesson when the pupils were looking at different methods of subtraction. The lesson went forward at a very brisk pace, yet the concentration and behaviour of the mixed age and mixed ability class of children were so good that all the pupils achieved well. Very occasionally, a small group of younger boys can become excited and distracted from their work if the teaching is not strong enough to keep them busy.

15. Relationships are very good and reinforced consistently by the way pupils' personal skills are developed in lessons. Pupils' social development is also very good, and this is reflected in the way that pupils care for each other, are always encouraged to be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others, and to respect their views. Pupils exhibited this well during an art lesson in Year 6, based on the story of the Titanic, when they were discussing each other's work, sensibly and sensitively. In lessons, pupils work together very well and share resources sensibly. At break and lunchtimes, all pupils provide good care and support for each other. During discussions with pupils, they all said that they value the help and encouragement they receive from teachers and all adults who support their learning.

16. Pupils' cultural development is good, and ensures that they develop an understanding of their own culture and an awareness of the major world faiths. Pupils' very good spiritual development is at the heart of school life. Assemblies are well used for pupils to reflect on many aspects of their lives. For example, in one assembly the headteacher read a traditional Jewish story. The pupils listened attentively and then thought about the many things that are valuable and important in their own lives. In another, the pupils gave serious consideration to what makes them angry and how best to deal with anger. Teachers plan interesting lessons that will stimulate the pupils and provide moments of awe and wonder. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, the pupils were thrilled with the poems about dragons that were read to them and gave a 'roar of delight' when they were asked to write their own dragon poems. In Year 6, the pupils were excited by the discoveries they made during a science investigation on the cycle of life. They were filled with wonder as they saw the beauty and complexity of tiny seeds, magnified by a computer-linked microscope. The headteacher has very successfully created an ethos in which all pupils can grow and flourish, and this is a major contributory factor to pupils' high levels of enthusiasm, confidence and standards of achievement.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.5	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

17. As the table above shows, attendance at the school is well above the national average. The pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. Parents are happy with the school's attendance procedures and know that the school is rigorous in following up absences. As a consequence, they help to ensure that their children arrive at school regularly and on time.

18. Since the last report in 1998, the good behaviour, attitudes and personal development – its promotion and the outcomes for the pupils – have all been improved. Pupils' high rate of attendance and their punctuality have been maintained. Progress since the last inspection has been very good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Effective teaching, based on a well-planned curriculum and reinforced by very good extra-curricular activities, ensures that pupils learn well.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall, with some very good features. As a result, pupils' learning is equally good. Assessment is used well in English, mathematics, science and ICT, and satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned, with a good variety of activities to interest the pupils.
- Relationships are very good, and in almost all lessons pupils are willing to learn.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and praise them when they do well. Pupils respond well to this – working hard, concentrating and trying to succeed.
- Teachers do not always plan work that is appropriate for the full range of ability in the class; as a result, some pupils are not challenged enough and others find the work too difficult.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7	6	4	1	0	0

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

### Commentary

19. Pupils are achieving well. A significant reason for this is the quality of the teaching throughout the school. Pupils make good progress because teachers develop very good relationships with their pupils that make for a harmonious and pleasant classroom environment. In addition, the well-planned lessons ensure that pupils are interested in their studies. In a literacy lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, the work on poems about dragons fired the children's imagination and made them eager to learn more. Also, the teaching methods develop effective learning skills. The teachers encourage pupils to find things out for themselves. In a very good science lesson, for example, the Year 6 pupils were unable to say where the seeds are in a pineapple fruit or what they look like. The teacher directed them to the Internet, and in a few minutes the pupils had researched the subject and were able to understand the answer. The teaching is organised for the older pupils in such a way that teachers are teaching to their strengths. This means that the pupils have a number of different teachers through a typical week, but they are teaching to their subject strengths. Their subject knowledge and understanding is secure, which enables them to challenge and extend their pupils. In the science lesson described above, the teacher was not the class teacher, but the science co-ordinator for the school.

20. The best lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. The teachers' drive and enthusiasm inspire the pupils and they learn quickly. In a very good numeracy lesson with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, the teacher set a fast pace, using small whiteboards so that the pupils could do quick calculations as they multiplied two- and three-digit numbers. She then shared with them her enthusiasm for different methods for doing calculations involving multiplication. They made good progress because they wanted to learn and try things out for themselves.

21. In the many otherwise good lessons, the level of involvement is slightly lower because the enthusiasm and expertise that the teachers bring to the lessons are not always as high as they were in the lesson described above. Nevertheless, the pace of learning is brisk, and the teachers focus well on their learning objectives. These are shared well with the class so that the pupils know what they are expected to achieve. Teachers' expectations are high, both of behaviour and of the progress that their pupils are expected to make, and pupils respond well.

22. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, teachers' subject knowledge is still secure, and class control is good. The pace of lessons is satisfactory rather than good, and expectations are not as high as in the better lessons, so that the level of challenge is not as great. Not all pupils are challenged equally. In a numeracy lesson on rounding numbers up to the nearest 10, the boys were so keen to contribute that the girls got little opportunity to take part. In a design and technology lesson on designing and making a frame for a photograph, the task set was the same for all so that the younger or lower attaining pupils achieved less well – particularly when it came to modifying or improving their design. Later, the same teacher taught an art lesson well, infecting pupils with her enthusiasm and ensuring that all were challenged to improve their drawing and painting skills. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, the teaching approaches did not capture the pupils' interest, and the younger boys in the class, in particular, lost concentration and learnt little. The teacher was not able to manage them satisfactorily.

23. In literacy and numeracy lessons, the work is planned so that different groups of pupils within each class are given tasks to do that are appropriate for their learning needs. Because the tasks are relevant to their individual needs, and the pupils are aware of their individual targets, they are motivated and learn well. In foundation subjects, the tasks set are sometimes very similar for all within mixed age classes and do not always sufficiently challenge the higher or lower attaining pupils.

24. The homework that is set is effective in helping pupils to improve their knowledge and skills: it ranges from regular reading tasks to long-term project work that encourages pupils to develop their research skills at home, with the support of their parents or older brothers or sisters. This reinforces many of their learning objectives. Marking is done conscientiously, and the use of praise to build pupils' confidence is good. In English, mathematics and science, pupils know their targets and what they have to do to reach them. In other subjects the marking does not inform the pupils of what they need to do to raise the level of their work.

25. The quality of teaching during the inspection was very good in the Foundation Stage, and good overall in the rest of the school, with much that was very good. Across the school, the teaching of mathematics is good, with thorough coverage of all aspects of the subject. The pupils learn well because they are taught in depth. Secure subject knowledge leads to good teaching in English. Pupils learn well because teachers are seeking to meet their individual needs. Teaching is also good in science. Teachers provide practical lessons in which pupils can find out things for themselves and test hypotheses. Most learn well during these practical activities because they are so involved.

26. In ICT, history and geography, teaching is good. It was not possible to observe enough teaching in the other subjects to give judgements on the overall quality.

27. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Classroom assistants support pupils well and promote the learning of literacy and numeracy skills. Generally, class teachers take into account the attainment and needs of pupils with special educational needs and support them in their lessons. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.

## **The curriculum**

Overall, the curriculum is good.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and there are very good opportunities to extend pupils' learning experiences and sense of enjoyment outside the classroom in a range of activities. The range and quality of staffing and resources are good. However, accommodation is unsatisfactory; it is cramped and, in some circumstances, restricts the quality of learning.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good range of opportunities for pupils of all needs and abilities within a well-planned curriculum.
- There are very good opportunities for enrichment, especially in the arts.
- The good personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is an important factor in the strong personal development of pupils.
- There is a good match of teaching and ancillary staff to the needs of the school.
- Although resources are good, the quality of accommodation is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

28. Although this is a small school, its curriculum is broad, offering an impressive range of learning opportunities for all pupils. The curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of mixed age classes. Good use is made of the expertise of individual teachers in subject areas such as art, and all pupils benefit. Pupils are well catered for, whatever their needs. The relatively small number of pupils with special educational needs benefit from good ancillary support and extra teaching programmes and make good progress. The most able pupils are also identified and teaching strategies are mostly effective in enabling them to achieve well. The school copes with a very high level of pupil mobility remarkably well, successfully integrating incoming pupils quickly into all year groups. The good PSHE programme is instrumental in achieving this in addition to the positive role models provided by staff. Pupils develop as confident and articulate individuals, citizens and responsible members of the school community. The very good leadership of the headteacher ensures that, despite the pressure on staff in a small school, the curriculum is reviewed appropriately and is open to development. For example, the use of ICT has been carefully integrated into the curriculum to the benefit of all subjects. In subjects such as English, careful planning ensures that pupils are well catered for, although occasionally the match of work to the needs of all pupils is not consistent. Pupils are able to move smoothly from one phase to another, so that the potential problems of having mixed age classes are minimised.

29. The curriculum also benefits from very good opportunities for enrichment. These are particularly strong in the arts. There are opportunities for extra music tuition, and for pupils to participate in music and drama presentations. There are popular sports and other clubs available, including a recently established French club. Older pupils benefit from a residential visit. Strong parental support and community links play a significant part in enriching the curriculum.

