

INSPECTION REPORT

**DOLTON VOLUNTARY AIDED CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dolton, Winkleigh

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113450

Headteacher: Miss Rachel Priest

Lead inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th March 2004

Inspection number: 255981

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	63
School address:	Dolton The Square Winkleigh Devon
Postcode:	EX19 8QF
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Dolton CEP School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Alison Atton
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Dolton VA C of E Primary School is smaller than most other schools. There are 63 pupils on roll and these are taught in 3 mixed age classes. Each class contains pupils from three age groups. The school serves a mixed, rural catchment area. All the pupils are from white British or other white ethnic backgrounds. There are two pupils who speak English as an additional language but these are not at an early stage of language acquisition and have equal access to the National Curriculum as their peers. Eight pupils are on the special educational needs (SEN) register, which is below average. Three have statements of SEN which is well above average. Pupils with learning difficulties make up the largest SEN group. There is a high level of mobility in the school. When they enter the school, most children are achieving standards that are well below average for their age. The school received a Healthy Schools Award in 2003. The headteacher was only appointed from January 2004, some seven weeks before the inspection.

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Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Dolton VA C of E Primary School provides a sound education for its pupils. The very recently appointed headteacher has made a good start to her time at school and she has accelerated the process of school improvement. Her leadership and management of the school are good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average in mathematics and science but are below average in all aspects of pupils' literacy work. However, because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Years 2 and 6, most pupils are achieving satisfactorily for their abilities. Achievement in mathematics is good. Standards in ICT are below average and achievement here is unsatisfactory. Governance of the school is sound and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has made a good start since her very recent appointment to the school, but she has a heavy teaching commitment and not enough administrative support.
- Pupils are well cared for and looked after, and their very good behaviour and relationships contribute to the impressive sense of community within the school.
- The school's partnership with parents and the local community is very good.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for those with SEN is good.
- All pupils are very well included in the school's life and work.
- The school's standards in literacy, especially in writing and in ICT and the quality of teaching in ICT need further improvement.
- There are some important shortcomings in the current school improvement plan.
- Assessment and recording procedures are not sufficiently well developed to allow data to be used set realistic but challenging targets to improve standards.

The school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards in all aspects of pupils' literacy work have fallen and insufficient progress has been made in addressing the three key issues which were identified. These were concerned with improving teaching to increase the overall rate of progress that pupils make, raising standards in ICT and monitoring the progress that pupils make through the National Curriculum. However, the rate of progress being made has been accelerated significantly since the headteacher's recent appointment. Standards in science are being raised and the quality of teaching is being improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Great caution must be exercised when analysing data from this school because of the very small year group numbers. During the inspection, standards attained in Years 2 and 6 were average in mathematics and science but below average in all aspects of literacy. **Pupils' achievement is satisfactory** overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in mathematics, and for pupils with SEN, and satisfactory in English and science. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall because Year 2 contains the highest proportion of pupils with SEN in the school and Year 6 has a high proportion of pupils with complex learning difficulties. This means that most pupils are making at least sound progress while not reaching average standards in their literacy work. However, both

standards and achievement in ICT are unsatisfactory. Pupils are not making sufficient progress in this subject because of lack of progressive teaching of concepts and skills and the unreliability of some older equipment.

Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in class and around the school are very good. They are keen to learn and are fully committed to their lessons. Attendance is good and pupils come to school punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Here, the teacher provides a well balanced, challenging curriculum, makes the children feel valued and welcome and works very effectively with her assistant. Strengths in teaching across the school are the positive way that pupils are managed and the improved lesson planning. Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory but it is enhanced well by a good range of visits and visitors to the school. This brings the curriculum to life well and improves pupils' learning. However, provision for ICT and assessment are not sufficiently developed. Care and welfare provision are very good, and the very good links with parents and the local community support the school's work well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the newly appointed headteacher are good. She has introduced several new initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and curriculum leadership. These are beginning to impact positively. There are some important shortcomings in the existing school improvement plan but the new headteacher has introduced an effective interim plan for the current term. **Governance is satisfactory.** Governors are enthusiastic and support the school well, but procedures to evaluate critically the school's work are not sufficiently developed. Governors meet all their statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils have positive views of the school and the headteacher has quickly secured the confidence of parents, who are fully committed to its work. Parents are particularly pleased with the school's work in helping their children become mature and the arrangements made to settle pupils into the school. Most pupils are confident that there is an adult at school they can go to if they are worried or concerned.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

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

- Continue to raise standards in literacy across the school, especially in writing.
- Raise the standards achieved and improve the quality of teaching in ICT.
- Improve the effectiveness of school improvement planning.
- Further develop the procedures for assessing what pupils know and can do and the progress they make and use the data more effectively to set targets to improve standards.
- Governors should continue with their best endeavours to increase the headteacher's non-contact time and level of administrative support.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The distribution of pupils with SEN across the year groups in this small school significantly influences the standards pupils attain, especially in the national tests when compared with schools nationally. Both Year 2 and Year 6 contain high proportions of pupils with SEN. The Year 2 group contains a higher SEN proportion than usual and is the highest of any group in the school. Year 6 contains two pupils with statements of specific and significant educational need. These factors impact particularly on pupils' language work and make it more difficult for them to reach average standards.

In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are below those expected for their age in all aspects of their literacy work. Standards in mathematics and science are average across the school. However, most are achieving least satisfactorily in English and science and well in mathematics. Children in the Foundation Stage are also achieving well and the pupils with SEN are making good progress towards their own learning targets. Standards are below average in ICT and achievement is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with SEN achieve good standards for their capabilities and make good progress towards their own learning targets.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well.
- Literacy skills are lower in Year 6 because of previous underachievement but weaknesses in approach are being rectified.
- Standards in science are rising in the school as a result of the higher profile the subject has been given.
- Achievement in mathematics across the school is good.
- Across the school, standards in ICT are below average and most pupils are not achieving as well as they should.

