

INSPECTION REPORT

Lydford Primary School

Lydford, Okehampton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113257

Headteacher: Mrs Gillian Page

Lead inspector: Mrs Jane Morris

Dates of inspection: 12th & 13th January 2004

Inspection number: 256806

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:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	33
School address:	School Road Lydford Okehampton Devon
Postcode:	EX20 4AU
Telephone number:	01822-820-264
Fax number:	01822-820-510
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Poppy Arnold
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small, rural primary school with 33 pupils on roll. The school is situated within the Dartmoor National Park, very close to Lydford Gorge and Lydford Castle. These properties are owned by the National Trust and English Heritage respectively. Pupils come from the village itself and other hamlets in the area. They come from a variety of home backgrounds and their socio-economic circumstances are average. Almost all are of white British heritage and virtually all have English as their mother tongue. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than those expected is average. Attainment on entry to school is similar to that found nationally. Forty-three per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. This is well above average. Their needs are learning related. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

The school has two classes. Younger pupils of reception age and in Year 1 and Year 2 are taught by two teachers who share responsibility for the class. Older pupils, Years 3 to 6, are taught by the headteacher for four days and another regular teacher for one. The school works closely with other schools in the area, both primary and secondary, to share joint events to promote additional opportunities for pupils' learning and for staff development.

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, Physical education.
1311	Mr Barry Wood	Lay inspector	
16405	Mr Keith Sadler	Team inspector	Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, Religious education and Special Educational Needs.

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school's effectiveness is good and it provides good value for money. Good teaching ensures that all pupils achieve well in relation to their ability. Standards are above average. The very good leadership of the headteacher and the strength of the governing body ensure that this is a school that is always seeking to improve. It takes account of the needs of all its pupils very well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has a very clear vision that is fundamental in steering the school's determination to improve within a very caring environment that promotes a very good ethos.
- Teaching, supported by very effective assistants, is good and standards are above average.
- A very good curriculum is supplemented by a particularly wide variety of additional opportunities and outstanding links with the community.
- The governors' knowledge about the school is making a very strong contribution to the school's improvement.
- The 'pupil council' is exceptional. It has a significant impact on the work of the school.
- Links with and involvement of parents are very good. They have every confidence in the school.

All key issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed very well. The quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum have improved, as has leadership and management. The role of the governors is much stronger. The commitment of all staff is instrumental in assuring the school's effectiveness and it is offering a higher quality of care. Links with parents are very much better. The very good leadership and teaching of the headteacher mean that there is a very strong sense of purpose, with a determination to raise standards permeating throughout the school. This has a significant and very positive impact on all aspects of the school's work. Since the last inspection, school buildings have been refurbished and the learning environment enhanced both inside and out. The school is well placed to continue going from strength to strength with the complete confidence of the 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	B	A	C	E
mathematics	B	E	E	E*
science	C	A	A	A

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

Caution is needed when interpreting data in this school which has extremely small year groups. National test results fluctuate depending on the number of pupils in any year group and those with special educational needs.

All pupils achieve well for their ability in Years 1 to 6. The above and well above average standards seen during the inspection are in stark contrast to the previous year's test results and reinforce how standards reached by the very small numbers in each year group can and do fluctuate dramatically. Test results for 2003, for a cohort with a particularly small number of pupils, show that Year 6 standards, in relation to all schools were average in English but well below average in mathematics. Standards in science were well above average. In comparison with similar schools English standards were well below, and mathematics results were very low. Science was well above average. Currently Year 6 pupils are working well above the national expectations in English, mathematics and science.

In 2003, Year 2 pupils' results were well below average in relation to all and similar schools. Indications are that the 2004 results for Year 2 are likely to be considerably higher as inspection evidence shows above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are also above average in ICT.

Attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year. Almost all of the current, very small group of reception-aged children, joined the school four days before the start of the inspection. They are achieving satisfactorily as teachers get to know them and very early indications are that they will meet or possibly exceed the anticipated early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. They have an outstanding understanding of their responsibilities within the school and the village community in which they live. Attendance is 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 individuals extremely well and plan very thoroughly to address their needs, both the more and the less able.

The overall quality of the curriculum is very good. High 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 very good. Partnerships with parents are also very good, as are affiliations with other schools and colleges. The school has exceptional links with the community. These all have a valuable impact on pupils' learning as they give them many additional opportunities to acquire further knowledge in a wide range of areas.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good.

The headteacher has the skills, knowledge and determination to continually move the school forward. Governors are not only very supportive but their role as a challenging body is very well developed. They have an especially thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensure all statutory requirements are fully met. The school is managed very well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express extremely positive views. They are very satisfied with the school and have every confidence in the headteacher and the staff. They are kept very well informed. Pupils are very positive about school. They are totally involved in all that the school offers and secure procedures are in place, through the school council, to make certain they are instrumental in identifying any areas that may require some attention. They enjoy taking this responsibility.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no areas of significant weakness that require additional focused attention. The school's improvement plan is to be commended. It is already guiding and supporting the school's endeavours as it builds on its successes and develops pupils' learning further.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve well and standards are good. From Year 1 to Year 6, pupils make good progress in their learning. Currently in Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are attaining above average standards. Children of reception age achieve satisfactorily. They are likely to reach or possibly exceed the expected goals as they enter Year 1.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards seen during the inspection in Year 6 were well above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils achieve well because their individual progress is carefully monitored and new targets for learning are set which they understand.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve particularly well, supported by all adults at the school.

Commentary

1. The number of pupils in each year group is very small and this means that the analyses of data have to be viewed with extreme caution. Standards attained at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 fluctuate widely both across years and also within subjects for each year. This is because each pupil represents a large proportion of the whole year group. For example, in 2003, only three pupils completed the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds so each child represented over 30% of the total. The relevance of and the meaningful interpretation of trends over time is better when considered in relation to the characteristics of each individual's progress within the very small groups of pupils. The headteacher makes sure that this is done very thoroughly. Individual results and any slight variations are analysed in depth and each pupil has challenging but realistic targets to work towards. These processes are productive and ensure every pupil achieves well. There are no significant differences in standards attained by girls and boys.
2. Children enter the reception year with a wide range of attainment. Overall it is average. At the time of the inspection four of the five reception children had only been in the school for one week. Provision is sound and children achieve satisfactorily in the mixed age class they share with Years 1 and 2 pupils. They are likely to reach, and sometimes exceed, the goals expected by the time that they enter Year 1.
3. Currently in Year 2, standards are above expectations in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT and RE. Standards are in line with expectations in art and design. Year 6 pupils are working above the national expectations and are on track to attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of the school year. Achievement is good. In other subjects, evidence collected from samples of work, photographs and talking with pupils suggests standards are also high. In some aspects, such as speaking and listening, poetry writing and investigative science, standards are very high. This is because of the very good teaching and the rich curriculum that secures very effective learning in Years 3 to 6.
4. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is a particular strength of the school. This is due to the very good arrangements that are in place to assess each individual pupil's strengths and needs. Individual and small group work is provided by skilled learning support staff both in and outside the classrooms to strengthen pupils' learning in targeted