30. The level of resourcing is good and adds to the quality of pupils' learning. The quality of staffing is also good, but there are limited opportunities for monitoring progress in subjects outside the core of English, mathematics and science. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, and this represents a decline since the previous inspection, when there were far fewer pupils in the school. The need to use the school hall as a classroom has a negative impact on the learning environment, although the skill of the staff prevents it having a negative effect on the curriculum. Staff facilities are also inadequate. Although the school does its best to minimise the impact, and uses other facilities such as the village hall, where appropriate, the accommodation is extremely cramped.

## Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure the care, guidance and welfare of the pupils are very effective. Achievement and personal development are monitored well. The involvement of the pupils in the school's work and development is good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are very well cared for and they are happy in school.
- Pupils feel valued because their teachers listen to their concerns.
- The induction procedures are very good and ensure that pupils new to the school settle quickly and happily.

## Commentary

31. Almost all the parents spoken to by inspectors, and who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, stated that the school cares for their children well. The inspection team agrees with their views. Parents believe that their children like school, and pupils spoken to during the inspection endorsed this view. The last report was critical of the arrangements for giving information to parents. This is now a strength of the school. A positive feature is the way that parents and their children linger at the end of the school day, and lengthy conversations take place between teachers and parents. Teachers know the pupils in their classes very well, which enables them to pick up any

concerns quickly. The large majority of pupils who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire said that there are adults at school that they would go to if they had worries. Pupils from Years 2, 3 and 4 were complimentary about the way the prefects help them at break and lunchtimes. During the inspection, all pupils said that they are happy in school and enthusiastic about all it has to offer.

32. The pupils feel able to express their opinions, whether positive or negative, because their teachers are good listeners and always respond to their comments. Pupils' contributions are valued in lessons, and this is helping to boost their self-esteem and confidence. For example, in a class assembly the pupils were asked what it would be like to be on television all the time. Answers ranged from 'You'd be rich and famous' to 'The whole world would see your mistakes'. The teacher helped them sensitively and positively to develop their ideas, leading them gently to the conclusion: 'Fame has its advantages and disadvantages'.

33. Parents are very happy with the induction procedures into school. Foundation Stage children are 'buddied' with a Year 1 partner, and pupils said that they remain friends throughout their time at school. The youngest children are invited to a number of pre-school sessions, and this helps both them and their families to become part of the school community. Parents feel that older pupils joining the school late 'are soon absorbed' and older pupils also said that settling into this friendly school was easy. A range of assessment procedures is in place in the core subjects of English and mathematics. They are used well to guide and inform teachers' planning, and teachers modify lesson plans in the light of assessments made during lessons. The results of national tests are analysed to identify areas that need additional focus and to indicate where individuals are under-performing. However, assessment arrangements are less well developed in the other subjects of the curriculum, and teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' abilities to ensure that they are set work that is appropriately challenging.

34. Overall, progress since the last inspection has been good.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a very good partnership with the parents. Links with the community are very effective and links with other schools are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The parents have very positive views of the school and are very appreciative of all it has to offer them and their children.
- Parents are very well informed about what is happening in school and the progress their children are making.
- Good links with other schools and pre-school groups enhance and support pupils' learning.
- Very good community links successfully promote pupils' personal development.

### **Commentary**

35. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the meeting with parents were overwhelmingly positive, and reflect parents' confidence in the school's new primary status. Their comments included: 'This is now a very popular school' and 'Children get a longer, better childhood than our friends' children at other schools'. Parents show their support by attending meetings in high numbers, helping in classrooms, staying after school to talk to teachers and through fund-raising for the Friends of Coombe Bissett School. The headteacher canvasses the views of the parents via questionnaires and responds to their suggestions and opinions in newsletters. Responses to the school's most recent questionnaire also show positive support for the headteacher and the school.

36. Parents are invited to termly parent/teacher consultations and to open mornings to look at their child's work, see the school 'in action' and take part in workshops. The annual reports are thorough. They provide comprehensive information about how well children are achieving, the level they are

working at and targets for improvement (that have been agreed with the parents). The newsletters are informative and written in a friendly style. Parents are sent guidance on helping their children with homework. The support that many pupils receive from their parents is having a positive impact on standards of reading in the school.

37. There are strong links with all the feeder pre-schools and regular meetings with neighbouring schools (cluster schools) on many issues, such as the curriculum, special educational needs teaching, and teaching and learning styles. There are good liaison arrangements with secondary schools related, for example, to induction, sport and science. Work experience students from local schools and colleges are welcomed into the school, as are teacher-training students.

