

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Lifton Primary School**

Lifton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113256

Headteacher: Dr Caroline Whiting

Lead inspector: Mrs Jane Morris

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 256732

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	102
School address:	North Road Lifton Devon
Postcode:	PL16 0EH
Telephone number:	01566-784-288
Fax number:	01566-784-899
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Janet Brady
Date of previous inspection:	15 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small, rural primary school with 102 pupils on roll. Pupils come predominantly from the village of Lifton. Their home backgrounds are wide ranging and are average in socio-economic terms. A significant number join the school from other parts of the country. All pupils are of white British heritage with English as their mother tongue. The number of pupils enrolling at or leaving the school at times other than those expected is slightly above average. Attainment on entry to school is variable but below average overall. Twenty six per cent of pupils have special educational needs. This is above average. Two per cent of pupils have a statement to meet their special educational needs. This is in line with the national average. Pupils' special needs are physical, emotional, behavioural and learning related. Pupils are taught in four, mixed year group classes. The school has achieved the 'Healthy Schools Award'.

After the last inspection the school went through a period of disruption, including significant staff changes. A number of pupils moved to other schools in the area. One class teacher, the senior member of staff, has remained constant and provided valuable continuity for the school. Other posts, including that of the headteacher were filled temporarily for various lengths of time and this caused additional instability for pupils. The arrival of the current headteacher in September 2001 and the appointment of other permanent staff has made certain the school is now in a settled and secure position.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18270	Mrs Jane Morris	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, English, Information and Communication Technology, Art and Design, Design and Technology, Music and Physical Education.
32655	Mr John Bostock	Lay inspector	
8864	Mr Peter Clifton	Team inspector	Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, Religious Education and Special Educational Needs.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The effectiveness of this school is good and it provides good value for money.** Good teaching, supplemented by very effective assistants, ensures all pupils achieve well in relation to their ability. Standards are improving. The headteacher has very good leadership qualities; she and her very committed and competent team have made certain that this school is in a strong position to move forward after a period of instability that resulted in low standards in the past.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in Years 3 to 6, which are showing significant improvement.
- The headteacher, supported by her very capable senior teacher, is implementing a rigorous and challenging plan for continued improvement.
- Teaching is of a high quality in the class for older Year 1 and Year 2 pupils ensuring pupils in this class make very good progress.
- The effectiveness of the teaching of some information and communication technology (ICT) skills is hindered by how computers are positioned in the classroom.
- The presentation of work in some older pupils' books is unsatisfactory.

All key issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed well. Since then standards at the end of Year 6 have improved as have the quality of teaching and assessment. Leadership and management, including the role of the governors, are much stronger. The commitment of all staff is instrumental in assuring the school's effectiveness. The school is now offering a higher quality of care. Links with parents are much better, having suffered during the school's unsettled period. Buildings within the school site have been refurbished to house the pre-school provision. The school has quite rightly regained the confidence of parents.

### 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	E*	B	B
mathematics	E*	E*	B	B
science	C	E	C	C

*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.*

**NB** Caution is needed in interpreting data in a school such as this where each pupil represents a large percentage.

**All pupils achieve well** for their ability now the school is back on a firm footing. After a period of decline, when some results were in the lowest five per cent in the country (E\* in the table above), results improved significantly in 2003. Standards at the end of Year 6, when compared with all and similar schools, were above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Currently Year 6 pupils are reaching average standards in English, mathematics and science, having had to work hard to catch up on their learning.

In 2003 standards at the end of Year 2 were well above average, especially in mathematics. Currently, Year 2 pupils' standards are above the national averages. This group are achieving particularly well and making very good progress even though a quarter of them have special educational needs.

The level of ability of children entering the school varies from year to year. Currently standards are below those expected, particularly in relation to speaking and listening skills. In reception, children do

well in the majority of areas of learning and most reach the expected goals in all but communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Progress in these areas, although satisfactory, is not as good as in the others. This is because the vast majority of children only joined the class full-time six weeks before the inspection started. They are taking time to settle into routines and this has affected their achievement. By the time they enter Year 1 they are unlikely to have met the anticipated goals in these fundamental areas.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.** Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and this results in a pleasant learning environment in which they learn well. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.**

**The quality of teaching is good.** Pupils learn well because teachers know the needs of individuals and plan with very effective teaching assistants to address their needs.

The overall quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Good quality extra-curricular provision enriches and broadens pupils' learning effectively and this makes a significant contribution to their achievement. The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Partnerships with parents are also good, as are affiliations with other schools and colleges. The school has good and productive links with the community. These all have a valuable impact on pupils' learning as they give them many additional opportunities to acquire further knowledge especially in games and sporting activities.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management in the school are good.** The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has the skills, knowledge and determination to continually move the school forward. Governors are supportive and make a good contribution to the effectiveness of the school. All statutory requirements are met. The leadership of other key staff and the management of the school are all good.

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

Parents have regained their confidence in, and have positive opinions of the school. They like the welcoming atmosphere and the ethos that permeates throughout. Pupils enjoy life at Lifton School. They are particularly impressed with the friendliness of their class-mates. Their views are sought and taken into consideration through the school council.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- To continue implementing the plan for school improvement that rightly focuses on helping older pupils to catch up and concentrates on further developing good quality teaching.
- Look for ways to enhance provision for ICT so teachers and pupils can work together more efficiently and effectively.
- Develop the standards of pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve well. Test results in 2003 were above or well above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are currently above average in Year 2 and are average in Year 6. This is because pupils at the top end of the school are still making up for the ground they lost during the period of instability within the school. Children of reception age achieve satisfactorily because, although they are likely to reach the expected goals in the majority of the areas of learning, their standards are likely to be lower than anticipated in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development as they enter Year 1.

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

- Standards at the end of Year 6 showed very significant improvement in 2003.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 have been improving year on year and were well above average in 2003, especially in mathematics.
- All pupils achieve well throughout the school and older pupils are catching up well on the gaps in their knowledge.
- Individual progress is monitored very carefully and target setting is well-established so pupils know what they have to do to improve and this supports effective learning.