Commentary

1. When they enter the school, most children are attaining standards that are well below those expected for their age, especially in their language development. Several of the current Reception group have specific speech and language difficulties. Most make good overall progress in the Foundation Stage but are still achieving standards that are below average when they begin Year 1. This is because of the good teaching and the well planned curriculum. Standards are average in children's personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, where children make good progress in their learning. Standards are also below average in children's mathematical and physical development and in their communication, language and literacy. But here they make good progress to achieve below average standards from a lower level on entry to the school. Better progress in their physical development is limited by lack of regular access to an appropriate outside play and activity area.
2. Analysis of the results of the national tests for seven-year-olds shows that standards have fluctuated from well below to well above average. The results in 2003 were very high and were well above average in reading and mathematics. The findings of this inspection are that standards in the current Year 2 are much lower. This is because of the composition of the year group and the high proportion of pupils with SEN. Standards in reading and writing are below average, and average in mathematics and science. Standards are lower in literacy because of pupils' SEN needs and the lower level in language skills on entry to the school.

3. Analysis of the trends in the national tests for eleven-year-olds shows a similar wide variation in results, with lower standards in English and science. The results in 2003 showed that standards were average in mathematics, below average in English and well below average in science. The findings of this inspection are that standards are below average in English and average in mathematics and science. The below average standards in English are explained by the low language levels on entry to the school and the complex language difficulties of some pupils in Year 6. The improvement in science is the result of the impact of the focus of the new science teacher/co-ordinator in raising the profile of the subject in the school.
4. Across the school, standards in ICT are below average and pupils are not achieving as well as they should. The main reasons for this are that pupils have not been progressively taught the necessary concepts and skills to enable them to reach average standards, although there is evidence that the approach has been much more focused recently. There are also continuing difficulties with pupils accessing up to date and reliable computers and printers for them to practise their skills and use them sufficiently across different subjects. The key issue at the last inspection concerning raising standards in ICT has not been addressed satisfactorily. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection for overall judgements to be made about provision and standards in history, geography, art and design, music, physical education (PE) and design and technology (DT).
5. Across the school, pupils achieve soundly and make satisfactory progress in their learning. Achievement in mathematics is good. This is because of the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and the good, practical approach which has been adopted. Pupils with SEN attain good standards for their previous learning and make good progress towards their own learning targets, which are realistic and achievable. Teachers and their assistants support pupils well and this enables them to make this good progress. The integration and support given to pupils with significant learning difficulties are good and staff work very effectively to encourage and enable these pupils to be fully involved with all school activities. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met satisfactorily. The mixed age classes allow younger pupils to be taught in groups that more closely match their ability. This is used well. Standards are also being raised through the provision of booster groups in English, mathematics and science. The use of literacy skills across all subject areas is not fully developed. There is an overuse of photocopiable worksheets in some subjects. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily across other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour overall are very good. Their attendance and punctuality are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully promotes good attendance levels and parents ensure the attendance of their children.
- Pupils demonstrate a very good interest in school life and in the range of activities provided.
- Pupils' willingness to be enterprising and take responsibility and their confidence and self-esteem are very good.
- The school promotes good relationships between pupils and adults with its 'family' atmosphere.

Commentary

6. The very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships between pupils contribute to the impressive sense of community in the school. Pupils show very good interest in their lessons and strive hard to achieve the expectations of their teachers. The family atmosphere that permeates the whole school has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils understand the school rules and do their best to keep them. As a result, standards of behaviour have improved since the last inspection and are now very good. The adults in the school lead by example and older pupils set good examples for their younger peers. The ethos promoted by the school is one of a large and happy family

where everyone is valued and respected. Both parents and pupils confirm how much they enjoy and benefit from this caring environment.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.0
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.

7. Attendance is good and above the national figure. This aspect has improved since the last inspection. The school ensures that parents and carers appreciate the importance of the prompt and regular attendance of their children at school. These efforts are very effective and, as a result, there is no unauthorised absence. During interviews and discussions with pupils it was very evident that they enjoyed school and their lessons. There has been one fixed period exclusion for one day in February of this year but none in the previous school year.
8. Pupils have many opportunities for taking on additional responsibility and they respond very well to them. The school council has a boy and girl representative from Year 1 upwards who meet regularly and discuss and debate the various suggestions they receive. The renovation of playground markings was the result of one of their initiatives. The 'buddy' system ensures that the younger members of school are fully supported and build lasting relationships throughout the school. An example of the buddy system was seen during the inspection at lunch time. Each table had an older pupil as supervisor who collected and served the meals and ensured help was given where needed. This assistance was carried out sensitively and without patronising the younger children. Pupil playground helpers organise games at playtime. Pupils carry out routine duties quietly and efficiently without any fuss and are quick to use their initiative when the need arises. Parents say that the relationships re-inforced by the buddy system stay with pupils long after they have moved on to secondary education.
9. Older pupils are quick to help their younger schoolmates should the need arise. Boy and girl pupils of differing ages interviewed during the inspection displayed mature, articulate, confident and responsible attitudes. The school encourages the personal and social development of pupils.
10. Pupils understand the differences between right and wrong and demonstrate this by their attitudes and actions in school. They have a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others and this is continually fostered by the family atmosphere of the school. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said there was no bullying in school and none was seen during the inspection. However, there was some discussion about what constituted bullying and pupils agreed that sometimes boisterous playground behaviour could be misconstrued. During the inspection, pupils were seen to be quick to point out to others if their behaviour was inappropriate.
11. Moral and spiritual development is encouraged in many ways. The links with the neighbouring church and the involvement of the Rector in assemblies assist the awareness of pupils. In one whole school assembly observed, the Rector told an imaginative story which promoted moral issues in a very understandable and entertaining way which pupils absorbed, enjoyed and understood. Before lunchtime, a grace was sung in parts, which apart from being extremely competently carried out, had a great spiritual impact. The awareness of living in a multicultural environment is promoted by the school. The school sponsors a schoolgirl in India and members of different faiths visit the school. Outside visits are made to theatres and museums and the school has plans to visit a Synagogue.