38. The headteacher and governors have worked very hard since the last inspection to build strong and purposeful partnerships with the local community. Many community members regularly help in school – listening to reading, playing the piano, leading assemblies, talking to pupils about the history of the village and running an after-school club. The school has a close relationship with the local church. The vicar is a regular visitor, and school services, to which parents are also invited, are held in the church. Pupils design covers for the Parish magazine, which is edited and produced by the vicar. The friends' association and pupils contribute to the village fete, and the local area is very well used to enhance history and geography lessons. Pupils take part in local music festivals and were involved in the recent St. George's Day pageant in Salisbury. All these opportunities greatly enhance pupils' social and personal development.

39. The governing body and headteacher have responded vigorously to the criticisms of the previous report to improve communication with parents and to increase the level of parental and community involvement in the school. Improvements in this area have been very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the school is very good, and parents, staff and governors praise it. The management of the school is also good, despite the headteacher's lack of management time. The governance of the school is supportive and helpful.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the school is very good.
- Communication is very good within the school and with the local community, fostering a real sense of community.
- The work of the school is managed well.
- The governors fulfill their roles well.
- The financial controls are sound.

### **Commentary**

40. At the time of the last inspection, many parents were disappointed at what they saw as a lack of communication between the school and home. Now, almost all parents agree that the school is well run, and that relationships between the school and the community are very positive indeed. This was reinforced at a meeting when the parents were concerned that the school had become so popular that it might grow beyond its ability to cope with the number of new pupils. The headteacher's management of the school is exemplary. She has managed her staff very well, despite the fact that she teaches almost a full timetable. She has managed the introduction of performance management well and has led the school to an Investors in People award – recently renewed in recognition of the good management systems in the school. Her monitoring of the school is informal, but effective. She knows the staff and children so well that she is very aware, in this very small school, of the quality of the work that they are doing. In her involvement in the classrooms, and her general presence around the school, she is an excellent role model for all the adults who work within it. However, it is not possible for her to keep all policies up-to-date with the



workload that she has to bear. Nor has she the time to monitor the work of the school as rigorously as necessary. A priority for the governors, as they recognise, must be to find ways to provide her with more time away from the classroom.

41. The headteacher leads the school very well. It is her vision of a school that gives its pupils an education of quality from the age of four to 11, and that was the driving force behind the school's move from a first school to the status of a full primary. This has been recognised by parents as a major improvement, and has raised its standing and viability. Her drive and energy, fuelled by a desire to see the school grow, and reach the highest standards, have resulted in major improvements, including the Basic Skills Award and a much needed extension to the school building.

42. Subject co-ordinators have been trained in their role. They are effective and committed, even though some have only recently been appointed and carry three or four subjects each. The English coordinator provides strong leadership. She shares her expertise with all members of staff, and thereby benefits all aspects of the curriculum.

43. All governors visit regularly to monitor and support the school. Many of them have considerable professional expertise outside of education that they bring to their role for the benefit of the school. They are involved in setting and monitoring the budget and in school development planning. They have been closely involved in the changes to the school's status – from a voluntary-controlled first school to a voluntary-aided primary school. They have discussed the changes that have been made with parents and the local community, and taken account of their views. They fulfil their role well and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plans are detailed and have been implemented effectively. The priorities for improvement are appropriate and there is clear evidence that progress is being made.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	216,631	Balance from previous year	16,013
Total expenditure	211,799	Balance carried forward to the next	4,832
Expenditure per pupil	2,750		

44. The management of the school's finances is good. All the necessary controls are in place, and the school has received a favourable audit report. Governors' expertise and the efficient work of the administrative officer ensure that the school makes very good use of its resources. Special educational needs funding is spent appropriately. The principles of best value are applied well. Income and expenditure per pupil are above the national average, but reflect the school's context. Pupils achieve well in terms of academic development and very well in their personal development, and the school is providing good value for money.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The provision for the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

45. The Foundation Stage comprises the children in the Reception class. Children join the school in September after their fourth birthday. They are taught with a small group of Year 1 pupils (chosen because they benefit from being taught for a further year with younger children).

46. The majority of children enter the school with levels of attainment in line with those expected of children of this age in the six areas of learning, although the current intake is slightly above average. They make good progress through the 'stepping stones' of the Foundation Stage curriculum in the Reception class. Being taught alongside Year 1 children helps them to learn the classroom rules quickly, and helps in their personal development, as well as developing their communication skills. Almost all are on course to meet and exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas of the curriculum by the time they enter Year 1.

47. The quality of provision has been sustained since the last inspection. It is never less than good in all areas of learning. Overall, teaching is very good. Assessment systems are used well to support children's learning. All adults who work with the children have high expectations of behaviour and learning and manage the children well. Their knowledge of the children is detailed, and they use this information to help the children to develop learning skills and social skills.

