

INSPECTION REPORT

MARLBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Devonport, Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113306

Headteacher: Mr J Griffiths

Lead inspector: Mr M Milton

Dates of inspection: 19 - 21 January 2004

Inspection number: 256852

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:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	167
School address:	Morice Square Devonport Plymouth Devon
Postcode:	PL1 4NJ
Telephone number:	01752 567681
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Martin
Date of previous inspection:	21 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Marlborough Primary School has 167 pupils in nine classes and is smaller than most primary schools. The classes include a nursery and a small nurture class for ten Year 1 pupils drawn from Marlborough Primary and another nearby primary school. This nurture class for pupils with special educational needs is funded by the Devonport Regeneration Company. There are equal numbers of boys and girls in the school as a whole, but imbalances in particular years. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with a small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups. No pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average and the proportion with statements of special educational needs is also above the national average. The most common special needs of these pupils are difficulties with speech and communication, and social, emotional and behavioural development. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the start and end of the school year is above the national average. More than half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, and this is well above the national average. The area from which the school draws most of its pupils is disadvantaged socially and economically, and benefits from the government's New Deal for Communities. The school has received the following awards: Healthy Schools and Enhanced Nursery. Until December 2003, the school was part of the Plymouth Education Action Zone that will be replaced by an Excellence Cluster soon. Pupils' overall standards on entry are far below national averages particularly in language and communication, and mathematical development.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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32257	R Chalkley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Music Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is effective because teaching is good and so pupils achieve well from their overall very low starting point. Although their overall standards are below national averages by the time they reach 11, the school adds value to pupils' learning. This well managed school provides a good quality education for pupils, many of whom come from a disadvantaged area. **The school gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good quality of teaching and learning, especially in the nursery and reception;
- The committed teachers and support staff provide a high level of care for all pupils and are seeking to improve the quality of education provided by the school;
- Despite pupils' good achievement in English and mathematics, there is still scope to raise standards further;
- Pupils' very good achievement in science;
- It works hard to ensure that all pupils benefit from the education it offers, including those have difficulties with their learning and behaviour;
- Its very good links with the parents and community are used to give the pupils an enriched range of learning opportunities;
- Accommodation for the nursery and reception classes is unsatisfactory.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1999. The key issues identified by that inspection have been addressed. Other aspects of the school that have improved are pupils' achievement, the level of care for pupils and the school's partnership with parents.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E*	E	E*	C
mathematics	E	E*	E*	C
science	D	E*	C	A*

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.

Pupils' achievement is good. Although pupils' standards on entry are very low, their achievement is good in the nursery and reception. Most children in reception are on track to reach the expected goals for their personal, social and emotional development but a relatively few children are on track to reach the other goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. During the infants and juniors, the good achievement continues. By the time they are aged seven, standards have risen to well below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. For eleven-year-olds, standards are below national averages in English and mathematics, and average in science. Pupils' standards meet national expectations in physical education, and the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus in religious education. Although pupils achieve well, there is scope to raise standards in English and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the results in the 2003 national tests for science were very high (ie in the top 5% of similar schools). Although the 2003 results for English and mathematics were in the bottom 5% of all schools, they were average for schools whose pupils were at a similar standard when they were at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to work and behave well. The school copes effectively with a small minority who misbehave at times. Attendance has

improved but is still below national averages despite the school's good procedures to promote high levels of attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In the nursery and reception, teaching and learning are very good. Teaching is well matched to children's learning needs. For Years 1 to 6, lessons are often interesting and this motivates the pupils. Pupils receive effective support to overcome any learning difficulties. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching provided by sports coaches, nearby secondary schools and Plymouth University. Teaching time is below the recommended minimum in the juniors and this reduces the effectiveness of teaching for geography, history and music. The blocks of teaching time within the school day are not well matched to needs of different subjects. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and includes an effective nurture class for Year 1 pupils with particular learning and behavioural needs. There are some unsatisfactory elements to the accommodation for the nursery and reception, for example, the toilets are too far from the nursery.

The pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good throughout the school. The school counsellor and drama therapist work with pupils each week. The school has very strong partnerships with parents, other schools and the community. These partnerships provide pupils with some very good opportunities for learning such as during the annual science week and the multi-cultural week last summer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The governing body is committed to supporting the school and carries out its duties satisfactorily. It has ensured that the school meets all of its statutory requirements but it does not act as a critical friend sufficiently. The headteacher leads from the front and is actively involved in all of the school's work. He has developed a very strong team spirit amongst the staff, and motivates and supports staff effectively. All staff are clear about their responsibilities. There is a detailed school development plan that guides the school's improvement but this is only for a year. The type of targets in the plan are similar to those used by most schools, but they do not always give specific, practical actions for raising pupils' standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think highly of the school, and no negative views are held by a significant number of parents. Pupils also have very positive views of the school. They enjoy going to school and appreciate the help teachers give them. About one third think that some pupils do not behave well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to raise standards in English and mathematics;*
- Ensure that the length and structure of the teaching time in Years 3 to 6 promote good achievement in all subjects;
- Ensure that school development planning looks ahead for two or three years and is more specific about how pupils' standards will be raised;
- Remedy the weaknesses in accommodation for the nursery and reception classes;*