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background

Ethnic background of pupils

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
61	0	0
2	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall, but with some important strengths. The quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement are satisfactory. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for those with SEN is good, but aspects of assessment are not sufficiently developed. The school's very strong Christian and community ethos enables it to maintain a high profile within the local community. The school ensures that all pupils are included in all aspects of its work. As a result of these strengths, parents and pupils have a positive view of the school's achievements.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage and for pupils with SEN, it is good. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment data in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory but are unsatisfactory across the rest of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good, and satisfactory across the school.
- Strengths in the Foundation Stage are the very effective co-operation between the class teacher and her assistant and the emphasis put on the personal, social and emotional development of the children.
- Pupils with SEN are taught well.
- Most of the lessons observed during the inspection were good, but the impact of the teaching over time has been satisfactory.
- A strength in teaching is the positive way that pupils are managed and encouraged.
- The good assessment practices in writing are not extended and developed sufficiently across other curriculum areas.
- Procedures for assessing and recording the progress that pupils make and the setting of learning targets to raise standards are not sufficiently developed across the school.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 14 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	1	10	3	0	0	0

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

12. The quality of teaching has remained broadly the same since the last inspection. This has been achieved despite a high level of staff turnover. The proportion of good and satisfactory lessons observed is almost identical to the profile in 1998. Now, as then, no unsatisfactory teaching was

observed. However, in the current inspection, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection has not been maintained over the whole of the last year. Since the headteacher's appointment, she has sensibly focused on the development and improvement of teaching and she has successfully introduced new planning practices and the use of more effective teaching strategies. For example, work sample evidence shows that, recently, teachers have become much clearer about the specific learning intended in each lesson and plans and pupils' work make reference to these. In some areas, pupils are using statements of intended learning as a means of assessing how successfully they have learned. Both parents and pupils are pleased with the standard of teaching in the school.

13. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are managed well and the way that they are encouraged and made to feel welcome and valued enables them to gain confidence and to settle quickly to their learning. A strength in provision is the very good co-operation between the class teacher and her assistant. The latter is well prepared and undertakes useful observations of children's achievements. Children are given good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. Assessment is satisfactory. The teacher is beginning to record assessment information for the end of year profile. A shortcoming is that opportunities to record observations as evidence of children's achievement are not sufficiently taken.
14. Strengths in teaching in Years 1 to 6 are in the way that teachers introduce lessons effectively and make their expectations clear. Teachers plan well, and in the best examples, the work for the different ages and abilities of pupils in the class is identified and the teaching assistant's responsibilities are clearly set out. Teachers generally show good subject knowledge in literacy and numeracy and the respective strategies are being implemented well. Across the school, pupils are managed well and are encouraged and motivated by teachers' enthusiastic approach, their introduction of challenging activities and their use of interesting resources. However, there was evidence from previous work, especially in literacy, that pupils had not been taught concepts and skills at a sufficient pace. This has been rectified now.
15. A Year 1 PE lesson, which was held in the village hall, illustrated several other features of good, effective teaching. The teacher managed the walk from school to the village hall safely and efficiently and the minimum teaching time was lost as pupils changed ready for the lesson. The lesson was part of a sequence being done on dance where pupils were rehearsing and developing a sequence of movements to music depicting a circus procession. Pupils undertook a vigorous warm-up and realised the importance of preparing for exercise. The teacher set the context of the lesson well by reminding pupils what they had done before. New balancing and moving skills were practised on floor mats before refining them and putting them to music. Pupils were encouraged by the teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm and by the opportunity for them to demonstrate what they could do. The lesson ended with a whole class performance of the sequences learned so far and showed commitment and enjoyment from all who took part.
16. Teachers plan well for those pupils who have SEN. They provide suitable work for them and the teaching assistants support them well. Teachers make sure that these pupils are fully involved in all the lesson activities, and they are listened to and appreciated for what they contribute to the classes.
17. Overall, the quality and impact of the school's assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. However, there are some examples of good practice. For example, the work which has been done by the whole staff on the assessment of pupils' writing has been very good. Teachers have selected pieces of pupils' writing across different year groups and have met together to assess these according to National Curriculum criteria. They are collected in assessment books and clearly annotated. Information is used well to set individual writing targets based on areas that require development. This is good practice. A system to assess and record progress in reading has recently been introduced. However, in other areas of the curriculum, the procedures are not sufficiently robust or regular. An important weakness is that there has been no detailed analysis of the available assessment data from the statutory assessment at the end of the Reception year nor of the national tests at the age of seven and eleven. As a consequence it is difficult for the school to have a clear view of the progress the pupils make as they move through the school or to set

useful developmental targets for groups or individuals. Procedures for recording the progress that pupils make through the subjects of the National Curriculum are also underdeveloped. This was also a shortcoming identified at the last inspection.

The curriculum

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is sufficiently broad and balanced. Provision is enhanced well by extracurricular opportunities. The accommodation and level of resourcing are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with SEN is good.
- Planning addresses the needs of pupils in the mixed aged classes well.
- A good range of clubs, out of school activities and visits and visitors to the school, enhance and extend the curriculum.
- Provision in ICT is unsatisfactory.
- The small school site poses some accommodation problems but staff use existing resources well.

Commentary

18. The curriculum is planned carefully on a three-year rolling programme to ensure that topics are covered in rotation for the three-year age range that most classes have. Work in English and mathematics follows the pattern recommended in the respective National Strategies. The arrival of a new science co-ordinator this year is already resulting in signs of improvement in the curriculum, especially in investigative work. There are gaps in the provision of skills for ICT and too much emphasis has been placed on word processing. The arrival of the new headteacher, seven weeks ago, has already begun to address this and data handling and Internet work are now happening.
19. The curriculum is enhanced and enlivened by a good range of visits, visitors and out of school activities. For example, pupils visit Exeter Cathedral, Buckfast Abbey and Paignton Zoo. Visitors to the school include the police, a poet, an author and an artist. The school takes part in local festivals for rugby and athletics and there are good links for science, PE and mathematics with the secondary school. Music is enhanced by after school instrumental lessons for recorders and other specialist instruments, such as violins and clarinets. These lessons are offered both in school and via the local cluster of schools.
20. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The needs of the young children within the mixed age class are met well. The class teacher successfully provides a separate curriculum for these young children within the mixed age class. Practical work is emphasised wherever possible, such as the shopping activity in the fruit stall and the opportunity for children to play with interesting materials such as a tub of jelly and large ice blocks. Pupils who have SEN are fully included in all the work of the school. Teachers and assistants make sure that their views are heard and that their work is valued.
21. Overall, the school's accommodation is satisfactory, but the playground and outside activity areas for children in the Foundation Stage are very small. Use is made of a grassed area for playtimes and games when the weather is dry. The very small hall is used for meals, assemblies and as a computer suite. PE activities are carried out in the village hall, some distance from the school.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good and is continually fostered.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good and are a strength of the school.
- Relationships with adults in school are very good.
- Induction arrangements are very good.