#### **Commentary**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.2 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.6 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.6 (18.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

##### ***No table is entered for Year 6 in 2003 as there were only ten pupils in the group.***

1. Test results for the end of Year 6 in 2003 show above average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. This positive picture is also apparent when comparisons are made with similar schools and in relation to pupils' prior attainment. Standards in 2003 rose dramatically from those reported in the previous year when test results for all subjects were in the lowest five per cent nationally. This unsatisfactory situation was caused by factors that were beyond the control of the current staff at the school. A number of issues resulted in pupils' underachievement in Years 3 to 6. The decline in standards has halted, improvement is tangible throughout the whole school and all pupils are now achieving well.
2. In 2003, test results at the end of Year 2 in mathematics were in the highest five per cent in the country. They were also well above average in reading and writing. The number of pupils achieving higher standards was also well above average. Comparisons with similar schools yield a more impressive set of results, with both reading and mathematics being in the highest five per cent nationally as were science standards as assessed by the class teacher.
3. The better test results, at the end of Year 6, reflect the tremendous effort the school has made to regain its equilibrium following the period of instability. The arrival of the current, very



proficient headteacher in 2001, new teaching appointments and a very strong, whole-school team commitment to raising standards have proved to be successful. There is a shared determination to improve achievement through the school. Good quality teaching and highly-trained and effective teaching assistants help teachers to ensure all pupils do well. Newly arrived members of staff accepted the challenge ahead of them and have worked extremely hard to make sure pupils have renewed their desire to learn. Pupils are regaining the ground they lost as they encountered instability after leaving Year 2.

4. At present Year 6 pupils are achieving particularly well to ensure their standards are in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science and also in religious education (RE) and ICT. The progress of each pupil is monitored very closely and targets are set for individuals to follow. Pupils are very familiar with these and refer to them regularly. In the class with Year 2 pupils the senior teacher makes certain that all pupils are very challenged but sensitively supported so they all fulfil their potential by learning well. Currently standards are above average in all core subjects including RE and ICT even though a quarter of the group has identified special needs. The senior teacher has been pivotal in securing improvements to standards and achievement.
5. Reception children enter school with varying levels of attainment. The vast majority of the present group of reception children started school six weeks before the inspection and are taking time to settle. Currently their standards are below average especially in speaking and listening. They achieve well and reach satisfactory standards in their personal, social and emotional development, and knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. However, progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is slower and means standards are lower with some missed opportunities to challenge the more able. Children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in these two areas as they start Year 1.
6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is a particularly strong feature of the school's work. This is due to the good arrangements that are in place to assess each pupil's strengths and needs and the very good support that is given to them, thus enabling them to make good progress and achieve well. There are no significant differences between the achievement of girls and boys.

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

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and this results in a pleasant learning environment in which they learn well. Attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers encourage pupils to be helpful and friendly and respectful to each other resulting in very good relationships.
- Good behaviour is expected and encouraged and as a result pupils behave well.
- Pupils have strong interests in all aspects of school life including opportunities to participate in a wide range of clubs.
- Good efforts are made to develop pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness.

### **Commentary**

7. Teachers continuously encourage fairness, friendliness and respect for each other. Pupils respond to this by helping each other with work, and supporting younger children as they adjust to starting school. Pupils mix well in their play and work, display care and compassion when pupils are upset, and respect for others when participating in group discussions when pupils are helped to overcome barriers of shyness and contribute well. Pupils are keen to include all their friends in their work and a particular feature of the school is the attention paid

to signing so that any pupils with hearing impairment can become involved. All staff and pupils are concentrating on learning three new signs a week. These attitudes contribute well to the good ethos in which successful learning and personal development can occur.

8. Teachers expect good behaviour at all times in the school and are rewarded by the response of the vast majority of pupils. All adults foster an ethos of quietness, controlled behaviour and maturity in pupils commencing with arrival at school and continuing through registration, assembly and lessons. In assemblies pupils do not fidget and are orderly, quiet and attentive so they gain significantly from the interesting topics presented to them. In lessons they concentrate well on the tasks and work enthusiastically. Play at break and lunch-times is energetic, yet friendly and controlled. Pupils respond well when teachers challenge them to work harder so they are encouraged to progress as well as they can. Children starting at the school take a while to adjust to this quiet working environment but are likely to meet the expected level in their personal, social and emotional development as they start Year 1. In questionnaires some pupils felt that their friends' behaviour could be better but inspection evidence shows they are friendly to each other and well-behaved. The vast majority of parents also agree that their children behave well.
9. Pupils are keen to participate in all aspects of lessons including practical activities such as art, physical education, or project work in groups, as well as in computer work, reading and being involved in class discussions. This helps them learn together well. The wide range of extra-curricular activities (including sports, dance, yoga and public speaking) are well attended and with great enthusiasm. Many of these activities enjoy support, not only from staff, but also parents and the local community. These help pupils to develop skills in a more informal but still productive manner.
10. Spiritual and moral awareness is developed well in assemblies which are led by members of staff as well as by a local Methodist minister. Various religions are contrasted with Christianity therefore giving pupils more opportunities to develop their awareness of other faiths and religions. Lessons feature discussions about citizenship and social issues. Teachers continuously stress the importance of fairness and develop a good understanding in pupils of right from wrong. Pupils display a good awareness about being part of a community and are keen to take on responsibilities and do so well. For example, they take turns to set up equipment in lessons, to take registers to the office, or participate on the school council. They speak enthusiastically about their school and senior pupils act as role models for the others. A wide range of multicultural topics are studied including the Chinese New Year, the Swahili language, and life in Japan and the Caribbean. However, there is room to develop further the exploration of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3 (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	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.*

11. Attendance was very good during 2002 and 2003. During the first half of this school year attendance has been 94.8% despite 2 weeks of greatly reduced attendance due to severe 'flu bugs. There have been no exclusions.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good and the commitment of the staff to improving the quality of education that the school provides is very good. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enhanced by good additional opportunities. Pupils are supported well by all adults associated with the school. There are good links with parents, the community and other local schools. The ethos for learning is strong.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of both teaching and learning is good. It is very good for pupils in the class for Years 1 and 2. Assessment procedures are good overall and very thorough in English, mathematics and science.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The senior teacher's high quality teaching provides a very good role model for others to follow.
- Teachers' good planning takes account of every pupil's needs and ensures challenge and support are focused appropriately so all pupils achieve well.
- Teaching assistants are highly-trained and very effective.
- There are some missed opportunities to challenge reception children.
- The determination of all staff, whether teaching or non-teaching, part-time or full-time, is very strong and together with committed, volunteer adults, helps pupils learn well.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' progress and setting targets for improvement are particularly effective.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	11	8	0	0	0

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

12. Teaching is good overall and ensures pupils learn and achieve well. In the class for Years 1 and 2 teaching is consistently very good. It is satisfactory with some strong features in the class for children of reception age taught with six Year 1 pupils. The overall good quality of teaching throughout the school reflects the generally positive views that pupils have about their lessons. The school, with the support of the local education authority, has monitored the quality of teaching and its impact on learning through lesson observations, work scrutiny and talking with pupils about how well they have done and how they can improve further. This has paid dividends and is reflected in the better quality of teaching seen during this inspection than reported previously.
13. The always sound and sometimes good quality of teaching for reception children ensures that they are achieving well in the majority of areas. However, achievement is only satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development because, even taking account of the fact that the vast majority of these children only joined the school six weeks before the inspection, there is some lack of sufficient challenge evident for some older or more able children in these areas. The teacher has the support of very effective assistants. A number of adults, both teaching assistants and volunteer helpers, are helping the youngest children to get used to school routines and are developing their personal, social and emotional skills well.