areas. Any pupils who join the school having English as an additional language are soon assimilated into the school's very supportive atmosphere. They are encouraged and enabled to do well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour. Their spiritual, moral and social development is very good and their cultural development is good, making these aspects of the pupils' personal development very good overall. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are immensely proud of their school and have a very good understanding of the high expectations of the headteacher and staff. Their awareness of the responsibilities of living in a community is superb.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour both in the classroom and outside are consistently at a very good level and contribute well to their interest and concentration.
- Pupils' very good relationships allow them to feel confident and safe in all school activities.
- Pupils want to attend school, but some 'in-term time' holidays can lower the attendance of some pupils.
- The very good spiritual, moral and social provision has positively shaped the pupils' attitudes and behaviour, although teachers miss some opportunities to promote this provision even further within their curriculum lesson plans.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.2
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.

5. Since the last inspection, the school has achieved a well above the national average attendance rate in most years. However, in a small school the performance is vulnerable to a small number of children with poor attendance. Last year's dip in performance has been corrected by the school. The headteacher makes a determined effort to focus parents on ensuring that their children attend school. Most parents respond conscientiously, but in-term holidays are a significant reason for absence. The school has well-established attendance procedures and the analysis of registers is thorough. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to improve attendance.
6. Pupils want to come to school, and they wear the uniform with real pride. An inspector was told that "this is the best school I have been to." The school has created an ethos where pupils' self-discipline is very strong. From their first days in the school, pupils show very good attitudes and behaviour. Their keen responses and calmness ensure purposeful classrooms and build very high quality relationships between teachers and pupils. The school has not needed to use exclusions, as all pupils have a good understanding of the behaviour boundaries. Pupils with special educational needs are indistinguishable in attitudes and behaviour from other pupils. All pupils listen enthusiastically to their teachers and show high levels of concentration when working alone and good co-operation when working in groups or exchanging challenging ideas. Older pupils increasingly realise that hard work can be fun and want to do their best. Around the school, pupils are relaxed and polite to adults. They play safely together without fear of bullying or harassment. Pupils value each other's differences

and contributions either in the classroom or in activities. They show obvious respect for their environment, of which they are justifiably proud.

7. The well-developed provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is backed by timetabled personal, health and social education. However, teaching across all curriculum subjects would benefit from developing even more planned opportunities to develop these areas, especially cultural awareness. Pupils have a good exposure to the teachings of other faiths. The school is sensitive to pupils' feelings and emotions when introducing topics in the classroom or in interesting assemblies. Pupils compose Grace and lead the school fluently and with reverence at very sociable lunchtimes. All pupils have a keen awareness of right and wrong and know the boundaries for behaviour without any loss of their essential character. The school's ethos is strong in valuing the individual, allowing them to think deeply about issues, and growing each pupil's confidence and self-esteem, but within the context of friendship and working together.
8. Pupils are given exceptional opportunities to take responsibility through the school council, and older pupils are eager to help younger pupils through the 'Buddy' system and in guided reading. The school is an energetic force in the local community and pupils want to respect their own cultural roots and traditions as well as take part in activities associated with their geographical location. As the centre of village life, pupils are enthusiastic in their participation in the performing arts. The school tries hard to overcome the fact that it is almost entirely a mono-cultural society. Opportunities for pupils' multicultural education are meaningful. They are developed through activities such as working with a Japanese artist and the pupils contributed to the Johannesburg Convention on world-wide environmental issues. The school is, however, somewhat limited by its location.
9. Prior to their entry to reception, most children have an appropriate, initial grounding through their home environment and pre-school. Their progress in achieving the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year is good. Children's attitudes and behaviour are generally very good, and they are well prepared for the next stage of education in the lower school.

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 very good and enhanced significantly by additional opportunities. Pupils are supported very well by all the adults associated with the school. There are very strong links with parents and very good links with other local schools. The ethos for learning is very productive. It reflects the family atmosphere and very caring environment created by all who work within this exceptionally small village school.

Teaching and learning

The quality of both teaching and learning is good. Assessment is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching by the headteacher in Years 3 to 6 is very good.
- Teachers' good planning takes account of every pupil's needs and ensures challenge and support are focused appropriately so they all achieve well.
- Teaching assistants are very effective.
- All pupils are treated equally and fairly. Those with special needs are supported very well.
- The commitment of all staff, whether teaching or non-teaching, part-time or full-time, is very strong and all adults help pupils learn well.
- Procedures for assessment, tracking pupils' progress and setting targets for improvement are very good.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	6	6	0	0	0

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

10. Teaching is good overall and ensures pupils learn and achieve well. In the class for Years 3 to 6 teaching is very good. It is satisfactory with some strong features in the class for children of reception age taught with Years 1 and 2 pupils. The quality of teaching reflects the positive views that pupils have about their lessons.
11. When the inspection took place at the beginning of January, four new reception-aged children were settling into school routines, having only been admitted four days previously. These four joined the one other reception child already in the class, bringing the total to five. The always sound and often good quality of teaching for this very small number of reception children ensures that they are achieving appropriately. Two teachers share responsibility for the class. They have the support of very effective assistants. All adults are gradually helping these youngest children to get used to school routines and are finding out what their capabilities are in order to plan to meet all their learning needs.
12. Years 1 and 2 pupils are always taught at least satisfactorily. They were seen to be taught well in science and RE. In these lessons the pace and organisation of the lessons ensured all pupils were actively engaged in stimulating activities throughout the session and that learning was reviewed profitably at the end. Teachers have high expectations but these do not always materialise because of their use of time. In some lessons that are less productive but still satisfactory pupils wait too long to get started on 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.
13. The headteacher, who is very skilled, takes the older pupils for four days a week and another, regular teacher takes responsibility for one day. The headteacher has high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond to this well, so they are always focused on their learning. This makes certain that their progress is good. For example, in science, the teacher guided her pupils through investigations to separate salt and sugar from solutions using night-lights as a heat source. Pupils demonstrated a mature approach to their work, fostered by the teacher's expertise.
14. 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 their confidence in the staff. The effort made by the school administrator to develop achievement in music is productive and to be applauded. Teachers' planning is secure and makes certain that work in each lesson is very well matched to each pupil's different learning needs. Expectation and challenge play a significant part in promoting effective learning in all subjects, as does teachers' very good subject knowledge. The successful deployment of very effective teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special needs are supported and they achieve very well. Any pupils who have English as an additional language are fully integrated into lessons and they too achieve well.
15. Timetable arrangements during the inspection meant overall judgements on teaching were not made in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily to the younger children and science is taught well. Older pupils are taught