Commentary

22. The school has very good health and safety procedures in place with both formal and informal risk assessments carried out regularly. There is a school governor with specific responsibility for health and safety. All staff have appropriate first aid qualifications. There are full child protection procedures in place and all school staff are aware of the appropriate procedures. The headteacher is the designated child protection officer and is awaiting the appropriate training. The family culture that permeates the school has been retained since the last inspection and ensures pupils' well being. This, coupled with the fact that the adults know the pupils very well, ensures a caring environment which encourages learning. In addition, most pupils know and care for one another, regardless of age or gender.
23. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. They know them well and provide good role models for behaviour. Discussions with pupils show that they feel very safe and secure and would be happy to turn to any adult in school should they need help, comfort or advice. The views of pupils about different aspects of school life are welcomed and encouraged both on an informal basis and through the school council.
24. The school's systems to monitor and track pupils' standards and progress are satisfactory. Overall support and guidance on personal and social matters are good. Induction arrangements for children starting school are very good. The playgroup next door to the school visits regularly and, as a result, children starting school already feel confident and comfortable in their new surroundings. Parents confirm they appreciate these good arrangements.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are very good. There are very good links with other schools and the pre-school playgroup.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The partnership with parents and links with the community are very good and are continually promoted.
- Parental involvement with learning at school and home is very good.
- There is a very active Friends' Association.
- Procedures dealing with complaints and concerns are good.
- There are good links with other schools and educational establishments.
- The school operates a genuine 'open door' policy.

Commentary

25. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and the school works well with parents, encouraging them to support the school through the Friends' Association and to help their children with their learning. Parental help with their children's learning is very good in school and they assist with practical support in lessons. They also help supervise pupils on school trips. Help with learning at home is also very good. The Friends' Association is very active and organises many fund raising events. The association works closely with the school to realise a variety of pre-agreed projects.

26. The school provides a good range of information and parents say they are kept very well informed. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date and these are also posted on the school's website which is managed by a parent. Termly curriculum meetings are held in addition to the annual consultation meeting when the annual reports are discussed. Procedures for dealing with complaints and ensuring satisfaction are good. Communication with parents is constant and enables them to give the correct help to their children with learning at home. The school operates a genuine open door policy and, as a result, parents have no qualms about approaching any member of the school staff. Teachers make themselves available at the end of the school day and parents take advantage of this to meet staff informally.
27. There are very good links with the local pre-school playgroup and parents say their children settle into school well. There is similar good liaison with the secondary school the school feeds and the school makes every effort to ensure a smooth transition to secondary education. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. Close liaison with neighbouring primary schools is maintained via the local cluster group and membership of Torrington Academic Council.
28. The school has very good links with the local community. Both the school and the governing body are pro-active in working to promote their involvement with the local community. Pupils have enjoyed visits to zoos, a fish market and Exeter Cathedral in conjunction with their project work. The school has a close connection with the local church and members of the local community are invited to school events. All these links have a positive effect on the quality of education the pupils receive.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher was appointed from the beginning of the spring term 2004 and had been in post for less than a term at the time of the inspection. The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are good and she is soundly supported by other senior staff. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has made a good start to her time at school.
- There are some important weaknesses in the current school improvement plan, but the interim plan recently introduced by the headteacher is detailed and effective.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and for provision for pupils with SEN are good.
- Governors are enthusiastic and promote the school well in the local community but their role is not yet sufficiently evaluative.
- The heavy teaching commitment of the headteacher and the regular lack of full administrative support, are barriers to effective school improvement.

Commentary

29. The recent changes in the leadership of the school have influenced the overall judgements of leadership and management. The headteacher's leadership of the school is good. Since her very recent appointment, she has settled well to the school and has already made a significant impact on the school's work. The main strengths in leadership which the headteacher has shown are in the clear vision for the school and the strength of purpose she has shown. She has managed the change well. The headteacher has acted decisively to rectify some shortcomings in the school improvement plan and she has been concerned to involve teaching and non-teaching staff in the development process. These approaches have secured the confidence of parents and governors. The school ensures that all pupils are fully included in all its work.
30. The current school improvement plan has some weaknesses. It is cumbersome. It contains too much unnecessary detail but lacks sufficient reference to success criteria and the impact of spending priorities on the annual budget. The importance of raising standards is not sufficiently emphasised and it is not an easy working document which can clearly chart the school's

development. However, the headteacher has acted decisively to introduce an interim improvement plan for the spring term. In this, appropriate areas for development are identified and their impact on raising standards is clear. Good management procedures have already been devised to plan its implementation.

31. The headteacher's management of the school is also good. She has successfully addressed part of her strategic vision for the school through the interim development plan. She has set up a useful system of staff meetings and identified the priority of increasing the responsibility and commitment of the subject co-ordinators. This has been successful in maintaining and improving staff morale and securing their continued commitment to the improvement of the school.
32. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Through the work of the several committees and the working of the full meeting, governors have a sound understanding of the working of the school. Governors support the school within the local community very well. They are very enthusiastic and are committed to the school's development. Several, including the Chair, visit the school regularly and are developing their appreciation of its work. Their impact on the building and premises is good. A weakness is that their role is not sufficiently evaluative. There has not been sufficient examination of the overall effectiveness of the school and the standards that are being achieved. The lack of relevant detail in the school improvement plan and the over reliance on information provided in the headteacher's reports have meant that the governors have not been sufficiently proactive in this important respect. An important challenge for them is to continue to seek ways to lessen the very heavy teaching commitment which the headteacher has. This is to enable her to have sufficient opportunities to further address the teaching, curriculum and management issues concerned with the necessary school improvement. Governors meet their statutory duties.
33. The school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. However, the rate of improvement has been accelerated since the headteacher's recent appointment. Several of the key issues identified by the last inspection, such as standards in ICT and monitoring progress through the National Curriculum are still issues for development. Standards in Year 6 and Year 2 are currently lower than they were at the last inspection.
34. The school's finances are managed satisfactorily. The bursar gives the headteacher good support and the procedures for devising the annual budget and monitoring spending through the year are secure. This was also the judgement of the very recent office audit carried out by the Local Education Authority. The administrative officer works effectively and provides a good link with the local community. A significant barrier to improvement is the fact that the school office is left without administrative support for too long. This adds further unacceptable pressure on the headteacher's class teaching responsibility.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	218,151	Balance from previous year	12,444
Total expenditure	203,221	Balance carried forward to the next	14,927
Expenditure per pupil	3,331		

35. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) leads this part of the school's work well. She is very experienced and competent, and manages the provision for these pupils with confidence. She has very little time allocated to her within the school day for this post and so gives freely of her own time for the administrative work that is involved. As a result, the overall provision for pupils who have SEN is good.
36. The management of the work of the Foundation Stage is good. The work of the Reception children is integrated well within the work of the mixed age class. The very good relationship and sense of partnership which exist between the class teacher and her assistant add significantly to the quality of provision in this area. Resources are well labelled and accessible to children and adults. Good use is made of the village hall for physical activities but a weakness is that the outside activity area is too small for the use of bicycles and tricycles and there are insufficient of these to be used there or in the playground.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. At the time of the inspection, there were seven children in the Foundation Stage. They are taught in a class with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Children are admitted to school from the beginning of the autumn and spring terms each year according to when their birthdays are and attend part-time at first. Most attend the village playgroup and have had experience of pre-school education. When they enter the school, although there is often a wide range of ability, most are achieving standards that are well below those expected for their age, especially in their language development. The present Reception group contains three children with recognised speech and language difficulties and three are very young, having been admitted from the beginning of the current term.
38. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The class teacher makes careful and separate provision for these young children within the mixed age class and ensures that their needs are being met well. The overall quality of teaching is good and this ensures that children achieve well and make good progress in their learning. By the end of the Reception year, most children are likely to achieve average standards in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards are below average in all other areas of learning, including their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection which found that children were making good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's personal, social and emotional development and their literacy skills are developed well.
- The very good partnership between the class teacher and her learning support assistant leads to a consistency of approach and good teaching.
- Children are confident and happy in school.
- Children do not have sufficiently regular access to a range of climbing, clambering and riding equipment in their outside activity area.

Commentary

39. Children's **personal, social and emotional development** is promoted well, and teaching and learning are good. The class teacher creates a warm, friendly and welcoming environment where children quickly feel safe, secure and valued. The smooth arrangements at the beginning of each day where parents bring their children into the class and sometimes share words and reading with them, help children to settle quickly to their work. The short time that the class spends together at the beginning of each day allows all the children to talk about feelings and concerns and this gives them confidence to ask for support when it is required. The whole class discussion time at the end of the day gives children opportunities to share successes with others and they enjoy nominating someone else for a special sticker award. Spiritual awareness is promoted well by the sharing of prayers at the end of the day. Children soon learn to play and work well together. During the inspection groups were co-operating well in the sand tray and in the role-play area. Children are involved well in their own learning as they make choices about the activities they would like to follow during the afternoon activity time. Overall, children behave very well. They help and support each other and interact very well with the others in the class.
40. Most children make good progress in their **communication, language and literacy skills** from a well below average level when they entered the school. Teaching in this area is good. The class teacher and her assistant take every opportunity to encourage and develop children's interest in stories and words. Children are given good opportunities to talk formally in class. Some speak clearly and confidently, but several use a very limited vocabulary and speak indistinctly. Most listen

attentively to the teacher and to each other. Some are still learning the convention of putting their hand up before speaking rather than calling out the first answer that comes into their head. Children take part in role-play activities in the class fruit stall, but their interest was not enhanced through the use of appropriate dressing-up clothes. Early writing skills are developed soundly, as children discuss the fruit pictures that they have painted and agree the writing of a caption for the picture. Several show reasonable pencil control and letter formation as they copy writing scribed by the teaching assistant. Children enjoy reading and books. They listen attentively and with enjoyment as stories are read to them and several recognise some individual words in the class story which they were reading. They all enjoy books and look forward to taking their book home to share it with their parents. In a group reading session, the teaching assistant drew children's attention well to the sound of letters in key words of the shared story and cleverly encouraged children to talk about the picture clues in the big book they were reading. Good support is given to the children who have specific language difficulties.

41. Most children make satisfactory progress in their **mathematical development** but are still achieving below average standards by the end of the year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children's interest in numbers is promoted well by some interesting displays around the class, including a washing line with numbered socks hanging out to dry. The mathematical activities which were observed during the inspection were appropriately practical. The work of the Reception children was carefully linked with the topic being tackled by older pupils. Children were consolidating their understanding of numbers up to ten and money values as they sorted and matched items of fruit on the fruit stall which had money values attached. Adults question the children well and allow them independence. The confident use of mathematical language, such as talking about bigger and smaller and to describe position, is less well developed.
42. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** are developed well and most are on track to achieve average standards in this area of learning. Teaching is good. The teacher ensures that life processes are emphasised well. Flowers and other plants are grown in the pots outside the classroom and the recent class project on homes had included reference to the children's own homes, as well as others including a bird's and a wasp's nest. Children's interest in materials was stimulated very well during the inspection as they were given opportunities to explore the texture and feel of a large pot of red jelly and had great fun squashing it and pouring it into different containers. They were also excited as large lumps of ice were placed in the water tray and they were able to feel and talk about the differences between water and ice. Children have good opportunities to use the computer. One child was observed using the computer mouse confidently to drag icons across the screen to complete unfinished picture jigsaws.
43. Children make sound progress in their **physical development** but overall standards are below average by the end of the year. Reception children have the opportunity of joining the older pupils for their regular PE lessons which take place in the village hall. In a dance lesson that was observed, children in the Foundation Stage achieved well. They moved around the hall confidently with an awareness of space and several were able to devise and perform some rolling and stretching movements on a floor mat. They all then took part with great confidence, enjoyment and expression in a demonstration of improvised movements to show a marching circus. A limitation in provision is that the outside activity area is too small to allow children use of appropriate climbing, clambering and riding toys. There is insufficient appropriate equipment in these aspects in the school playground. This is a weakness. As a result, children do not have sufficiently regular opportunities to build up some of their physical skills. However, the teacher provides good opportunities to develop smaller, manipulative skills, for example, through cutting and moulding play dough, using glue spreaders and paint brushes.
44. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about standards or teaching and learning in children's **creative development**. There was evidence from displays and activities observed during the inspection that children had opportunities to use a variety of paints. They had produced colourful painted pictures of some of the fruits they had been looking at and illustrations of the story they had been considering. During the afternoon activity time, children were painting coloured patterns and moulding shapes in play dough. Some were helping to produce large models of parrots by wrapping strips of coloured paper around a framed model.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy reading and books.
- The assessment of pupils' writing skills is very good but these procedures have not been extended to include other aspects of the subject.
- There is evidence of previous underachievement in Year 6 but weaknesses in approach have been recently rectified.
- Overall, teaching is satisfactory, but some good and very good practices have been introduced recently.
- Handwriting skills are not clearly and consistently applied across all aspects of pupils' written work.
- The school does not have a programme for the progressive development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

45. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are below average. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are also below average. This represents a decline since the last inspection when standards were judged to have been average across the school. The current inspection judgements are also significantly different from the results of the 2003 tests in Year 2 but are broadly in line with the results for Year 6. The differences are explained by the yearly variation in year group quality and the differing proportion of pupils in each year group with SEN. Currently, the proportions are highest in Year 2 and Year 6, and Year 6 also contains pupils with significant language difficulties. This makes it difficult, given the very small year group sizes, for average standards to be met.
46. Across the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress. However, there was clear evidence that pupils in Year 6 had not been sufficiently challenged during the first part of the year but that a lot of ground has since been made up. Pupils with SEN are well supported and make good progress towards their own targets. Higher attaining pupils make the same progress as their peers.
47. Across the school, standards of speaking and listening are below average. Pupils consistently listen well to their teachers, other adults and to each other. Speaking skills are less well developed. In Year 2, some pupils contribute willingly to class discussion and explain their ideas confidently. However, most of them are sometimes slow to offer their opinions and lack the confidence to talk freely in formal situations. The speech of some is hesitant and indistinct. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils were fully involved in their investigation and talked enthusiastically about what they were doing. In other lessons, pupils were sometimes slow to answer questions or to share their ideas and were willing to let others take the lead. There was evidence of only a partial use of the important tool of paired discussions, but several opportunities to use this approach productively were lost. A further weakness is that there is no structured, progressive development of pupils' speaking and listening skills or planned opportunities for them to engage in activities such as mini-debates to improve their skills.
48. Standards in writing are below average in both Years 2 and 6. Across the school, pupils have opportunities to write for a satisfactory range of purposes. Pupils in Year 2 write up news of things they have done, a letter home and a description of a visit by a recent puppet show. Higher attaining pupils use a good range of punctuation including capital letters, full stops and question marks and some interesting descriptive words. However, most do not use a sufficiently wide, varied or

imaginative vocabulary in their writing or use extended skills such as suspense or tension in their work nor the logical development of ideas. Pupils in Year 6 write their own ghost stories, construct a persuasive argument on the subject of whether all children should learn how to fish and a poem about the potato. Higher attaining pupils appreciate the journalistic use of sensational and eye catching words as they look at newspaper headlines and use more complex sentence structures in their writing. However, most writing is not sufficiently structured and pupils do not use imaginative words or precise vocabulary in their work. Handwriting skills are taught regularly, but they are not consistently applied. As a result, by the end of Year 6 several pupils have not yet developed an accurate, joined handwriting style which would help to improve the presentation of their work.

49. Reading is promoted well across the school but standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. All pupils like books and get enjoyment from reading. Across the school, pupils are encouraged to take their books home and to share them with their parents. Pupils, and their parents, greatly enjoyed the Reading Reward challenge whereby pupils are awarded a certificate for reading an agreed number of fiction and non-fiction books. The school library and individual classes contain a good range of interesting books for pupils to read. Across the school, higher attaining readers read widely and well. They read regularly and for pleasure and talk in detail about stories which they have read. However, other pupils are hesitant and have difficulty in recalling what they have read. Most are developing satisfactory strategies for sounding out unknown words.
50. Across the school, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Several good features have been introduced recently, particularly in Year 6. Here, there is now a careful progression of concepts and skills and the pace of pupils' learning has been accelerated well. The key concept to be learned is clearly introduced at the beginning of the lesson and the activities are planned around this. Tasks such as, 'Should children go to bed early?' and, 'Write a report of the village pancake race as a newspaper reporter', interest and challenge the pupils. This recent approach is beginning to address weaknesses evident in the past. Teachers manage pupils well and introduce work clearly. Their lesson planning does not always clearly show the detail of the work to be done for the pupils of different abilities in the class and opportunity to stress new and exciting vocabulary is not always taken.
51. The co-ordinator has a sound understanding of the subject across the school. Useful developmental work has been done by the whole staff on the approach to writing. This has resulted in the introduction of very good processes for assessing pupils' writing skills and matching them to National Curriculum criteria. Examples of pupils' writing are collected regularly and discussed at whole staff meetings. This is good practice and the data are being used well to set useful developmental targets for writing. Assessment of reading is in its early stages. A weakness is that there is no analysis of available data from national or optional tests and no overview of the pattern of attainment across the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Overall, language skills are developed satisfactorily across other subjects but there is scope for development in some aspects. Teachers generally use questioning effectively in class discussions but sometimes they do not give pupils sufficient time and opportunity to share their answers and comments. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily in science where investigations are recorded well. However, in other subjects such as history, geography and DT, there is an overuse of worksheets, which limits pupils' opportunity to practise their writing and recording skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning, while satisfactory overall, were good in the lessons seen, enabling the pupils to make good progress.