14. Older Year 1 and 2 pupils are always taught very well because lessons have pace, challenge and very high expectations. The organisation of lessons ensures all pupils are productively engaged in stimulating activities throughout the very well planned sessions that take account of each and every pupil's needs. Learning is always reviewed profitably at the end so pupils know where they need to aim next. Pupils also respond well to the class-teacher's system that encourages them to evaluate their own learning by using symbols to tell the teacher whether work is too hard, too easy or manageable.
15. In the other classes, lessons are always at least satisfactory and the majority are good. The use of lesson introductions to tell pupils what they are going to be taught is followed by a review of progress at the end. This is proving to be of great benefit to learning. Teachers' planning is secure and makes certain that work in each lesson is very well matched to each pupil's different learning needs. Any less productive but still satisfactory lessons happen when pupils wait too long to get involved in tasks that enable them to share their ideas. This means that there are occasions when they become restless and do not remain as focused on their teacher as they might and this inhibits their learning. However, as soon as they are set on tasks, they become engrossed in their work and achieve well. Sometimes teachers give pupils too much to cover and on rare occasions the monitoring of pupils' application to their tasks is insufficient in order to ensure productive use of pupils' time. The successful deployment of very effective teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special needs are supported and they achieve very well.
16. Inspection findings support parents' very positive views that teaching is good, and that their children are expected to work hard. Parents are also very complimentary about the commitment of the staff, whether part-time or full-time, teaching or non-teaching, and inspection findings fully endorse the confidence they have in the staff.
17. During the inspection overall judgements on teaching were made in English, mathematics and science as well as in RE, ICT and physical education (PE). Pupils are taught well in all subjects. Teachers are very keen to develop ICT opportunities in their lessons and this means it is integrated into lessons at every opportunity and on a daily basis in a 'carousel' of activities. Teachers make some profitable links between subjects to help pupils learn in a cohesive way. Literacy skills are promoted well across many areas of the curriculum so pupils practise skills effectively and the school has plans to further develop this aspect of its work.
18. Assessment procedures are good. They have been a major feature of the school's development. As year groups of pupils are small and have different characteristics the school rightly measures each individual pupil's progress in detail. It does its utmost to meet and fulfil any identified needs, both of the more able and the less able. Pupils are fully aware of how well they are doing, as are their parents. Marking is very thorough. Pupils know where they need to aim next. This area of the school's work has improved significantly since the previous inspection, when it was a key issue.

## **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The opportunities provided for enrichment of the curriculum through clubs, visits and special events are good. Accommodation and resources provided to support learning are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's strategy for curriculum development is good.
- The provision for special educational needs is very good.
- Visitors and after school clubs support the curriculum well.
- Teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to the quality of provision.
- Planned improvements to the accommodation in relation to the outside play area for reception

and the small library are very appropriate and well-timed.

### **Commentary**

19. The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory and are set to progress further as the school focuses on the next phases of curriculum development that are highlighted within its scheduled improvement plan. The school meets all statutory requirements and satisfactorily implements the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Personal, social and health education is well planned. The need for a healthy lifestyle and aspects of drugs education feature strongly in the science curriculum. Assemblies are used to support the RE curriculum well and promote strong moral messages. The overall strategy for curriculum development has rightly focused on and given the highest priority to the development of English, mathematics and science. This has been successful. For example, previously weaknesses were identified in scientific investigation; provision here is now good. The school improvement plan identifies further curriculum development in other subjects now that the provision for raising standards in the core areas has been secured.
20. The provision for special educational needs is a very significant strength of the school. Supported by some high quality paperwork, the strength of the provision lies in a common commitment of all staff to inclusion. Specific strengths within this area include:
  - Very skilled teaching assistants who know the needs of pupils well.
  - Very good information flow in the school between staff.
  - Regular adjustment of teaching plans to meet the pupils' specific needs.
  - Good quality literacy support programmes led by a teaching assistant.
  - The school is strongly supported by governors who are committed to the school being an inclusive place.
21. There is considerable enrichment of the curriculum. During the inspection visitors came into the school to support health education in science and the 'Toys and Games' topic in history. The three visitors to the Years 1 and 2 history lesson provided an excellent range of resources for the pupils to experience, examine and ask questions about. This gave additional and very valuable support to learning about life in Victorian times. A doctor's input about food and its values gave pupils expert knowledge to draw on. After school activities provide additional opportunities for learning to take place, such as dance led by students from the local college and celebration of the custom of Shrove Tuesday. The clubs are well attended. An especially innovative feature is the introduction of yoga classes for teachers and pupils. These classes aim to foster inner calm and well-being for both staff and pupils, and to help provide a new way to develop more effective learning together.
22. The current team of staff are very enthusiastic. Teaching assistants are very effective because there is very good communication with teachers and they have accessed high quality professional development. This has significantly improved their skills in developing pupils' learning in many areas, including signing to support any hearing impaired pupils. They are confident and make a significant contribution to the quality of provision. They are also effectively deployed in classrooms.
23. Although accommodation is satisfactory overall, there are some strengths and weaknesses. The outside play area is spacious. New accommodation which the local pre-school uses in the morning is supporting close links with children, parents and the school. It also provides an extra large space for activities such as drama and music after school. However, there is limited space in the school to develop specialist ICT provision and the library is small. Further improvement of the outside area is planned, in particular an outside play area for the youngest children, which is currently underdeveloped.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, and safety are good. The school provides pupils with good support, advice and guidance. Pupils play an active part with regard to decision making

about the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good trusting relationships with the adults in the school.
- There is a systematic review of pupils' development which is used to set new targets for their future work and learning.
- Processes for induction and transition to and from the school are handled well.
- The ideas of pupils are considered in developing school policies and practices.
- The school manages health and safety arrangements well which significantly helps the creation of a secure learning environment.