48. Children have very good attitudes to learning. They achieve well, acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. The children are interested in all the activities, learn to concentrate for increasing lengths of time, and become independent. During lessons, many children work unsupervised at specified tasks, while the adults work with other groups.

49. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Resources for most areas of learning are good. The teacher and teaching assistant (TA) work well together and the TA makes a significant contribution to the quality of care and support that the children enjoy.

50. There was insufficient time to inspect every aspect of the Foundation Stage in depth. There were three areas of focus: literacy, numeracy and personal development. In each, the teaching is very good and the children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the year, and they are achieving well.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in response to the adults' high expectations of them.
- Children are encouraged to be independent.

#### **Commentary**

51. Children respond well to the high expectations of good behaviour that the staff have of them, and settle quickly and confidently into the class. They learn to take turns and share. Assemblies and class discussion time are planned opportunities for children to think about themselves and others, and to share ideas about what is special to them. They are encouraged to think for

themselves and to ask and answer questions, with good support from the adults to challenge and extend their skills and knowledge. They achieve well and reach good standards. A particular feature is the way that, towards the end of the year, they have built up enough confidence to be able to make suggestions, without prompting, to the teacher on how the lessons could develop, and offer ideas for further activities. They reach above average standards.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

The provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Emphasis is placed on teaching early reading and writing skills.
- There are good opportunities for speaking and listening.

### **Commentary**

52. Children develop their skills in listening and speaking through a wide range of activities. They recount their personal experiences when discussing what they do at home, and use appropriate language when interacting with adults and other children. By the end of the year, they are very confident and articulate when speaking to adults. They enjoy looking at books, and all learn to write simple words by the end of the year. The higher attaining pupils can write simple sentences. Overall, standards are above expectations.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well-planned activities to develop mathematical skills foster a love of learning and enquiry.
- The opportunities for discussion develop children's understanding of mathematics and increase their mathematical vocabulary.

### **Commentary**

53. Children are taught to count objects one by one in order to aid accuracy. They learn quickly because numeracy skills are reinforced throughout the day. For example, during registration they all help the teacher to count the number in the class and work out how many are absent. They are learning the names of shapes, such as squares and rectangles, and their properties. They learn to count and to divide during simple number games. By the end of the year, standards are above those expected for children of their age.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

### **Commentary**

54. Good progress is made because of good teaching. In the short time available for the inspection, it was not possible to observe enough to make detailed judgements. However, in knowledge and understanding of the world, the children learn to understand and respect the environment; they learn about nature and living things.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Commentary**

55. In the short time available for the inspection, it was not possible to observe enough to make detailed judgements. Creative development is taught thoroughly through singing, music, art and construction games. Children join in the singing with the whole school and, though some are quiet and unsure of the words, the quality of their singing in assembly indicated that they reach the standards expected by the end of their year in Reception.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Commentary**

56. In the short time available for the inspection, it was not possible to observe enough to make detailed judgements. Physical development is fostered well through outdoor play and good opportunities for movement sessions in the school hall.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in Year 2 are well above average.
- Pupils of all ages achieve well in response to good teaching.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and contribute to good learning.
- In a minority of instances, teaching approaches are not sufficiently directed at the needs of all pupils in mixed age and mixed ability classes.

### **Commentary**

57. Standards of Year 2 pupils in the 2003 national tests were high, reflecting a continuing trend, and were well above standards in similar schools nationally. The Year 6 entry in 2003 was too small for the results to be significant in national terms, although the three pupils involved did at least as well as expected. The inspection showed that standards in English are well above average in the current Year 2, for both boys and girls, in all the key areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. A particular strength is the confidence and clarity in speaking, which many pupils show when responding to teachers or volunteering information in class. Pupils also read with confidence, and most develop an accurate written style, with a good range of vocabulary. Pupils in Year 2 join the school with above average standards and achieve well.

58. Standards in Year 6 (where there are only six pupils in the current year) are average in relation to national expectations. These pupils also achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. They have well developed speaking and listening skills. The quality of their reading and writing is more variable. There are no significant differences in standards or achievement between boys and girls. The most able pupils in all year groups, and also the small number with special educational needs, share in the good achievement. The level of achievement in English is particularly creditable given that the school has to cope with a high rate of mobility, with a high percentage of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times.