- Classes and lessons are well organised.
- Planning and support for pupils with SEN are good.
- The new co-ordinator has made a good start in leading the subject.
- Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are becoming keen 'young mathematicians'.
- There is no analysis of data from the National Curriculum tests or from general assessment.

Commentary

53. Standards of attainment in mathematics are average in both Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection report. These findings also match the results of the national tests in Year 6 for 2003. However, there is a considerable difference between the Year 2 results for 2003 and these findings. They drop from well above average in 2003, to average at the time of the inspection. This is explained mainly by the large proportion of pupils in that group with SEN.
54. Pupils' progress and achievement in mathematics are good overall when their prior levels of attainment are considered. Pupils with SEN receive good levels of support and care from the teachers and assistants, and this enables them to make good progress towards their targets. Some higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have booster classes organised at the secondary school. These classes focus on the more advanced Level 5 work, thereby taking the pupils forward well.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is generally satisfactory when past work is taken into consideration. However, teaching and learning were mostly good in the lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers plan and organise well for the diversity of ages and abilities in each class. This is resulting in pupils becoming keen mathematicians, and it was especially so among pupils in the Year 4/5/6 class where they catch the teacher's lively enthusiasm and interest well. The lesson went at a good pace and provided good challenge for the pupils as they learned to add decimals to two decimal places. As a result, they made good progress and achieved well. All were fully involved and kept trying right through the lesson.
56. A good example of practical and investigative activities provided by teachers was seen in the Year R/1/2 class. Pupils sorted and 'bought' fruit and worked out what change to give, or added up the total of their purchases. Teachers are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy, and all aspects of the mathematics curriculum are followed appropriately, involving all pupils. For example, in a good lesson seen in Year 2/3/4, the planning provided well for the ages and abilities of the pupils, and the teacher made sure that everyone was able to join in the lesson about sharing and multiplication. She very carefully included all the children who have SEN in everything that the class did. Other strengths in the quality of teaching include well planned lessons with learning objectives shared with pupils at the start and the reinforcement of the concepts by getting pupils to explain their reasoning and methods of calculation.
57. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but there is no analysis of the school's results in the national tests, and no tracking of pupils' progress. This is planned to begin this year, but at present, any gaps in pupils' learning are not readily identified. The headteacher, who also co-ordinates the subject, has made a good start in leading and managing mathematics in the seven weeks since her appointment. She is well aware of what needs to be done, and has good ideas, plans and previous experience to take the subject forward and improve standards. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning in the subject have not yet been established.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, they use data handling skills in science when they write up their findings of surveys and experiments. They produce charts and graphs for this. In DT, they weigh and measure accurately and, in music, they count. ICT is used in mathematics when possible but is hampered by the quality and reliability of the computers available.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recent emphasis on investigative science is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress.
- Pupils are using appropriate scientific vocabulary.
- Teaching and learning, while overall satisfactory, were good in the lessons seen.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- ICT is not used sufficiently in this subject.

Commentary

59. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are average, although the trends over three or four years in the national tests and teacher assessments have been well below the national average. The new co-ordinator for science, appointed in September 2003, has brought much more emphasis on 'hands-on' investigative work. This is having a positive effect on pupils' learning and progress, and it is raising their interest and involvement well, enabling them to achieve better. Given the very high proportion of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 with SEN, the standards pupils achieve are in line with their abilities and most are achieving satisfactorily.
60. Year 2 have studied forces and looked at those that push and those that pull. They understand something of the resistance provided when an object falls through the air. Work on the earth and the solar system shows some understanding of day and night. It can be seen clearly from pupils' books that their skill at writing about experiments is increasing as they get further up the school. Year 6 write fully and with some depth of knowledge about what they have done. They use scientific vocabulary well and write about condensation and evaporation accurately. There are references to practical use of science such as drying clothes, kettles and windows steaming up. They draw accurate graphs and are beginning to analyse their data well. Nevertheless, analysis of predicted outcomes shows that, with a quarter of the group having SEN, the overall results are still likely to be below average.
61. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory, although good in the two lessons seen. In the lesson to Years 2/3/4, where pupils were learning that some materials can be changed by cooling or by heating them, teacher's planning was very good and included the questions needed to draw out pupils' understanding of liquids and solids. Interesting extension work was developed as pupils described how ice felt and what happened to melted wax when it dripped onto a card. Others recorded changes in temperature. In the Years 4/5/6 class, the teacher developed pupils' understanding of liquids, solids and mixtures by giving them water and an unknown powder, which turned out to be plaster of Paris. Later they used a cement and water mixture, and a variety of household substances such as lemon juice and bi-carbonate of soda. Pupils in both lessons learned well because they were able to predict what they thought might happen, carry out the experiments, and then record carefully the outcomes of their work. In one lesson, the teacher took opportunities to guide pupils' observations and understanding well. For example, as one mixture began to bubble, she asked what was happening and pupils were able to think it through until they realised that a gas was being given off.
62. The new co-ordinator is leading and managing the subject satisfactorily. The greater emphasis on the practical work is paying off and all pupils are recording their work well, following a scientific method. This shows what they intended, what they predicted, and the materials used, as well as the outcomes. The shortcomings in science are that there is no form of assessment, and ICT, while sometimes used is not used enough.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 2 and 6 are below average and not as high as they should be.
- The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory but there is evidence of recent improvements in teaching, learning and the leadership of the subject.
- The coverage of skills, assessment and the resources for ICT are unsatisfactory.
- Computers are not used sufficiently across other curriculum areas.