### **Commentary**

24. Pupils have a trusting and confident relationship with their class teachers and teaching assistants. Nearly all pupils feel they have a person to go to if they needed someone to talk to. They are greeted on arrival at school and escorted to their classes. At the end of the day teachers ensure they are met by parents and carers. During play and lunch-times the pupils are well supervised. Parents consider that good care is taken of their children and that they enjoy school. Bullying and other forms of harassment, although an area of concern in previous years, is no longer seen as an issue by the vast majority of parents or pupils and staff. A recently conducted survey throughout the school suggests this area is now resolved and this is supported by inspection findings.
25. Child Protection measures are very good and have very significantly improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher is the focal point in ensuring that all other teachers follow the necessary procedures. Any incidents are handled carefully, with tact and diplomacy and this supports the pupil's confidence in the adults.
26. The school's promotion of a healthy lifestyle for pupils has recently been recognised with the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils have fruit at mid-morning breaks, and special, healthy menus are available for lunches. Lessons stress the importance of healthy eating and exercise and other components of a healthy lifestyle are promoted very well.
27. The system for checking pupils' achievement is good, especially in numeracy, literacy and science, and this information forms the basis of new targets for the pupils and contributes effectively to their learning. Initial targets are set at the beginning of the school year and are reviewed frequently. The targets are shared with parents to help them assist their children with their work at home. Pupils are encouraged to carry out their own assessment of progress against their targets which is then reviewed by teachers.
28. Induction arrangements for pupils into the reception class are good. They include the teacher making home visits and also visiting the on-site pre-school to find out more about the children and begin to build relationships with them. Parents agree that arrangements for settling their children are good. Ensuring a good transition to secondary schools is a harder task because two schools are involved, one in another county. However, exchange visits and links with these schools enable an easy and well managed transfer of pupils.
29. Pupils' views are mainly sought through the school council. This is made up of elected representatives from each class. Membership can change every term and the group meet regularly. The school council co-ordinates the awards system. Pupils' views are also surveyed on specific topics such as bullying. In lessons pupils are widely encouraged to talk and give their opinions thus helping to develop their reasoning.
30. Health and safety arrangements are of high importance to the school with the consequence that all required health and safety checks are carried out well. Governors regularly review the school's facilities and report on any hazards or safety issues. This is another aspect showing a marked improvement since the previous inspection.

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

The partnership with parents is good, as are links with other schools and colleges and the community. These arrangements have a positive impact on pupils learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides good information to parents about the progress and learning of their children.
- Parents are offered courses which enable them to assist their children's learning.
- Parents are supportive of the work of the school.
- Links with other schools support the development of pupils well.
- The local community provides good support to the school.

### **Commentary**

31. The school provides a comprehensive range of information to parents. These include, 'Meet the Teachers Evenings' and the sharing of the learning targets set for children in literacy, numeracy and science. This sharing of information takes place in the autumn term and helps parents to support their children with their homework and be involved with their learning. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very clearly tracked so success towards targets within their individual education plans can be reviewed and discussed with parents. Parents' consultation evenings are well attended in both the autumn and summer terms. Parents are invited to discuss the annual reports for their children. Additional meetings are also held to discuss national tests. The annual reports provide good examples of work achieved by children and the level at which they are working but they are not always expressed in a simple way. Pupils are so clear about what it is they have to learn next that they contribute to reports by adding their own targets. Reading homework helps pupils consolidate their learning from lessons. Nearly all parents felt well informed about how their children were getting on.
32. The school has recently provided the facilities for a computer course for parents and is just commencing a "Learning together" course. Parents benefit from the schemes in two ways - they develop their own skills and also become more able to help their children with their learning at home.
33. Parents are involved in many aspects of the work of the school including working as teaching assistants, listening to pupils read, supporting swimming, and trips away from the school. Many help with clubs. They feel well informed about the development of their children, especially those with special needs, and are pleased that the school seeks their views through surveys and meetings. They are comfortable about approaching the school if they have any concerns. Parents praise the work of the teachers and also that of the teaching assistants.
34. The school works closely with all local education establishments. Secondary schools in Launceston and Tavistock support the careful transition of pupils into the next phase of their school life and also provide teaching support for science, design technology, French and physical education. Trainee teachers from local colleges work in the school as part of their development, and secondary school pupils also visit as part of their work experience placements. The headteacher is a member of an informal network of primary school headteachers throughout Devon and benefits from practical and informal advice. The local education authority has provided extensive support, guidance and training for all staff in recent years.

35. There are good links with the local community including visits by a doctor in support of a science lesson and the local history society in history lessons. There is frequent and regular religious support from local ministers for assemblies, and the local parish church receives visits at Christmas and as part of the planned curriculum. In addition the school's facilities are used by local clubs and societies.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall leadership and management in the school are good. Leadership of the headteacher is very good. Governance, the leadership of other key staff and the management of the school are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a forward-looking and highly committed team of teachers and teaching assistants.
- A detailed school improvement plan is an effective tool for school development.
- Governors have maintained a drive for improvement through a difficult period.
- There is a strong commitment to developing the skills of individual staff in the school.
- Management of special educational needs is very good.

### **Commentary**

36. The headteacher has established a dynamic team of teachers and teaching assistants. Working with governors, she has secured an almost entire change of staff over the last two years. The current team are committed to school improvement and have shown a willingness to embrace the good features from the past and yet focus on and secure change and development. The headteacher and senior teacher are confident and supportive of other staff in the school. Care is taken to ensure that all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Monitoring of teaching has been explicit and has supported the culture of self-improvement that has had a direct impact on learning. This has enabled older pupils to catch up on the gaps left by interruptions to their education caused by the difficult circumstances the school had to deal with.
37. Improvement in the school has been steered by an effective and detailed school improvement plan. The plan has many strong features. Critically, it is securely based on a range of self-evaluation strategies which have identified strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision. The previous inspection noted that insufficient time was available to the management team to enable this to happen. This situation has been rectified. The headteacher has carried out a meticulous analysis of data and uses the outcomes effectively to adjust the plan. Spending priorities within the plan are clear and have been carefully evaluated with a value for money judgement made. The current plan has a one year timescale because the school is using it as a means of evaluating the overall progress made since the involvement of the local education authority. Monitoring by the governing body, as an integral part of the plan, is effective.
38. The school has come through a period of considerable uncertainty caused by a range of difficult circumstances. Through this time there has been an almost entire change in the governors of the school. The governing body is now effective and improving the overall governance in the school. All statutory requirements are met. Governors are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have had to confront and deal with significant issues in the school. They managed difficult situations effectively alongside the headteacher, who was supported very well during this time, by her senior teacher. Good quality new staff have been appointed, including those who are newly qualified. Recruitment, including that of the current headteacher, has been effective. Governors have made certain that now the headteacher has an appropriate amount of time out of the classroom so she can lead and manage the school effectively. The parents' confidence that the school has 'improved considerably' since the headteacher's appointment is well based.