very well in all subjects. Teachers are committed to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. They have adapted planning to meet the objectives of these strategies in such a very small school very creatively and successfully. Teachers are very keen to develop ICT opportunities in all their lessons and this means they are integrated into each area of the curriculum at every available opportunity. They are used profitably to extend pupils' learning, as when they research information for their humanities work. Teachers make profitable links between subjects to help pupils learn in a cohesive way. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well across all areas of the curriculum so pupils can practise these skills effectively. Homework is used very well to promote additional learning. Its role is well understood by both parents and their children as a means of developing knowledge further.

16. Assessment procedures are very good. They have been a major feature of the school's development. As year groups of pupils are so small and have such 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, because marking is very thorough. They 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.
17. The school's monitoring of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning through lesson observations and work scrutiny has paid dividends. This is reflected in the higher proportion of very good lessons seen during this inspection than at the time of the previous one. The use of introductions to lessons in which pupils are told about what they are going to learn and then how their progress is reviewed with them at the end, is well established and of great benefit to their learning.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is very good. It meets statutory requirements and is enriched by high quality, extra-curricular provision. The recently refurbished accommodation is satisfactory, as are the learning resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for learning beyond the classroom are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very effective.
- Participation in the arts and environmental activities is particularly noteworthy.

Commentary

18. The very small team of dedicated teachers has successfully adapted curriculum planning to meet the needs of all seven age groups within the two classes. They have established a comprehensive planning structure that not only ensures the required curriculum coverage is in place but that it is supported very well by other purposeful and productive activities, particularly those related to the arts and the environment. The curriculum follows the local agreed syllabus for RE and meets the requirements of the National and Foundation Stage Curriculum.
19. Great emphasis is placed on ensuring all pupils can succeed at whatever level is appropriate for them. Teachers' planning for coverage of the curriculum in mixed-age classes effectively matches the work to the learning needs of all pupils and makes links between subjects whenever possible. There are a few occasions when planning could highlight even more opportunities for pupils' personal development. The adaptations and attention paid to curriculum planning ensure that the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The successful introduction of the national strategies has made sure that pupils develop their numeracy and literacy skills by building on prior knowledge. This has led to improvements since the last inspection, when it was a key area of concern.

20. A high priority is placed on providing learning opportunities beyond the classroom, particularly through the very close partnership the school has with the National Trust and activities that the school takes part in at Lydford Gorge and on Dartmoor. Pupils gain a great deal from activities that promote their knowledge and understanding of history and also raise their cultural and environmental awareness and understanding. The school provides additional music, drama and arts activities for the pupils. They take part in a wide variety of visits, including one that is residential. These sometimes encourage them to 'dress-up' and take part in role-play. For example, they took part in a 'themed' day at Morwhellam Quay when they dressed up as Victorians and learnt a great deal about the differences between living as a rich and a poor person. When asked which they preferred, there was unanimous agreement that to be rich was the better option! They have also helped to conduct a dormouse survey on Dartmoor. A member of the community takes them on walks within the area to find out more about how foxes and other animals such as badgers live. The parents' overwhelming view that the school provides a very good range of activities to support learning that their children find interesting and enjoyable is substantiated.
21. The provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils is very good. This area is one of great strength. The school has just been accredited with the 'Healthy Schools Award' that acknowledges the sterling work of the school in promoting the emotional, health and well-being of staff and pupils, the work it does to support an awareness of sex and relationships, drugs education, citizenship and physical activity. There is a very worthwhile short and snappy aerobics session for all pupils at the start of the day that certainly wakes them up and stimulates their minds and bodies ready for the challenges of the day ahead.
22. Links with the local secondary schools are very good and prepare pupils very well for the next stages in their education. For example, visiting teachers enable pupils to take part in French lessons and also take pupils for sporting activities such as tag-rugby. Very young children and their parents are encouraged to visit school on Friday afternoons so they become familiar with the setting. This helps to make starting school less daunting for them.
23. The school provides a good range of out of school time clubs for pupils, even though this is such a small school and pressures on all staff are demanding. Their commitment is noteworthy. Visitors from the community and friends of the school make a valuable contribution to pupils' experiences and learning. Members of the church visit the school regularly.
24. Sufficient staff, both teaching and non-teaching are available to the school. Teaching assistants are especially effective, as is the school administrator. Accommodation has been improved since the previous inspection to ensure classrooms are brighter, and, in the case of the younger pupils, the teaching area has also been enlarged. Displays enhance the learning environment, which is kept very clean and tidy. Resources are of a satisfactory quality. They are of an especially high calibre outside in the play area. The school continues to use off-site facilities for physical education as there is no hall and no scope to build one within the school setting. However, a major project to improve the outside facilities is benefiting pupils in terms of their physical activity. An impressive adventure play area has been revitalised and provides more physical challenge for all pupils. Alongside this, a garden area has been developed. This is cultivated and cared for by pupils during a gardening club held by a visiting parent. It does much to increase pupils' understanding of living things. Pupils have been fully involved in prioritising the areas requiring refurbishment and their approach to these initiatives through the school council is praiseworthy.

Care, guidance and support

The school is highly effective in ensuring pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. It provides them with very good support and guidance and has an exceptional level of involvement with pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a safe environment for all pupils as a result of good health and safety procedures and the keen awareness of staff.
- The school minimises the external risk to pupils through vigilant staff using very good child protection procedures.
- The headteacher, staff and trusted visitors to the school have a very good knowledge of pupils and offer them high quality pastoral care.
- Pupils are soon made to feel part of the school through very good induction procedures.
- The school makes exceptional efforts to listen to pupils and value their views as part of the school family.