Commentary

63. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain below average standards and their achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards were also below average at the time of the last inspection. Insufficient improvement has been made since 1998. However, evidence from the lessons observed during the inspection show that recent improvements, based on the arrival of the new headteacher who also leads ICT, are beginning to have an impact.
64. Across the school, word processing is the strongest feature of pupils' work. Standards in this element are average. However, other aspects of the subjects are not sufficiently well developed. Although some data handling has been done previously in Year 6, it is in this term that pupils have started to extend their skills in this topic. In Year 2, pupils have begun recently to look at things that have controls, such as a tape-recorder or a television. The emphasis seen in past written work has been on downloading information together with some word processing skills.
65. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. In the past, teachers have not ensured that pupils have been taught sufficient basic skills for them to reach the standards expected for their age. For example, there are no instances in the folders of written work about control systems, plotting a simple course for a floor robot, or e-mails. However, discussions with pupils showed that they remembered using a floor robot, but it was 'ages ago' they said. Some are confident about e-mail but most indicated that this was done outside school, mostly at home. The indications are that this is improving, and in the lesson seen in Years 4, 5 and 6, teaching and learning were good. Good pace and challenge were maintained and, by the end of the lesson, pupils had learned how to add hyperlinks to their research work on the Internet. Assessment of pupils' work is still in the planning stage, although there is a checklist of what they can do.
66. Resources are unsatisfactory and, in some instances, poor. The combination of some older, very slow computers and recurring faults makes teaching difficult and takes valuable lesson time. The lack of a quick, reliable Internet connection also means that lessons are slowed down. One computer cannot copy and paste one and a half lines of text, it has to be done three or four words at a time. Of the two laptop computers, one cannot be connected to the Internet. The school has a data projector but this was away for repairs during the inspection. Too much class time has to be spent resolving technical problems. There are no interactive whiteboards in the school. Improvements to the leadership of the subject have been secured recently since the headteacher assumed responsibility. Pupils' skills are slowly being increased and assessment procedures are securely in place for all years for the future.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. ICT skills are not used sufficiently across the school to support work done in other curriculum areas. Evidence from lesson observation and displays of pupils' work show that some pupils use computers as, for example, older pupils access the Internet to discover information about their history projects on life in Ancient Egypt or Greece and others use word processing features to present their displayed creative writing work. However, these are isolated examples. Opportunities to use ICT across all curriculum areas have not been consistently established.

HUMANITIES

68. There was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement to be made about provision in history and geography. Older pupils' work on the Ancient Greeks and Ancient Egyptians was recorded well and attractively displayed. The use of interesting and good quality artefacts in the class displays positively promotes pupils' learning. The sample of pupils' work indicated that younger pupils had learned about the lives and times of Louis Braille and Florence Nightingale and older pupils had worked on the routes taken by some early explorers. In geography, younger pupils drew sketch plans of their bedrooms and undertook a traffic survey in the road near the school and older pupils studied aspects of the geography of Greece.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. There was insufficient evidence for overall judgements to be made on provision or standards achieved in art and design, DT, music and PE.

70. Pupils' **art and design** work is displayed effectively across the school. There are colourful collages in the hall showing football and netball players and the school emblem. There is also an interesting large display collage of a pheasant using natural materials such as leaves, seeds and twigs. Evidence from the sample of pupils' work shows a limited use of sketch books showing, for example, sketches of their faces and drawings of bicycles. Teaching in the single lesson observed was good. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 were investigating the effect of mixing paints to get the required shade and recording their findings. Pupils were encouraged and challenged well and made good gains in their appreciation of the use of colour.

71. Analysis of available work and discussion with pupils in **design and technology** showed that pupils are gaining experience using a suitable range of design ideas and materials. For some of the projects they research well. For example, Year 2 pupils have made fruit salads, first tasting the fruit and discovering likes and dislikes. Year 2 also made some 'wacky wallets' and they compared other types of wallet that they found, including fastenings, shapes and materials. Year 6 pupils have made some North American Indian tepees and, in discussion, they remembered finding out about them before designing their own. There are some examples of evaluation of their work, but this does not seem to be consistently applied. Only a few examples were seen where pupils wrote about possible improvements that they could make.

72. In **music**, the whole school sang well in assemblies using a tape recorder as accompaniment. They know the hymns and sing with meaning and enthusiasm. Planning shows a good range of topics and experiences are provided based on the nationally recommended scheme of work. Instrumental lessons, such as those for recorders, take place in school, and those for flute, clarinet or violin are given locally. The music curriculum is enhanced by joining with the local cluster of schools for some events and lessons. There is a leavers' concert at the end of the school year, which provides good opportunities for pupils to perform in front of an audience. The school now has a small room where the instruments are kept and very small groups can use it for practice or lessons.

73. In **physical education**, the school does well to overcome the difficulties imposed by the small hall. The village hall is used successfully, and all the required strands of the programme are to be found in the planning. In the one lesson seen, which was very good, the focus for Years R/1/2 was dance. Pupils understand the importance of a warm-up and they are well aware of safety when handling apparatus. They made good progress in their dance skills and were very well behaved when moving from school to the local hall, and when changing. One afternoon each week all of Years 2 – 6 go swimming locally. This is a very good addition to the PE programme. As a result of this addition, by the time pupils leave the school, most are able to swim well. In the session observed during the inspection, all of the Year 6 pupils could swim and most were taking part in survival swimming lessons with a specialist instructor. In discussions with younger pupils, they talked excitedly about country dances they had learnt and different rolls that they had performed on the mats. Older pupils understand gymnastic sequences and talked about rolls and balances as well as athletics and the sports they do such as netball and football.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for Personal, Social and Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The PSHCE programme is clear and relevant and carefully integrated with other subjects.
- The PSHCE programme positively encourages pupils' good social development and the good relationships within the school.
- The work encourages the strong sense of community in the school.
- The work is led well by an experienced co-ordinator.

Commentary

74. The PSHCE programme is well balanced. It is linked well to religious education where this is appropriate. The programme includes sex education and relationships, as well as attention to alcohol misuse and drugs awareness. The school sees the whole PSHCE programme as an important part of its work, and the Healthy Schools award has been achieved as part of the programme under the direction of the co-ordinator. Pupils learn to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, respect others and their views, and express their own feelings. They learn to recognise if another pupil may be being bullied and discuss what to do and who to talk to. They are aware that family life and relationships are important in their social development and form a secure basis for their sex education. The co-ordinator for PSHCE is experienced and has included personal care, protection issues as well as the healthy lifestyle element into the programme. She is well aware that some of the programme will raise sensitive issues for some pupils and their parents, and these are well planned and prepared for. Provision also includes 'circle time' where pupils learn how to respect each other, and listen to other people's views.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	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	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).