39. Part of the strategy for school improvement has been a belief in the development of the skills of staff. This shows the headteacher's strong commitment to developing the individual. Training has been used positively to share expertise and improve provision. The newly qualified teacher is well supported as are all of the teaching assistants. The benefits of this strategy have been considerable and are reflected in the good achievement now being made by the pupils.
40. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. There are very high quality systems in place to monitor pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants, supporting pupils with statements of special educational needs are particularly effective. Provision is checked carefully each term. The records kept by the school and the information available to staff are very good. The school as a whole is strongly committed to inclusion.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	268,303	Balance from previous year	9,403
Total expenditure	261,853	Balance carried forward to the next	6,450
Expenditure per pupil	2,815		

41. Since the previous inspection there has been very good improvement in governance, leadership and management. Financial planning, over three years, is good and is well supported by an effective administrative assistant. The school has targeted its resources in employing teaching assistants and this has made a significant contribution to the quality of provision. 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

Provision for the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching assistants and other adults provide very effective support.
- There are missed opportunities for children to further develop their early writing and mathematical skills.

### Commentary

42. It was not possible to make overall judgements about each individual area of learning during the inspection. The following is a summary of what was seen and judgements on standards. There are seventeen reception children who follow the Foundation Stage curriculum. They share the class with six younger Year 1 pupils. Thirteen of these reception children began school on a full-time basis six weeks before the start of the inspection and are taking time to settle. This new intake has altered the dynamics of the class considerably and the teacher is adapting her organisation and planning to make certain their needs are met. The group joined the class for two half days a week during the autumn term as part of their induction to school.
43. The attainment of children who join the reception class varies considerably from year to year. Currently it is below average. A significant proportion of the class is exhibiting well below average speaking and listening skills. Children are achieving satisfactorily overall. Early indications are that the majority of them are likely to be below average in the key areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development as they enter Year 1. Evidence suggests that they are likely to be meeting the national expectations in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development, having made more progress in these areas.
44. Leadership is satisfactory. Detailed, on-going assessments recognise areas that require development and are used to aid planning to meet children's needs, particularly those of the less able. There are missed opportunities to extend some more able children. Additional outdoor space has been allocated to the class. The teacher is putting plans into action to develop this facility in conjunction with the on-site pre-school. This joint venture includes plans for the purchase of large, outdoor play equipment which is currently under resourced. The teacher has established profitable links with the pre-school setting to aid children's successful transition to the main school.
45. Teaching is always satisfactory and has some good features. It was seen to be especially effective and to be promoting good learning in sessions where additional adults supported small groups well. Children's **personal, social and emotional development** is fostered in a good way because all adults help children to settle into school routines, encouraging and enabling them to take part and develop longer attention spans. Small group activities get children to take turns and to listen to one another without interrupting. This aspect, however, is currently more of a challenge for some than for others. Care is taken to cultivate children's self-confidence and encourage positive attitudes to learning through a balance of adult led and child initiated tasks.
46. **Communication, language and literacy** are promoted satisfactorily through activities that interest and motivate the children. The high proportion of adults to children encourages them to develop their speaking and listening skills which they do well. This is because they become actively engaged in conversation. For example, when cutting out puppets and re-enacting the

story of 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' they explained what their model bears and other small figures were doing and used the appropriate sound effects. These play scenes helped children to recreate the story plot, participating with confidence, and remembering and ordering the dialogue with some useful help from adults. This work also supported their creative development well. Children recite well-known rhymes such as 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' and were seen handling books and sharing text. Activities such as these ensure they are gradually developing an awareness of sounds, letters and words. There are, however, some missed opportunities to develop learning further, particularly in establishing early recording skills. Children were seen to be re-enforcing bad habits in relation to their letter formation. Satisfactory **mathematical development** takes place when children take part in counting games and learn to distinguish numbers and how to count in sequence. They take part in weighing and measuring activities that develop their understanding of estimation and the value of numbers. They also use computers profitably to acquire more knowledge of the value of numbers.

47. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** and their **creative development** receive appropriate coverage and children learn well because satisfactory and often good teaching in these areas provides appropriate, stimulating opportunities for learning. For example, children investigate a collection of balls to find out what they are made of and observe closely their different shapes, sizes and properties. They build a variety of models using a range of materials, explore old and new toys and record the places around the world that 'Barnaby Bear' has visited. The teacher ensures children develop an awareness of the Christian faith and other beliefs. Children frequently use computers to, for example, move pictures on a screen into the correct position as they 'dress teddy'. They paint, cut out, glue, use musical instruments, dress-up and use 'small world' toys such as farmyards to profitably develop their imagination and creativity further. **Physical development** is supported by sessions in the school hall focused on developing spatial awareness. All children have the opportunity to go swimming, greatly enhancing their learning in this aspect. Children also climb, balance and use large equipment when they play outside in the adventure playground. This makes certain the effective development of their co-ordination is pursued.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 2 because of very good teaching.
- All pupils are achieving well and older pupils are catching up on a legacy of lower standards because of good teaching.
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support to assist pupils' learning.
- Leadership of the subject is good and is ensuring standards are monitored rigorously, thus supporting improvement.
- Strategies to track pupils' progress in reading and writing are very effective and support individual improvement as pupils are very clear about what they need to achieve next.
- Marking is used very well to inform pupils about how they can improve their work.
- Standards in handwriting and presentation in older classes are unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

48. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 fluctuate due to the very small cohorts of pupils taking the tests each year. However, standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently high over the past four years because of the very good teaching which has remained constant during the school's difficult times. The same cannot be said of the

standards in Years 3 to 6 which suffered during the school's turbulent times. Standards deteriorated and have been below and well below average at the end of Year 6 in the recent past. Now stability has returned to the school, improvement is discernable and the results for 2003 at the end of Year 6 were much better. Progress in raising and improving standards reflects the impact that good quality teaching has on learning and the steps the school has taken to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are monitored very closely. They are all achieving well. Older pupils are making up successfully for lost time. There have been satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection, especially in relation to standards in reading in Year 6.