59. Teaching in English is good and results in successful learning. The main strength of the teaching lies in the appropriately challenging expectations of teachers, who manage mixed age classes skilfully, and ensure that pupils who are well motivated and keen to learn remain very focused on their work. The quality of marking is variable and, in some instances, is not very helpful in showing pupils how they can improve their work. However, assessment is used effectively in lessons: teachers refer to pupils' targets and give good feedback on how well they are doing. When teaching to the whole class, teachers use questioning well to consolidate learning and language development – as seen, for example, when Year 3 and 4 pupils were investigating poetic forms. Teachers also put a strong emphasis on developing independent and collaborative learning skills, encouraging pupils to research and to find out things for themselves. Pupils respond very well to these opportunities, and learn well as a result. For example, when Year 5 and 6 pupils analysed Alfred Noyes' poem *The Highwayman*, the teacher insisted that pupils substantiated their answers in such a way that they not only improved their comprehension skills, but also developed their abilities as confident speakers. At the same time, the pupils were encouraged to develop study skills such as note taking. On the minority of occasions when learning is less effective, it is for one of two reasons. Either the teacher does not match the work sufficiently to the needs of all pupils in the class or, where there is an imbalance of boys and girls, the teacher or TA sometimes allows one gender group to dominate discussion or other activities, with the result that some pupils become passive learners and do not achieve as well as others.

60. Leadership and management are good. The teaching of literacy is monitored, and there are strategies such as the provision of 'catch-up' groups in place to help lower attaining pupils improve their progress. The provision of English is regularly reviewed and the professional development of staff is good.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

61. Most pupils in the school have above average language and literacy skills. These help to promote good learning in all subject areas. Almost all pupils listen well and are confident in discussion as, for example, when considering the use of evidence in history. Pupils also use their literacy skills to become good researchers. For example, using information from the Internet and from books to explore topics in geography. The ability of many pupils to read and write fluently is a major contributory factor to the good standards achieved in several subject areas.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The school's provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of mathematics is good across the school and pupils achieve well.
- The good ethos created for learning ensures that pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics.
- Information from assessment is used well to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are well above average, as they have been consistently in recent years. The small group of pupils in Year 6 is reaching average standards overall. Last year they were above average, but the numbers are too small for them to be meaningful. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. Higher attaining pupils are extended by tasks that differ in the amount of challenge they present. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. There is no significant difference in the achievement between boys and girls.

63. By the end of Year 2, the higher attaining pupils are working at Level 3 and have very good numeracy skills. They can perform calculations accurately and have a good knowledge of mathematical shapes. Almost all pupils are at least at Level 2 of the National Curriculum for mathematics and can add, subtract, divide and multiply one- and two-digit numbers with a reasonable degree of accuracy. At the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils are confident mathematicians for their age. They are working at Level 5, and can use a range of strategies to do complex calculations, including multiplying and dividing three-, four- and five-digit numbers. Most pupils are at least at Level 4, the nationally expected level for their age. However, there are two lower attaining pupils in this year group and, because of the small overall numbers, they bring down the overall levels to close to, or slightly below, average.

64. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was consistently good or better. Pupils are enthused and motivated by the quality of the teaching and the opportunities for investigation and problem solving. They respond very well to the well-planned lessons and show positive attitudes to the subject. For example, they take part enthusiastically in the mental mathematics that is used at the start of the lessons. Teachers are aware of the different ways in which pupils learn, and they use a variety of teaching methods and strategies to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. They have good subject knowledge and are able to present work in a variety of ways. This maximises opportunities for effective learning. Good relationships and clear routines and procedures give pupils confidence and independence. Homework is used effectively to reinforce the work done in class.

65. The school copes well with the difficulties presented by mixed age classes. In a very good lesson in the Year 5/6 class, on alternative strategies for multiplying three- and four-digit numbers, very well planned teaching ensured a high level of challenge for the wide range of ages and abilities within the class. In the mixed Year 3/4 class, good use was made of skilled support staff to provide activities matched to the needs of the younger pupils.

66. The leadership and management of mathematics are good. Teachers are reflective and keen to refine classroom practice. Resources are good and used well to support learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

67. Pupils have good opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge as part of their work in other areas of the curriculum. As a result, they develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. They use graphs and tables to record data and, in science, they estimate and measure. The emphasis in mathematics lessons on pupils applying their knowledge from one area of mathematics to another, and on investigating and solving problems, is a good grounding for the use of such skills in other curriculum areas.

## **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is appropriate emphasis on investigation.
- Standards in science are rising.
- Good resources for science contribute to pupils' ability to learn.
- The teaching does not always meet the needs of pupils of different ages, abilities and levels of attainment.

## Commentary

68. National test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were at the national average, but below those in similar schools. The number of pupils involved was too low for this to have any statistical significance.

69. Current standards in Year 2 are above average. By the end of the year, pupils have a good understanding of living things, know the names and functions of the different parts of plants and understand forces. They are learning about the properties of a range of materials and have begun successfully to plan and carry out simple scientific investigations. All pupils achieve well.

70. By the end of Year 6, attainment is in line with national expectations. For pupils of all ages and abilities, including pupils with special educational needs and the most able, this represents good achievement, particularly since many pupils join the school with diverse prior experiences.