Commentary

25. From her start in the school, the headteacher was determined to place the welfare of pupils at the centre of her agenda. Since the last inspection, she has strengthened many aspects of the support, guidance and welfare of pupils to a very good level. The very high quality of care for pupils is underpinned by a wide range of well written policies, and thorough systems and procedures which are well implemented by diligent and caring staff. As part of its passion for the well being of the whole child, the school has won a 'Healthy Schools Award' and has developed a unique start to the day with a short, invigorating aerobics session for all pupils. Pupils with problems, whether they are physical, emotional or learning related, are effectively integrated into the school's rich activities and all can focus on self-improvement. The school receives good support from outside professional agencies.
26. The school is very vigilant about risks to pupils. Child protection procedures conform to local statutory guidelines and staff training is updated regularly. The school wants pupils to participate in their own security through the display of a 'Childline' poster.
27. The headteacher, governor and caretaker undertake termly audits of the school premises. The school completes risk assessments of activities, which produce a safe environment as evidenced by the low minor accident rate. The previous inspection's health and safety key issue relating to the use of the village hall has been addressed by implementing eight practical measures. The dispensing of medicines is well controlled and there are sufficient first aiders.
28. The headteacher and staff give the highest priority to the pastoral care of all pupils, and they in turn show very good care for each other. There is a strong mutual trust between adults and pupils, and pupils know that they can trust their teachers and other staff to listen to their problems and anxieties. Regular visitors to the school support the school in this task. Pupils show an obvious happiness in their school life and feel that they can undertake a learning adventure in a safe environment without distractions. The school 'buddy' system is firmly part of the school's culture and allows older pupils to mentor younger pupils, particularly with guided reading, without requiring adult intervention.
29. The provision of support and guidance based on monitoring the individual child is very good. The headteacher has comprehensive records of pupils' academic and non-academic performance which is tracked over the pupils' time in the school. This allows the teachers in both classes to have well informed conversations with pupils when setting targets, using graphical representations of their strengths and weaknesses. Teachers identify pupils with special educational needs and they develop good individual educational plans with pupils and parents.
30. The induction of pupils new to the school is very good, and is appreciated by all parents. Parents and pupils rapidly become part of the school family and realise that their decision on the choice of school for their child was right.

31. The school is outstanding in showing pupils that they care about their views and ideas, which they try to put into practice. It routinely calls for their views through teaching in the classroom and personal and social education sessions in class. Pupils influence parts of the school improvement plan and they receive good feedback on their ideas through a notice board in the reception area. The school council enjoys high status in the school. Pupils are trusted to raise the agenda, discuss relevant issues intelligently and maturely, and take their own minutes, so that they have hands on experience of the democratic process at work.

Example of outstanding practice

A school that involves its pupils in decision-making processes.

Lydford Primary is an outstanding example of a school that cares about pupils' views and ideas and wants to put them into practice. It has developed a culture in the classroom that calls for pupils to express their views and ideas logically and intelligently. It wants pupils to challenge stereotyped and prejudicial thinking as an aid to developing their own understanding and learning. Pupils have been asked for their ideas on school improvement and their many ideas have been displayed prominently in the reception area of the school. As each idea is progressed, the headteacher records the actions on the display for all parts of the school family to be aware. The school council enjoys high status in the school and pupils are very serious about becoming councillors. They declare their candidacy with well presented election manifestos. The election results are posted, and once councillors are elected they are collectively trusted to develop agendas, discuss relevant issues maturely, and take and publish their own minutes. An understanding of democracy at work is extremely well established.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is very good. The links with the local community are excellent. The associations with other schools are very productive.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has built a very good partnership with parents, which contributes greatly to the good progress of pupils.
- Parents have an excellent level of satisfaction with the school.
- Parents enjoy very good information about the school and their children's progress.
- All pupils benefit greatly from the school's outstanding links with the community.
- The school sustains very good relationships with secondary schools which eases the transfer of older pupils to the next stage of their education.

Commentary

32. The headteacher gives a very high priority to the school's relationships with all parents, and all aspects of the partnership with parents have improved since the last inspection. Presently, there is a large increase in parents' satisfaction to an excellent level. Parents show major increases in confidence in all aspects of the school and many areas have the total approval of all parents. In particular, homework, standards, and the way in which the school works with them show large increases in approval. The level of parental dissatisfaction has reduced markedly since the previous inspection. Since her arrival the current headteacher has ensured there are no areas of significant dissatisfaction. The school receives few complaints, as the headteacher is skilled in pre-emptive action to head off problems. Overall, parents feel that their role is fully valued and respected. New parents are soon made to feel welcome in the school and become proud ambassadors for the school in the community.
33. The statutory information for parents is very good and demonstrates the essential ethos and character of the school. Annual reports to parents are comprehensive statements of what children can do in all National Curriculum subjects and contain academic targets for the following year. These reports are supplemented by pupils' own written reports on their year at school. Parents enjoy an informative weekly newsletter, and letters to home are timely and

respectful of the demands on parents' roles. Parents feel comfortable with the opportunities they have for engaging with school and recognise the feedback and descriptions of their children and their achievements.

34. Parents have signed the home-school agreement and fulfil their pledge through their children's good attendance and assisting them with homework. The school has been proactive with parents in discussing how they might help their children and explaining new education strategies and initiatives. Parents make a significant contribution to the school improvement plan through annual questionnaires. Many parents are energetic in helping the school and all parents attend the many school functions.
35. The school is at the centre of village life. It enjoys an excellent relationship with the local community, which thrives to the mutual benefit of the pupils and the villagers. Relationships with the local church are close, and the rector, who is also a governor, makes regular visits for assemblies and to be part of school life. Both the church and village facilities and the adjacent countryside are important resources for the practical teaching of some subjects of the National Curriculum, and for school celebrations. People from the local community are welcomed into the school every week for lunch, and the Christmas lunch is a particularly memorable occasion. A 'mother and toddler' group is well integrated into the school every week. Local businesses have been very generous in their support of the school to improve school finances.
36. The school has very good links to both primary and secondary schools. Parents receive knowledgeable and informative advice as the time for transfer to secondary school approaches. The school's positive efforts and the pupils' natural confidence produce a mainly anxiety-free transition for pupils. The school works well with a local 'Beacon'¹ school in assessing pupils' mathematical abilities, which enables the headteacher to have useful data in setting targets with pupils. The very good relationship with other small primary schools enables them to operate joint performance management and training of staff.

Example of outstanding practice

A school with excellent links with the community.