49. Currently standards in speaking and listening are average in Year 2 and Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, there are many good opportunities for discussion with both the teacher and the teaching assistants, as was seen when younger pupils explored the story of the 'Paper Bag Princess'. Good progress has been made to improve standards that were below average on entry to Year 1. In junior classes a great deal of attention is given to getting pupils to engage in worthwhile discussions. Their level of conversation is appropriate but standards still reflect some missed opportunities to develop this aspect of their learning earlier on in their education.
50. Reading standards are above average in Year 2 and average but improving in Year 6 as pupils make up for previously lost time. Pupils make good progress and are now achieving well. The school has introduced a daily 'carousel' of activities that support the development of literacy skills including those that focus on reading. These sessions are proving to be very successful and are addressing the points raised within the school improvement plan. Volunteer helpers play an important role in these daily group activities, as do teaching assistants because their support enables pupils to read aloud more frequently and gives them additional opportunities to discuss the plots or events described in their books thus supporting learning well. Comments about what pupils need to do to improve are recorded systematically and comprehensively in reading diaries. Parents have access to and contribute to these records so they are kept well-informed and they too can and do help their children to make progress.
51. Standards in writing in Year 2 are above average and in Year 6 they are average. Pupils achieve well. Some pupils' use of spelling techniques and punctuation are still not sufficiently established in the oldest class because ground was lost lower down the school. Teachers make good use of the National Literacy Strategy format. This makes certain all pupils know what they are going to learn in a lesson. They practise a new skill and then reflect on the progress they have made during a profitable review at the end. Teaching assistants are very effective and they use the materials that support the literacy strategy very productively. They offer valuable input into pupils' learning whether pupils are more able or experience some learning difficulty. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and this makes certain they too progress well.
52. Teachers' marking is very detailed and helpful to pupils. This, alongside very helpful discussions with individual pupils, ensures that they know what to do to improve their work further. Their progress is tracked very carefully. This promotes good achievement because teachers use the information they gather about each pupil's progress to make sure that the next steps in learning are identified and each and every pupil's needs are recognised and planned for.
53. Leadership of the subject is good. Since her arrival at the school the headteacher, with the effective support of the recently appointed literacy co-ordinator, has introduced systems and strategies to improve standards. Lessons have been monitored and points for development noted and acted upon. These are having a significant and positive impact. The school has developed the use of 'Progress in Writing Books'. These are completed twice a term. The outcomes of the assessments of this work are used to set targets that are discussed with pupils and help them to identify what they need to do next to improve. These assessment books show that standards in writing are rising and pupils are making good progress although

presentation and handwriting are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has drama expertise and this area is set to improve further having already benefited pupils' learning during after school clubs.

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

54. These areas are being promoted well in many curriculum areas but more links are being established within a review of the development of subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Research and investigation receive good attention.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Following a period of turbulence in the school progress is now good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and that for higher attainers, is very good.
- Teaching for pupils in the class for Years 1 and 2 is very good
- Leadership and management of the subject are highly effective.
- The use of computers with small groups is supporting learning in mathematics profitably.
- Some aspects of problem solving are underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

55. Standards in mathematics are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. There are small numbers of pupils in each year group and this means that there is likely to be considerable fluctuation in results in different years. Over the past four years the results have been consistently well above average in Year 2. In Year 6, the 2003 results were just above average having been well below average between 2000 and 2002. These results reflect the considerable period of turbulence at the school. The current inspection confirms that the position is now stable and that the standards are rising because of good teaching and higher expectations of pupils.
56. Pupils come into the school with lower than average standards. Overall, they are making good progress from the start of Year 1 and achieving well so that by the end of Year 2 standards have risen considerably. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are particularly well provided for. Provision here is significantly enhanced by the high quality input of teaching assistants who work closely with the classroom teacher. Pupil progress is carefully mapped on a lesson by lesson basis to ensure that needs of pupils are met. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well and good planning ensures that higher attaining pupils are well challenged.
57. There is a growing use of computers in classes to support the development of mathematical skills. In lessons observed, the use corresponded closely with the objectives set for the lesson. Pupils used the programs to set themselves problems and, working in pairs, checked each other's answers.
58. Work in pupils' books show strengths in the development of understanding number and shape and space. For example, Year 3 pupils identify symmetry in different shapes. In Year 6, formal methods to multiply numbers together are used well and pupils can calculate the area of complex shapes. There are plentiful examples of data handling through bar and line graphs in science. There are weaknesses in algebra, and the use of reasoning to solve more

complex problems which require several steps to be understood and followed. There are few examples of the use of 'jottings' which show different ways of solving problems or applying understanding.

59. Overall the quality of teaching is good. One lesson in the Years 1 and 2 class was very good. The strengths in the teaching include:
- High quality lesson planning.
  - Sequences of lesson which build on previous learning.
  - A secure learning environment in which the pupils are confident to contribute.
  - Good quality questioning by both teachers and teaching assistants which check pupils' understanding and help them to think more deeply.
  - Highly skilled teaching assistants who work closely with teachers, making sure all pupils are included in lessons.
60. In some lessons, when pupils are asked to work together in groups their work rate is not as good. This is because the tasks given are completed early and there are no extension tasks available. Also, some pupils are too easily distracted or take too long to settle down.
61. The headteacher of the school has focused relentlessly on improving the quality of teaching, particularly in Years 3 to 6 in order to raise standards. This has been a key issue in the school improvement plan. Monitoring and evaluation of lessons both within the school and externally have supported improvement very well. The progress of pupils is carefully charted and this confirms the significant improvement since 2001 in Years 3 to 6. Before this, progress was weak reflecting a time when teaching was unsatisfactory. The headteacher has produced an analysis of strengths and weaknesses from a range of monitoring activities in the school and presented these in a helpful way to staff. Very strong leadership and management are now supporting teachers well in focusing their work. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. The use of number across the curriculum is satisfactory. There is good use of the application of number in science and the school has recently purchased a new package which will enable the use of ICT for data handling and spreadsheets to be developed.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average in Year 2.
- Pupils' progress and achievement are good.
- Overall teaching is good.
- Pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes encourage them to learn in a co-operative way during investigations.
- Standards in scientific investigation have improved since the previous inspection.