71. Pupils know the properties of solids, liquids and gases. They investigate the properties of different materials and can say what materials are most suited for a range of purposes and why. They understand that some changes in materials are reversible, such as when water freezes, and that some are not. Most can write up their investigations clearly and record their results in graphs that they can interpret and explain. They organise and carry out investigations, with a good understanding of the factors that will make for a fair test.

72. The teaching is good. It is well planned and well resourced. Teachers make lessons enjoyable and, as a result, the pupils respond well. The pupils enjoy science and are eager to be challenged and questioned. They are excited when they are able to make predictions and then discover the answers for themselves. In a very good science lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher had supplied a wide range of fruits in order that the pupils could find out about the seeds they contained. They identified many differences between the seeds and the many ways that fruits have for distributing them. They were enthralled by the detail they discovered when they examined and photographed them under a computer microscope. Where the teaching is less effective, it is because the learning objectives are aimed at the needs of the average pupils in the mixed age classes and are not entirely appropriate for the higher or lower attaining pupils. Work is marked conscientiously, but it does not always indicate to pupils how they can improve.

73. The subject is well resourced and is led well. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last report, including the writing of a good scheme of work.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages achieve well.
- Standards in Year 2 are above average.
- Pupils have good opportunities to use ICT as a learning aid in several subjects and are confident in its use.
- Although some of the equipment needs updating, there is a coherent development plan in place for the further development of ICT.

## Commentary

74. Standards in ICT are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6, in relation to expectations nationally. For pupils of all ages and abilities, including pupils with special educational needs and the most able, this represents good achievement, particularly since many pupils join the school with diverse prior experiences.

75. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good range of ICT skills. They can word-process well. After using programmes to create patterns, they can add captions and save and print their work. During the inspection, several younger pupils were observed in lessons using computers confidently and largely independently.

76. Several pupils in Year 6 have a less secure background in ICT than those lower down the school. However, they achieve well in developing a range of competencies in various subject areas. Pupils use the Internet effectively for research, including, for example, the ability to use databases when carrying out a water survey in science, and making graphs to record traffic surveys in geography. Commercial programmes are used competently in subject areas such as mathematics, and pupils are confident in using ICT as a word-processing tool. Pupils are able to talk with appropriate fluency about some of the advantages and disadvantages of using ICT as a learning resource, although they are less aware of the ethical and other issues involved in the use of computers in the wider world.

77. Information and communication technology is not taught as a stand-alone subject in the school, and no teaching was observed during the inspection. However, the quality of the work seen, and the confidence and competence of pupils in using ICT, confirm that the teaching is effective in promoting good learning and achievement. Assessment in ICT is good, and there is a clear understanding of pupils' achievement and how they can develop their skills further.

78. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The use of ICT as an integral part of teaching and learning is carefully built into curriculum planning, taking advantage of local authority advice, but also taking account of the school's own needs. Pupils, especially older ones, are given regular opportunities to use ICT in and out of lessons as a means of developing their skills. Teachers act as positive role models through their own use of ICT. There is a good, varied, range of resources, and opportunities are being taken to broaden pupils' experiences, for example, by establishing an e-mail link with a school in Colombia. Although some of the computer hardware needs replacing, and some of the accommodation is cramped, there is a coherent plan for the further development of ICT as an integral part of the curriculum, including plans for upgrading resources and introducing more staff training.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

79. Information and communication technology is used well in several subjects as a means of supporting and furthering pupils' learning. It is built into curriculum planning. Information and communication technology is particularly effective as a means of research, with pupils having access to the Internet to obtain information for subjects such as history. Pupils also use ICT independently on a regular basis outside lessons. Consequently, it is seen as an integral and normal part of curriculum provision and adds to the quality of learning in most subject areas.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes towards the subject and work well both collaboratively and individually.
- Teachers use a good range of resources to promote learning.
- There is insufficient focus on higher level historical skills which would raise the achievement of more able older pupils.



## Commentary

80. No lessons were observed for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and there was too little evidence of retained work to make a judgement on standards in Year 2. In the key areas of historical knowledge and understanding, and the ability to use historical evidence, standards in Year 6 are in line with national expectations for pupils in this age group. Pupils are able to research effectively, using ICT to investigate life in the Ancient Roman period. Although there is relatively little sustained writing in Years 3 and 4, pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop the ability to describe life in past times; for example, recognising some key differences in comparing peoples' lives in Victorian times with today. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and the most able pupils, achieve satisfactorily in building upon their prior knowledge. However, whilst developing good research skills, and often achieving a good standard of descriptive writing, pupils have few opportunities to develop an understanding of higher level concepts and skills: there is insufficient emphasis on considering why things do or do not change or on examining the significance of this.