Lydford Primary School is at the heart of village life, and is a considerable force in uniting villagers together. Pupils are extremely welcoming and tolerant to people of all ages. They provide a home for the local mothers' and toddlers' group, and they request that villagers and elderly residents come and join them every Tuesday for lunch. At Christmas, older pupils see it as their privilege and responsibility to wait on elderly residents and provide entertainment at a superb lunch. Relationships with the local church are close; the school makes a regular contribution to the parish magazine and the rector is a school stalwart. A local pub is proactive for the school, as it makes a weekly contribution to school funds from the quiz night. Additionally, local businesses have provided generously for an auction of promises. This small school has to use the village hall for physical education and for much applauded plays which villagers greatly anticipate and which are presented twice a year. Pupils value their environment through work with the Dartmoor Rangers, which has given them a good knowledge of dormice. They are official, proud guardians of the local tourist attraction of Lydford Gorge.

¹ Beacon School: A school recognised as having strengths worthy of sharing with others.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. In particular, both the leadership and the management of the headteacher are very effective. This has been the key factor in the school's improvement. The governing body is very effective and the school's management is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school's educational direction.
- The headteacher has developed an effective staff team and has united the parents and community to work very well together in the school's best interests.
- The governors have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The school's self-evaluation processes are very good.
- The school is managed very well and it runs smoothly.

Commentary

37. The headteacher's leadership and management are very good. This has been the key factor in bringing about the significant improvements achieved in the school since the previous inspection. She has a clear vision and in the two years that she has been in post, she has developed a very strong sense of teamwork and purpose for the staff, governors and parents. She is very caring and is committed to ensuring that all are effectively included. This has led to significant, positive changes in the school and is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. For example, there is a strong consistency of approach throughout the whole curriculum which stems from the headteacher's belief that relevance to the pupils' needs is a key principle in determining both the choice of what is to be taught in each subject and the approach to teaching and learning. This vision is effectively reflected in subject planning across the curriculum and in the teaching and learning strategies employed.
38. The school's improvement planning processes are very good, and involve all the school community – not least the pupils, whose views about needed improvements to the school's environment and accommodation have been adopted and woven into the school's plan. The key priorities identified are just right. They are carefully planned and costed, effectively monitored and their impact on school improvement is evaluated well. This, too, is an improvement since the previous inspection, which found weaknesses in development planning.
39. Even though the headteacher is the only full-time member of the teaching staff, curriculum leadership is very good and is having a significant impact on both the quality of the curriculum and the standards achieved. The successful implementation of performance management impacts favourably on all members of staff, making them feel valued and helping them to develop. Each of the four members of the teaching staff has named responsibilities for the core curriculum, and significant curriculum areas, and all responsibilities are shared across the whole staff team. This system is working very well and as a result, curriculum improvements have been secured in all subjects since the previous inspection, which found weaknesses in the leadership and management of the curriculum. The leadership and management of special educational needs is particularly effective. Although the school has not had any pupils with a statutory statement of educational needs for many years, nor are there any pupils that require external support, both the management and provision arrangements for the pupils that are on the register of needs are highly effective.
40. Governors play a key role in the school's improvement. This is a significant development since the previous inspection, which found that governors needed to expand their role to become fully involved in the overall management of the school. Governors are now effectively

organised and have an exceptional grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is due to a number of factors:

- The high quality and rigorous information provided to the governors by the headteacher and staff, particularly in the analysis of the school's performance;
- The close contact that governors have with the school;
- Governors' direct involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, which includes some governors' direct observation of teaching and learning that is reported back to the whole governing body;
- A knowledgeable governor operates an up to date web-site for the school that keeps parents and the community well-informed.

As a result, the governors play an important role in shaping the direction of the school and its policies and are able to ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	159,211	Balance from previous year	7,740
Total expenditure	148,072	Balance carried forward to the next	11,140
Expenditure per pupil	4,627		

41. There are excellent arrangements in place for financial planning, management and control and the school seeks best value in its spending. The school has plans to make improvements to classroom lighting. Work is scheduled to commence shortly, and accounts for the carry forward in the budget being above the anticipated five per cent. Even though the school has very high expenditure for each pupil, it gives good value for money. The school administrator plays a very significant and effective role in this aspect of the school's work. The Friends of Lydford School and the community in general raise significant funds to be spent in the school.

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**.

There are five reception children who follow the Foundation Stage curriculum. Four of these children began school four days before the start of the inspection. The attainment of the very small groups of children who join the reception class varies from year to year. The overall attainment on entry of this group is average. After such a short time in school, it is not possible to determine whether individual children are likely to meet or exceed the early learning goals in specific areas of learning. They are, however, achieving satisfactorily overall and early indications are that standards are likely to meet or possibly exceed national expectations.

Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. It was seen to be better in sessions to support knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Personal, social and emotional development is also taught well. Two teachers share responsibility for the class. They ensure children are provided with appropriate activities to stimulate their learning. There are however, some missed opportunities to develop learning further. For example, there is a lack of display around the classroom to help children recognise words. There are also some occasions when the pace of lessons is a little slow. Both teachers are aware of these issues and are already focused on improving them. There have been substantial improvements to the accommodation and resources that are available to the class since the previous inspection and these have enhanced provision considerably. Additional outdoor classroom space has been created by building a covered balcony to which children have continuous access for sand and water play. The recently resurfaced playground also provides a soft landing area for large play apparatus such as a climbing net and balance beams. These go some way to supplement pupils' physical development which might otherwise be hindered by a lack of a school hall. The school has also purchased large ride-on toys that are used enthusiastically and constructively to help children develop their co-ordination appropriately.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching assistants offer very effective support.
- The outside play area is very well equipped and is used productively to support children's learning, particularly their physical development.

Commentary

42. Children's **personal, social and emotional development** is fostered well because it is a very strong feature of the school's work. Children are supported admirably as all adults in the school know them and their families very well. Significant care is taken to cultivate children's self-confidence and encourage positive attitudes to learning. **Communication, language and literacy** and **mathematical development** are promoted satisfactorily through activities that interest and motivate the children. For example, children acted out the story of 'Three Little Pigs' using masks, made during a focused time with the teacher. These helped them to then take on different characters, participating with confidence, and remembering the dialogue with some help from the very effective teaching assistant. They were heard learning nursery rhymes, seen handling books and are gradually developing their awareness of sounds, letters and words. Children take part in counting games and learn to distinguish numbers and how to count in sequence. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** and their **creative development** are encouraged well because teaching in these areas is good. For example, children did not just look at different kinds of paper, they explored them to see which could be folded to make a card that could stand up, guided by the valuable support of the teaching assistant. They also took part in a good quality discussion about different kinds of clay and its properties as well as looking at photographs of Barbara Hepworth's sculptures.