### **Commentary**

63. In the 2003 assessment for Year 2 pupils, standards were above average. In the Year 6 tests, standards were average. Over the past four years, with the exception of 2002, standards in science have been broadly average. The inspection indicates that standards are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6.

64. The samples of work seen and discussions with pupils in Year 2 show strengths in understanding of how to plan investigations, present results in tables and thinking about what has been learnt. Pupils share and evaluate their results well. Higher attaining pupils are developing good ideas which might explain what they have found out. For example, when discussing how well a parachute would work, the pupils linked the speed of the fall to the size of the canopy. One pupil commented that a large area helped 'push the person up'. In Year 6, pupils explain the meaning of scientific terms carefully. They plan investigations, collect results and evaluate findings well. The work samples show some effective coverage of the importance of healthy living and dangers of drugs. The Year 6 pupils are now developing much more confidence in their work, especially in applying their understanding.
65. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Coming into the school with below average standards this strong progress enables these above average standards to be reached. The reasons for this include:
- High levels of good quality support from teaching assistants which ensures that pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils are effectively challenged
  - Clarity in planning which builds on previous learning and helps thinking to be extended
  - Very high expectations from the teacher of pupils in Year 2
  - High levels of interest and concentration from the pupils.
66. Achievement and progress are also good in Years 3 to 6. Tasks are set at different levels and this, together with the very good support from teacher assistants, ensure that lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs also achieve well. In Years 5 and 6 the lessons are characterised by a good, industrious atmosphere, effective lesson planning and clear explanations from the teacher. Pupils apply themselves well.
67. Teaching is good with very good teaching seen in the Years 1 and 2 class. Teaching throughout the school has several strengths. The teaching of scientific investigation is good across the school. Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 are supported well by teaching assistants asking probing questions. In Years 5 and 6, teacher intervention extends understanding. For example, when pupils are asked to develop explanations about why plants are adapted in particular ways, individual research using the internet is used effectively to access information. In Years 3 and 4, teaching is enhanced by the use of a visiting doctor to talk about healthy living and balanced diet. Clear explanation helps pupils understand the link between eating and exercise.
68. Pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes support learning well. In Years 5 and 6 pupils collaborate with each other and share ideas well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen to each other's ideas about testing parachutes and take turns in making their own. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils work well together but a small number are boisterous and this affects their learning because the teacher has to work hard at times to maintain their concentration.
69. The subject is well managed. The focus for improvement in the school improvement plan has been successful in raising attainment in these areas. In the previous inspection, scientific investigation was judged unsatisfactory with weaknesses in drawing conclusions. This issue has been resolved. Progress made has therefore been good

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good.
- The daily 'carousel' of small group activities includes the productive use and development of ICT skills. This forges links between ICT and other subjects, especially literacy and numeracy.

- The layout and positioning of computers does not support any whole-class teaching of skills. This inhibits the productiveness of teaching.
- Teaching assistants use the digital camera to support learning very effectively.
- The past history of the school has led to some delays in securing the satisfactory provision now available to pupils.

### **Commentary**

70. Evidence about pupils' standards in ICT was gathered from a range of sources and during lessons when ICT featured as part of the teacher's planned work as an integral part of the session or as a focus for specific skills development and learning. Pupils' books were scrutinised, as were displays of work and the co-ordinator discussed her work and plans. Discussions were held with class teachers, teaching assistants and an inspector also spoke to a group of Year 6 pupils. Evidence gathered from these observations indicates that standards are average in both Year 2 and Year 6.
71. Pupils are very enthusiastic about ICT. They are confident about using the skills they have developed. Year 6 pupils can access information from the internet independently using a search engine. They use search engines when learning about plants and differing habitats. They explain that why using one site is preferable to another and how frustrating it can be at times when a search leads to many different interpretations of the enquiry. In Year 1, higher attaining pupils were seen achieving particularly well as the teacher challenged them to complete an information sheet by cutting and pasting the correct answer from a pre-prepared word bank.
72. In the two lessons seen with pupils developing skills, one with Year 1 and the other with Year 6, teaching was good. Teachers showed good subject knowledge that enabled them to develop pupils' learning well through clearly explained procedures to follow. Key vocabulary was introduced and pupils had to keep reiterating what it was they had to do to input information; thus learning was reinforced profitably and extended previous knowledge well.
73. Teachers plan ICT activities into their daily 'carousel' of tasks. These support and develop pupils' learning effectively but the positioning of the computers is not conducive to class-teaching. This limits the delivery of skills to just a few pupils at a time and does not make the best use of the teacher's time. It also hinders the progress that pupils can make as they only have restricted times at the computer to practise newly introduced skills. Teachers have to repeat aspects of work with two groups rather than engaging with all pupils at one time.
74. A very good contribution to pupils' learning is made by the use of the digital camera. A very effective teaching assistant supported a lower attaining group of Year 1 and 2 pupils during a literacy lesson when they learnt a great deal about how to describe a setting. By taking photographs of a model castle, a dragon and a cave as features to talk about within a story they were able to have an instant recall of their previously dramatised story. Having taken the photographs they helped download them onto the computer screen and printed them to use as prompts in retelling the story.
75. The subject is led satisfactorily by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has started monitoring standards of work in order to raise standards further. Improvement has been satisfactory since the previous inspection because although standards remain similar provision has improved. This is because the instability of the school delayed teachers' training, and the securing of fully functional hardware has been problematic. A technician regularly visits the school to resolve any problems with computers because of links established with the local secondary school thus helping to stop interruptions in learning.



## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. Teachers make good use of ICT to support a range of subjects. It featured within a significant number of lessons seen during the inspection such as science, literacy and mathematics. It also is used well in the daily 'carousel' sessions that develop pupils' spelling and numeracy skills but it is not possible to introduce new techniques to the whole class at any one time which impedes the use of ICT across the curriculum.