* These are improvements that the school has already identified.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

On entry to the school, pupils' standards are very low. Pupils' achievement is good because of effective teaching, good assessment in the nursery and reception, English, mathematics and science, and a curriculum enriched by community provision. Most reception children do not meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. By the time they leave school in Year 6, overall standards are below national averages.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in science is very good and Year 6 pupils are on track to reach standards that match national averages.
- Although pupils' achievement is good, there is scope to raise standards in English and mathematics further.
- Children in the nursery and reception achieve well.
- The school adds value to pupils' learning in all years.
- Standards in physical education match national expectations.

Commentary

1. In 2003, the results of the national tests for Year 2 pupils were well below national averages for all and similar schools. Few pupils reach the higher Level 3 standard. The results of boys and girls are similar. Between 1999 and 2003, the trend of improvement in the school's results was above the national trend of improvement. In comparison with all schools nationally, the results of the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003 were very low in English and mathematics, and average in science. However, when the results were compared with those schools whose Year 6 pupils (in 2003) had similar results when they were at the end of Year 2 (in 1999), they were average for English and mathematics and very high for science. In mathematics, boys' results were better than those of girls and the school has adopted a satisfactory strategy to improve girls' standards. The standards achieved by boys and girls are similar, and the standards achieved by the small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups are similar to those of the White British pupils. Overall, the results of the Year 6 pupils in 2003 were above average for similar schools. Between 1999 and 2003, the trend of improvement in the school's results was below the national trend of improvement. The school set itself targets for the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics in 2003 but those targets were not reached. The school has set itself challenging targets for 2004 and many pupils are on track to achieve these.
2. Children enter the nursery with very low standards in all areas of learning. They achieve well as a result of the very good teaching supported by an effective curriculum and good assessment. Despite the important improvements they make to their standards, in most areas of learning children are not on track to reach the goals that children are expected to reach by the time they leave reception. The exception to this is the children's personal, social and emotional development, and most are on track to reach the expected goals for this area of learning. For the current Year 2 pupils, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well below national averages despite their good achievement during the infants.
3. In English and mathematics, pupils have very low standards on entry but they achieve well and their standards rise to well below national averages in Year 2 and then rise to below national averages in Year 6. However, there is still scope to raise standards further and the school is taking actions to secure this improvement. Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics

because of the challenging teaching, effective target setting, and the range of extra support that is targeted on those pupils who need it.

4. As the table below shows, the results of Year 6 pupils in science improved in 2003 and reached national averages. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach standards that match national averages by next summer. Pupils' achievement in science is very good because of the very effective science teaching in school which is supported by a stimulating annual science week for all pupils and the provision of specialist teaching by a nearby secondary school. The science co-ordinator monitors and evaluates standards well and then takes practical steps to raise standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.8 (13.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.4 (11.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.7 (13.1)	16.5 (16.5)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.2 (24.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.2 (22.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.9 (24.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Year 6 pupils' standards in religious education match those expected by the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils achieve well because their work covers the required study units, and the good teaching provides them with some interesting learning activities. For information and communication technology (ICT), the overall standards of pupils in Years 2 and 6 are below national expectations because the ICT suite has only been used for a relatively short time owing to technical difficulties. Pupils' achievement in ICT is now good because of the effective teaching with the good learning resources. For physical education, standards match national expectations because of the school's own good teaching, and the specialist teaching and coaching from outside organisations.
6. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage of their time at the school. Their progress is closely monitored. Pupils' achievement is good because of the effective teaching and support that they receive.
7. There is a commitment from all staff to raise standards, and each subject has a development plan with several actions to achieve this. Although these plans have a format and content that are similar to the plans found in most schools, a weakness is that these development plans, especially for English and mathematics, are not based on a sufficiently clear diagnosis of the weaknesses in pupils' standards, with clear practical steps to remedy the causes of the below average standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Other aspects of their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also good. The high quality provision for pupils' personal development has been maintained since the last inspection. Punctuality is satisfactory and attendance is below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to work are positive and, in some lessons, are very good in response to high quality teaching.
- Most pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Staff praise pupils and successfully build their self-esteem and confidence.
- Pupils are keen to come to school.
- Pupils are given good levels of responsibility.
- Attendance was below average for the school year 2002-2003, but in the last autumn term the attendance rate increased.