Children have opportunities to use the computer both on their own and with adult help. They build models and visit places beyond the school. The teachers ensure children develop an awareness of the Christian faith and other beliefs. Children paint, use musical instruments, dress-up and use 'small world' toys such as farmyards to develop their imagination and creativity. The school rightly places significant emphasis on nurturing children's **physical development** and efforts to improve this area have had a positive impact. Children climb, balance and use large equipment when they play outside in the adventure playground and they also visit the village hall for physical activities. The daily aerobics session gets them used to moving to music and establishes their awareness of the effect of exercise on their bodies from a very early age.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good overall and very high in Year 6.
- Teaching for Years 3 to 6 is very good.
- High quality leadership of the subject ensures improvement.
- Poetry is taught very well and pupils achieve very high standards in this aspect of their work.
- Planning to meet the needs of different ages and abilities in the two classes is successful.
- Strategies to track pupils' progress are very effective and support individual improvement.
- Marking is used very well to inform pupils about how they can improve their work.
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support to assist pupils' learning.

Commentary

43. Standards reached by pupils in their tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have fluctuated over the past four years due to the very small cohorts. Results have also reflected the number of pupils within the small groups who have special educational needs. At the time of the inspection standards in speaking and listening are above expectations in Year 2 and are currently well above them in Year 6. Achievement is good. In Years 1 and 2, there are many good opportunities for discussion with both the teacher and the teaching assistant as was seen when younger pupils explored Christian and Sikh artefacts and discussed pictures of Barbara Hepworth's sculptures. Older pupils are very self-assured. They speak very confidently to an audience. This was observed during an assembly when they offered their individual manifestos for election to the school council. Year 6 pupils express themselves very clearly. They are extremely articulate, show no reluctance whatsoever to offering an opinion and have a very strong command of language. An example of this was observed when talking to pupils about other faiths and religions. A comment was made, with understanding, that one religion was an 'antithesis' of another.
44. Reading standards are above the national average in Year 2 and well above them in Year 6. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school has introduced a daily reading session when pupils either read with the teacher, to another adult, to an older or younger pupil or to themselves. These sessions are proving to be very successful and are addressing the points raised within the school improvement plan. This plan is concentrating on helping pupils to develop further their awareness of the author's meaning as described in the text. 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. All pupils have the strategies to work out unfamiliar words and have developed appropriate word-building skills.

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.

45. Standards in writing in Year 2 are above average and in Year 6 they are well above average. Pupils achieve well. There are many examples of exceptionally high quality poetry writing, and each year pupils contribute to published anthologies. A display of poetic descriptions of Dartmoor in winter is particularly impressive and evocative. Pupils are very keen to learn and apply themselves well. This was seen when older pupils were challenged to create a fantasy setting for a story. Their enthusiasm was tangible as they responded to the teacher's well-chosen objects, brought into school to stimulate ideas for an exciting plot and characters. They could hardly contain their excitement at the thought of getting their ideas down on paper within a well-prepared and familiar story planning format. Pupils use dictionaries, thesauri and word banks very effectively to enliven their descriptions with a mature use of adjectives. Their narrative writing is very good. Spelling techniques are well understood and promote high standards.
46. Teaching is very good in the older class and satisfactory in the younger one. Teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy successfully and this makes certain all pupils achieve well, whether they are more able or experience some learning difficulty. ICT is used effectively by teachers in all their lessons to develop pupils' learning. This was seen in both classes when pupils completed a 'framework for story writing' adding their own text to the proforma on the screens. Teaching assistants are very effective and they use the materials that support the literacy strategy very productively. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 work quickly when the headteacher challenges them to complete tasks in a specified time, giving them no opportunity to lose concentration. All teachers are well-prepared for lessons. Their questioning techniques are skilful, as when the Years 1 and 2 teacher prompted pupils to suggest where the word 'lizard' would appear in a simple picture dictionary from which it had been omitted. There are some occasions when pupils, especially the younger ones, find it difficult to curb their enthusiasm. Opportunities are missed that would enable them to share ideas with a friend, or to jot ideas down in writing, rather than waiting to explain their ideas to the teacher, and this leads to some occasional restlessness.
47. Teachers' marking is very detailed and helpful to pupils. It ensures that they know what it is that they have 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. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and this makes certain they achieve very well.
48. Leadership of the subject is very good. Since her arrival at the school the headteacher, with the effective support of the literacy co-ordinator, has introduced systems and strategies to improve standards, especially in writing. Lessons have been monitored and points for development noted and acted upon. These are having a significant and positive impact. The school has developed further the use of 'Progress in Writing Books'. These are completed regularly. Pupils write specifically targeted pieces of work that are assessed to common criteria. The outcomes of these assessments 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 have risen and that pupils are making good progress. There have been very good improvements in English since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. These areas are promoted very well in all curriculum areas. There is very good use made of role-play and drama. Research, investigation and writing skills receive a great deal of attention in many areas of the curriculum. Opportunities to write for a variety of purposes are encouraged and are especially productive when used in conjunction with science, ICT and

history. Particularly productive and stimulating additional opportunities arise from visits to places beyond the classroom, and these are used to foster the use of literacy skills across the curriculum, notably in the development of high quality poetry writing to express pupils' experiences, thoughts and feelings.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in both classes is good.
- Attainment is above average.
- Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching assistants are very effective.
- The curriculum has been carefully developed to meet the needs of the pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to use mathematical language.

Commentary

50. Standards attained have fluctuated considerably over the past four years, particularly at the end of Year 6. This is due to the very small cohorts of pupils taking the tests each year. Pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving above average standards and in Year 6 they are well above average. Pupils' progress in learning is good in each aspect of mathematics, and they achieve well, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This is because lessons are carefully planned, and are well taught. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are very well supported and achieve very well.
51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the younger class and very good in the older one. Pupils' learning is very good in Years 3 to 6 because the teacher plans and organises work very well to make sure that it is pitched appropriately. This leads to the pupils achieving very well in lessons. For example, the mental recall part of the daily mathematics lesson is very skilfully taught. The teacher, focusing on doubling numbers, worked simultaneously with three different year groups whilst the fourth group was working on computers. Each group was set different work which was carefully planned to meet both the National Numeracy Strategy year objectives and the current learning needs of each pupil. As a result, the pupils were all fully engaged, they concentrated well, responded rapidly and enthusiastically and made very good progress.
52. The assessing of pupils' knowledge and skills is a particularly strong feature of teaching in both classes. Learning is aided by very good support from teaching assistants, who enable groups and individuals that they work with, especially those identified as having special needs, to achieve well.
53. The consistent use of precise mathematical vocabulary and teaching and learning methods that require the pupils to discuss their work are further positive features of the teaching by both teaching and learning support staff. Pupils are questioned very effectively, and because they are encouraged to talk about their work and to apply their newly introduced vocabulary in their explanations, both their knowledge and understanding of the lessons' objectives are quickened. This is supported, particularly in the classroom for Years 3 to 6, by the very good display of number-related information that the teacher has created. There is a broad range of prompts, number lines, listing and labelling of vocabulary which is related to the learning intentions for the week. The pupils, when discussing their mathematics, make good use of these displays to further their learning. ICT features consistently in mathematics lessons and supports pupils' learning especially in data handling and in developing their knowledge of tables and number facts. There has been good improvement overall in this subject since the previous inspection.