## HUMANITIES

77. Only one lesson was seen in **history** in Year 2. Therefore it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. There was insufficient information gathered about **geography** for any judgements to be made. **Religious education** is reported in full.
78. From the **history** lesson seen and pupils' work examined, standards are average and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Year 6 pupils have produced some good work on Anglo-axons. They have considered aspects of life in Anglo-axon times such as farming and settlements. Studies include comparisons with modern times and belief in different gods. Year 2 pupils are developing an understanding of the past by considering toys today and in Victorian times. The use of parents and other visitors to the school to look at very old toys with the pupils and discuss how they are different from toys of today is very good. Some excellent resources stimulated high levels of interest from the pupils, and with help, they were able to ask relevant questions about the past. The resources included a toy theatre, shove halfpenny boards, old card games and a Noah's Ark set. Some fascinating points were made. For example, pupils were intrigued to discover that the Noah's Ark set was the only toy that was allowed to be played with on a Sunday because it had a religious theme.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' knowledge of Christianity and other faiths is secure and reinforced particularly effectively in assemblies.
- Pupils contribute well in class discussions.

## Commentary

79. Evidence from lessons observed, assemblies, talking to pupils and looking at their work indicates that standards are average overall and in line with the expectations of the local syllabus. Assemblies are used especially well to develop pupils' understanding of the customs of Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday as well as those of other major religions such as Islam. Ideas about 'feasting' leading to 'fasting' at Lent are introduced imaginatively. A strong moral message about 'giving something up' and becoming better people is discussed with the whole school. Pupils listen carefully and contribute their ideas well.
80. Pupils in Year 6 show a sound understand of stories from the bible. They write about their ideas of faith and different interpretations of sayings from the bible such as 'I am the bread of life'. A Year 6 lesson based on memorials provided a good opportunity for pupils to express their views and understanding. Years 3 and 4 pupils discuss the story of Easter and the symbols associated with it. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 compare key ideas about Christian and Hindu festivals. Overall pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory.

81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well and ensure that follow up written tasks provide an appropriate challenge. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with extra support. Pupils listen carefully and express views confidently in whole-class discussions. They have positive attitudes about the subject.
82. Planning at whole-school level is based on a two-year cycle. These plans and pupils' work show that the requirements for religious education are being met. At the time of the previous inspection provision was judged to be unsatisfactory. A new co-ordinator has recently taken responsibility for the subject and an update of the action plan is being undertaken following a review of the strengths and weaknesses in the current provision. Progress since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

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

83. Physical education is reported fully but as no lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology or music it is not possible to report on overall provision in any of these areas. However, planning, evidence around the school and talking with pupils suggests satisfactory coverage of the curriculum. In **art and design** displays illustrate a range of techniques and use of different media. For example, Year 6 pupils portrayed a series of movements using line sketches and Year 2 pupils produced observational drawings and paintings of flowers. In **design and technology**, pupils study a range of materials and work on projects using textiles, materials and food. Photographs and evidence around the school suggest a satisfactory coverage of the curriculum that enables pupils to learn well and achieve standards that are at least in line with national expectations. They also have opportunities to attend events away from school that challenge them to investigate wind power as a source of alternative energy and pneumatics as a way of firing a dart. Puppets on display in the Year 1 and 2 classroom are of an especially high quality. In **music**, pupils are given appropriate experiences to help them learn. There is a wide selection of instruments available. In assemblies pupils sing tunefully and are given the opportunity to listen to and comment upon a range of styles of music. In some lessons in Years 5 and 6, music provides a soothing background for learning. Years 3 and 4 pupils took part enthusiastically in singing a 'rap' version of a Swahili poem before having a go at producing their own poems. Younger pupils play instruments and take part in singing games and rhymes so they learn about pitch and rhythm appropriately.

### **Physical Education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

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

- Teaching is good and encourages pupils to appraise each other's work constructively.
- Recent developments, fostered by links with partner secondary schools, are proving beneficial and are raising pupils' achievements but these still require time to improve satisfactory standards further.
- The knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment of the subject leader are developing this area effectively.
- The curriculum is supported well by a range of additional opportunities.

#### **Commentary**

84. Evidence gathered from lessons, school documentation and talking with pupils shows that this area is of significant and growing importance to the school. All elements of the curriculum are covered and requirements for swimming are met. The very youngest children at the school are also included in swimming lessons on a regular basis so they gain confidence in the water from the earliest stages. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 as they were at the time of the previous inspection but overall provision has improved.

Teaching is good because teachers have thorough subject knowledge and make sure pupils learn skills in a purposeful and progressive way. Lessons are pitched appropriately and take account of prior learning thus ensuring good progress. The recent emphasis on this area of the curriculum means that pupils are now acquiring new skills and further developing others. They have been taught how to offer supportive but constructive advice to one another on their performance. They do this well and it helps them to learn more effectively. Teachers are making sure older pupils are achieving well in order to catch up and reach satisfactory standards. For instance, in Year 6 pupils are catching up on their ball and racquet skills because these had not been developed sufficiently over time.

85. The subject co-ordinator is committed to her subject. As well as establishing thorough and effective planning and assessment procedures she has been involved in introducing some innovative and additional aspects to the curriculum. For example, pupils take part in yoga sessions. These increase, not only their spatial awareness, but also help them to develop their concentration skills. The school has introduced this focus to staff as well. As a shared feature, yoga is helping to try and promote inner calm and well-being for staff and pupils, and to provide a new way to develop more effective learning together. The co-ordinator's work includes monitoring of lessons and provision. She is determined to raise standards further and has the ability to do so, supported by her involvement in the School Sports Co-ordinator programme in the area. This aspect of the school's work has improved significantly since the last inspection.
86. Meal-time supervisory assistants have been involved in training to promote more activity during lunch-time breaks. They are supporting the promotion of playground games successfully. This is having a good impact on pupils' development in terms of fostering a healthier lifestyle. After school clubs are an integral and valuable part of school life. They help pupils develop additional skills and are led by various members of the community through the good links that have been established with them. Rugby, football, dance, yoga and netball were all available during the week of the inspection.
87. Pupils take part in a variety of sports activities. Inter-school sports competitions are held and provide additional opportunities for pupils not only to develop their physical skills but also to meet other pupils and socialise.

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

88. Only part of one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work so no judgement is made about overall provision. The school sees this aspect of its work as an important area of the curriculum and the development of the pupils' emotional health is a key objective in the school improvement plan. It is delivered in specifically allocated time and through other subjects. The overall programme for personal, social and health education is good and includes work on keeping safe, medicines and drugs and sex education. Healthy living and the effects of drugs are covered well in science lessons and use outside expertise effectively. Year 1 pupils use a 'golden' box to explore feelings and this helps develop their self-esteem. In the one lesson seen pupils learnt well and discussed 'safe' and 'unsafe' environments and all pupils were involved appropriately.

## 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>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
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).*