81. The teaching of pupils between Years 3 and 6 is satisfactory. Teachers use a good range of resources, including Anglo-Saxon artefacts and videotape to illustrate developments. Evidence such as census material is used well to enable pupils to investigate past times, as seen in a lesson in Years 5 and 6, in which pupils investigated the history of the local village. Pupils enjoy these activities, are interested and work productively. However, teachers provide insufficient opportunities to analyse evidence, and this sometimes restricts the achievement of more able pupils. Work is marked regularly, but it does not always indicate to pupils how their standards can be raised. There is a strong reliance on worksheets lower down the school where the teaching is sometimes unsatisfactory. The match of work is not always appropriate to the differing needs of pupils, and some lose concentration or do not achieve sufficiently as a result.

82. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic to develop history, but opportunities for monitoring and systematic development of the subject are limited because of her wide range of responsibilities.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages achieve well in response to good teaching.
- Standards of pupils in Year 2 are above expectations.
- Pupils have a positive attitude towards the subject and enjoy using a good range of resources.

## Commentary

83. It was not possible during the inspection to observe any geography teaching for younger pupils, but the evidence of work seen shows that standards in Year 2 are above the expectations for pupils in this age group. Pupils explore the locality of the school and develop well the ability to carry out basic mapping. They can recognise key geographical features, and they can use basic information to complete weather charts. *Barnaby Bear* is used well to develop a wider perspective of place. Consequently, pupils of all abilities achieve well.

84. Standards of pupils in Year 6 are in line with expectations, and this represents good achievement for these pupils in terms of their prior attainment. Pupils develop a sound understanding of how the landscape changes over time, and also a sound understanding of processes such as the water cycle. They also show good development of research skills, using the Internet to research information about various countries. However, the resulting work tends to be descriptive, with little attempt at analysis.

85. The teaching of geography is good. Teachers use a range of resources to motivate pupils and teach a range of geographical skills, whilst simultaneously helping pupils acquire an appropriate geographical vocabulary. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 took part in a local traffic survey during the inspection, and this was managed effectively so that pupils developed a thorough understanding of environmental issues. A range of maps was used effectively in a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Because the teacher in this lesson encouraged collaborative and investigative work, and managed the process well, the pupils developed the ability to recognise and name key geographical features in the locality. By plotting routes, they were able to improve their understanding of the uses of maps. Teachers' feedback and marking are helpful in showing pupils how well they have done, but the written comments could usefully give them more information on how they can improve. Teachers have high expectations, particularly of younger pupils, and the pupils respond to this well in producing good quality work, especially in Year 2.

86. Leadership of the subject is good, but there are limited opportunities for monitoring, and accommodation for some classes is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, resources are good, and geography is a developing subject.

### **Religious education**

87. The school's provision for religious education was not included in this inspection. It is the subject of a separate section 23 inspection because this is a Voluntary Aided, Church of England school.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

88. Only one lesson in art was observed during the inspection, and the pupils in Years 5 and 6 attained an average standard. However, there is some evidence of high quality work; for example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 had previously produced montages of 'People in action', showing a good command of colour and successfully conveying an impression of mood and movement. The co-ordinator plans for the subject thoroughly and enthusiastically. She has devised a realistic method of assessment to record progress and to ensure good coverage of the art curriculum. Pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject and achieve well.

89. Work in physical education was also sampled. Only one lesson was observed, for pupils in Years 3 and 4. In that lesson pupils demonstrated an average standard of throwing and catching for their age group. Physical education is given a high priority in the school, with a strong emphasis on swimming. Pupils are also given the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports events, including competitions and festivals for netball, rugby and cricket.

90. It was not possible to observe any music lessons. However, listening to the pupils sing – which they do well, with significant success in local competitions – indicates that standards are above average overall, and that pupils are achieving well.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

91. It was only possible to observe one lesson and, as most of the work is oral, there was little written work to use as evidence. However, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that provision in PSHE and citizenship is good, and that standards are above average.

92. Teachers are particularly skilled at developing the confidence of children from an early age and building on this as pupils move from Years 1 to 6. In the Reception class pupils work hard, choosing for themselves from a wide range of activities that promote their independence and social skills. The fact that they are working with pupils from Year 1 helps to promote their social and personal development.

93. The school plans to introduce a school council as soon as it is certain that it has the best possible procedures in place. However, pupils are given good opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility. There are prefects, and pupils welcome the opportunity to have their views heard. Pupils treat each other with respect. A strength of the school is the emphasis that is placed upon strong personal development, which enables pupils to work well together, and contributes very effectively to discussion in class. Strong community links also give pupils a very positive sense of development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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