54. The curriculum is based on the National Numeracy Strategy, and the adaptations made, supported by local education authority staff, to meet the needs of the school are excellent. As a result, the work set is progressively harder for pupils as they become older, and provides very good challenges, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is especially strong in providing very good opportunities for pupils to develop skills in applying and using mathematics. This approach is central to the learning in mathematics and because lessons are given a clear purpose, pupils understand not only what is to be learned, but also why. This helps to motivate the pupils and helps them to have the very positive attitudes to teaching and learning evident in the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. Pupils' competence in mathematics across the curriculum is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Mathematics is used consistently well across the curriculum to both enhance the pupils' mathematical development and to provide relevance to their work. For example, pupils were using measures very carefully when designing a fair test in science. There are also good opportunities to use mathematics in history, geography, design and technology and in ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and very good for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Year 6 standards are currently well above average.
- Pupils in all year groups achieve well because the science taught is made relevant and exciting for them.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes to science, collaborating well and helping each other to learn quickly.
- The curriculum gives very good prominence to scientific investigation and enquiry.

Commentary

56. National test results in science are strong. In the 2003 tests, all Year 6 pupils gained the nationally expected levels, with a high proportion gaining the higher Level 5. At the end of Year 2 teacher assessment shows that all pupils gained the expected level.
57. Standards seen during the inspection are above average in Years 1 to 5 and well above average in Year 6 with pupils making good progress in their learning throughout the school, and achieving well. This is due to a number of factors:
- The good and very good teaching ensures work is well-planned, is progressively more demanding, and the application of teachers' very good subject knowledge ensures that appropriate technical vocabulary is encouraged;
 - The rich science curriculum effectively covers all the required areas;
 - Pupils are helped to enjoy science lessons because the work set is challenging, interesting and is frequently based on practical investigations;
 - Lessons are made relevant to the pupils through teachers finding very good contexts for the learning, with a particular emphasis on environmental science in general and making good use of the locality to boost learning;
 - Approaches to teaching and learning encourage pupils to learn co-operatively.

58. Pupils are skilled in all aspects of science, and the oldest pupils in the school are already achieving levels well above the national expectations. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls, with almost all pupils achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs are very effectively supported and this helps them to achieve very well. ICT features regularly in lessons and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. For example, they have access to sensors that help them to record observations of changes in temperature. The youngest pupils in Year 1 are able to classify properties of different papers and make good choices, for example when deciding which paper is best to use to design and paint a card. This is directly related to the good quality teaching. Staff are particularly skilled in making sure that the pupils use appropriate scientific language; they encourage the youngest pupils to differentiate between the papers and use words such as 'rigid' and 'absorbent'. The oldest pupils have a very good understanding of fair testing and they use science vocabulary particularly well. For example, the older pupils, when carrying out an investigation into whether a range of materials will dissolve in water and considering the concept of reversibility, had very good discussions about how to make their tests fair.
59. Teachers make sure that pupils build on their prior understanding. They develop their knowledge and skills in a progressive way. A focus on developing this aspect of their learning has led to improvements since the previous inspection when this was an area requiring attention. Teachers also encourage very valuable collaboration. In a lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils dissolved sugar or salt in water and then heated the solution to find if the materials could be recovered. The oldest pupils used both sugar and salt and they were set the very challenging task of reversing this process. This was successfully achieved and led to enormous delight and wonder when the solutions evaporated and led spectacularly to the formation of salt crystals and sugar crystals burning to toffee! The consequence of good teaching and learning is that not only do the pupils learn quickly and well, but they have also developed a positive view about science education.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

60. It was only possible to see one lesson dedicated to the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT), therefore no overall judgements can be made about provision.
61. 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. Pupils' books were scrutinised, as were displays of work and the co-ordinator's file. Discussions were held with teachers and an inspector also spoke to a group of Year 6 pupils. Evidence gathered from these observations indicates that standards are above national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6.
62. In the one lesson seen with the older pupils, the teaching was good. The teacher showed good subject knowledge that enabled her to explain how to transfer a file from one computer to another. She was well-prepared and provided helpful support sheets for pupils to refer to as a back-up to her initial introduction. By the end of the lesson, Year 5 pupils showed how they could put a file onto a floppy disc and they used this method to transfer, store and retrieve information. Four pupils were highly competent in using two lap-tops that they were obviously familiar with. They used a 'spell check facility' and other word processing skills very competently. They achieved well in the lesson and were seen to be successful in practising their newly developed skill.
63. Pupils are very enthusiastic about ICT. They are confident about using the skills they have developed. Year 6 pupils can send e-mails without any help and are able to access information from the internet using a search engine. They can describe why using one search engine is preferable to another. They produce graphs and charts to support their work in mathematics. Work on the weather is supported by the use made of statistical information, available on the internet. A microscope, linked to the computer, promotes high quality work in science as pupils

identify the parts of a flowering plant. In Year 2, pupils exhibit above average standards as they too access a search engine, as when they were challenged to find out about who invented plastic. They are able to log on to the computer and can open up and use a word processing package independently. They explain confidently how they will print a copy of their story plan before storing it in their own file ready for future use.

64. The subject is well-led by the knowledgeable co-ordinator who has started monitoring standards of work in order to raise standards further. Recent hardware purchases have been made to ensure that the requirements for control technology are now fully met. The use of the digital camera is well-developed and very purposeful. Pupils on the school council made very good use of it to show areas around the school that they wished to see improved. They presented this pictorial information to governors with detailed notes to help them decide on priorities for the school improvement plan. This is an aspect of the school's work that has been successfully improved since the previous inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Teachers make very good use of ICT to support a range of subjects. It featured as an integral part of every lesson seen during the inspection. For example, in a science lesson with older pupils there was very effective and productive use of a software package that helped pupils to test and develop their knowledge of the separation of materials. Pupils could run and re-run video clips as they required additional information. The school sees ICT as a helpful tool for the development of many aspects of pupils' work in both classes. Examples of pupils' work, complemented by the use of ICT, are on display throughout the school. Word processing is used regularly and is an important part of pupils' day-to-day writing.

HUMANITIES

66. Work was sampled in **history, geography and religious education** with only one lesson of religious education in the infant class seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall evaluation of the provision in any of the humanities' subjects. There are, however, strong indications, from both discussions with Year 6 pupils and reviewing their work, that standards are above expectations in each subject. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
67. Subjects are carefully planned to provide a broad and rich curriculum that meets statutory requirements. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are also met. Staff have very carefully adapted the required programmes of study to meet the needs of Lydford pupils. In addition, great care has been taken to ensure that very good use is made of first-hand experiences, which include making a number of visits and having visitors into the school to enrich the humanities. A residential visit to study the environment around the River Dart and expeditions to Dartmoor are recalled with enthusiasm and excitement by the pupils. Their learning from these visits is successfully built on in the classroom as indicated by their workbooks which show high quality work. In religious education, the pupils recently visited Exeter Cathedral, and Buckfast Abbey, where they interviewed monks about their lifestyle. Pupils are able to make comparisons between the monks' lifestyle and that of a Hindu who visited the school to explain his religion and share Hindu artefacts with them.
68. In the one religious education lesson seen the quality of teaching was good: pupils achieved well and made good progress in their learning when studying Christian and Hindu religious artefacts. The oldest pupils were able to identify and classify photographs which represent different features of religious life such as the crucifix and prayer beads. They know why the cross is important to Christians, and through the teacher's good explanations, they were able to gain a developing understanding of the 'five K's' that Sikhs wear. In addition, the most able Year 2 pupils used computers to search for and successfully download information on Sikhs. They were able to discuss the contents of the information and have developed a good understanding of some of the similarities and differences between Sikhs and Christians.

69. The leadership and management of humanities are very good. The headteacher has responsibility for history. The teacher who is in school for one day a week is the subject leader for geography and religious education and she has this responsibility in two other schools. These schools share curriculum development, schemes of work and resources. This arrangement brings benefit to both very small schools and is a significant factor in the quality of the curriculum provided at Lydford.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. As only part of one lesson was observed in art and design and no lessons were seen in music, design and technology or physical education it is not possible to report on overall provision in any of these areas.
71. In **art and design** the part of one lesson observed saw younger pupils working enthusiastically with clay and reaching satisfactory standards. They exhibited the necessary skills to model and shape their clay and they made valiant attempts to join their pieces of clay together using slip. They had previously considered the shape and form of sculptures made by Barbara Hepworth. They made a worthwhile attempt to express their likes and dislikes about her sculptures.
72. Year 6 pupils' portfolios of work, teachers' planning, photographs, the use of the school's kiln and display around the school suggest that by Year 6, pupils have achieved well and standards are above national expectations. This is because the school takes pride in making certain that pupils are taught skills and techniques progressively, using a wide variety of materials. Pupils are also given many chances to enjoy additional opportunities provided by friends of the school who are experts in their areas, such as a Japanese potter. Pupils also show their resourcefulness by running their own art and craft club. These extra opportunities all contribute to the good progress made by pupils. The school has submitted an application for the 'Artsmark' award and the associated paperwork details the very strong emphasis placed by the school on this aspect of pupils' learning.
73. Links with the community foster the development of skills. This is exemplified by the work done in conjunction with the National Trust when pupils worked on large three-dimensional models, weaving living willow sculptures. Pupils are enthusiastic about their art work and talk animatedly about their achievements. There have been improvements to the curriculum since the previous inspection by extending pupils' experiences beyond the classroom even further.
74. In **design and technology**, pupils study a range of materials and work on design projects using textiles, materials and food. They remember fondly, making different concoctions for pizza toppings and evaluating the success of their combinations by eating them! Photographs and evidence around the school suggest a good coverage of the curriculum that enables pupils to learn well and achieve at least satisfactory and often better standards. There have been improvements to this area since the previous inspection when resources and coverage of the curriculum were barely satisfactory.
75. In **music**, pupils are given wide ranging experiences that boost their confidence in performing to an audience. A recent production of 'Scrooge' involved the whole school and promoted pupils' singing and musical capability very well. There is a very wide selection of instruments and tuition available. The school administrator works with pupils in a voluntary capacity and this enables pupils to learn the recorder and become accomplished hand-bell ringers. Peripatetic music teachers visit the school so that pupils can learn the violin, flute and guitar. Pupils write songs and compose music to celebrate different events. High quality examples were seen of those written in the autumn term to celebrate the harvest. Pupils have taken part in African drumming sessions with a visiting expert, thus broadening their cultural awareness. Improvements have been made to pupils' musical experiences since the previous inspection.

76. In **physical education**, evidence gathered from school documentation and talking with pupils shows that this area is considered to be of significant importance to the school and good standards are promoted. All elements of the required curriculum are covered and requirements for swimming are met by the end of Year 6. Pupils take part in a daily exercise session at the start of the school day to stimulate their minds and bodies into action, and this prepares them for the learning ahead. Older pupils take part in a variety of sports activities run by a 'Sports Council' group, linked to the local secondary school. This occurs on a weekly basis. 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 who will join them at secondary school. Dance is a major feature of the school's curriculum. Teachers have expertise in this area and this ensures pupils take part in many lessons and develop their spatial awareness and ability to move to music well. The annual residential visit gives pupils the chance to take part in adventurous activities such as abseiling and rock climbing. These help them to learn more about body control and endeavour particularly effectively. The village hall continues to be used regularly for gymnastics lessons and the health and safety matters raised at the time of the last inspection have been fully addressed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

77. Although no lessons were seen in this area, and therefore no overall judgement on provision can be made, it is an aspect of learning that permeates all the work of the school. It is very apparent that pupils' personal, health and social education is a great strength and of major importance. It has a positive impact on all that the school seeks to do, helping pupils to want to learn and to become 'rounded' people in their own right. It encompasses so many elements of the school's determination to develop every pupil's individuality and sensitivity. The school works hard, within its very good ethos, to provide each pupil with the knowledge needed to meet the demands of the wider community in a very caring manner and gives them many skills to help them to establish their roles as citizens. The work of the school council instils knowledge of democracy amongst all pupils from a very early age. The overall curriculum for this area is of a high quality. There is an appropriate emphasis placed on sex and relationships education and drugs and alcohol education and this is reflected within the school's award for being a 'Healthy School'.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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