Commentary

8. Children make a very good introduction to schooling in the nursery. They settle happily into school and quickly learn essential routines and expectations of behaviour because of the very good provision. They establish good relationships with each other and the adults with whom they come into contact. They respond positively to the varied and interesting work and play activities. By the end of reception, most children reach the goals expected of them for personal, social and emotional development.
9. As pupils progress through the school they show good attitudes towards their work and the people around them. Where teaching is of the highest quality, attitudes are very good. The pupils with special educational needs respond positively in lessons and are well supported.
10. In general, pupils' behaviour in lessons, assemblies and at other times is good. Pupils are courteous and welcoming to visitors. A minority of pupils experience emotional and behavioural difficulties and, at times, their behaviour is disruptive. The staff manage these situations well and work hard to ensure that all pupils benefit from the education that the school provides. There were two fixed-term exclusions and no permanent exclusions during the previous school year. There is a consistent approach to discipline throughout the school. Pupils' relationships with teachers, with other staff and with each other are good and reflect the positive ethos of the school.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	133	2	0

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

11. Many pupils show increasing maturity, confidence and responsibility as they pass through the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility. These range from fetching and carrying the registers to and from the office to participation in the school council. Pupils' self-esteem is generally well developed as they take on these responsibilities in the life of the school. The elected school council discusses issues of concern and has successfully introduced peer mediators to solve playtime disputes, and is in the process of organising training for 'playground friends'.
12. Pupils are able to work together in collaborative groups. They respect the opinions of others and treat materials and equipment with care. There is no significant variation between the behaviour and attitudes of different groups of pupils. The school deals with any incidents of bullying quickly and efficiently and pupils are aware that they should inform an adult.

13. Attendance levels are below the national average despite the school's adoption of a good range of procedures to promote good levels of attendance. Most pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly. Registers are completed in line with statutory requirements and there are procedures in place to monitor attendance to improve that of poor attenders who lower the average considerably. There are several pupils who receive certificates for 98, 99 and 100 per cent attendance, but others whose attendance is below 80 per cent. Unauthorised absence is very low.
14. Almost all parents who completed the parents' questionnaire consider that the school encourages their children to become mature and independent, although one fifth judged that their children had experienced bullying. During the inspection, the team did not see any instances of bullying. The evidence of the inspection is that any incidents are sorted out effectively by the staff. A high proportion of pupils like being at the school and find the other children friendly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.6 %	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.

15. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies provide opportunities for worship, praise and to reflect upon their own lives and others' lives. Good links are made between personal experience, the experience of the school community and the wider world. Spirituality is enhanced through art and music. The pupils attend Christmas, Easter and leavers' services at the local parish church.
16. The ethos of the school provides good moral guidance. Good use is made of assemblies, particularly class assemblies, for pupils to consider aspects of the world around them. The school is a well-ordered community promoting a caring and sharing ethos. Pupils are clearly taught what is right and wrong, and are encouraged to have a strong sense of fair play. All staff provide pupils with good role models in terms of the way in which they relate to each other. Circle time and personal, health and social education lessons provide good opportunities to examine moral issues.
17. Social development is good and the opinions of pupils are valued. There is an effective school council. After-school clubs, residential trips, the science and other special weeks, day trips (eg to the science centre in Bristol), shared sports and activities with other schools make a very positive contribution to social development.
18. The provision for pupils' cultural development is also good. What is taught in science, art and design, design and technology, music and religious education strongly develops pupils' cultural awareness. Some subjects include a range of cultural experiences through visits to places of interest and from visitors to the school. The curriculum provides opportunities for the development of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures, especially in religious education. Displays of pupils' work and artefacts enrich understanding of this country and the wider world, both past and present. The school prepares pupils well for life in a diverse multi-cultural society. The school had a special world food week, several classes were learning about Chinese New Year during the week of the inspection and the school recently won a multi-cultural prize in a calendar competition. In English, pupils use a good range of texts to contribute to their cultural and multi-cultural development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are very good in the nursery and reception, and consistently good in the rest of the school. The curriculum is enriched by very good links with the community, but does not promote good achievement for a few subjects.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning in the nursery and reception are very good.
- About one third of lessons results in very good learning.
- Assessment is good in the nursery and reception, and for English, mathematics and science.
- Learning support assistants are usually effective in helping pupils to learn.
- Good use is made of outside specialists for teaching.

Commentary

19. In the nursery and reception, the main strengths of the teaching and learning are the very effective planning which is based on the very good assessment information and so activities are very well matched to pupils' learning needs. Teachers and learning support assistants have high but realistic expectations of the children's behaviour and learning, and so the children behave well and are keen to learn. The caring and enthusiastic learning atmosphere provided by all the adults provides an ethos that fosters pupils' learning effectively. There is clear, step-by-step teaching for each area of learning that helps children make good progress. Pupils' achievement is very good for their personal, social and emotional development.
20. In the infants and juniors, teaching and learning are consistently good. Common strengths are that lessons are well planned with a range of interesting activities that secure the pupils' motivation. Sometimes, the learning is made great fun as in a science lesson when pupils investigated the absorbency of different papers following an introduction when the teacher 'accidentally' spilt some liquid and tried to mop it up with the different types of paper that were to hand. Following the excitement this generated, the teacher skilfully used a whole-class discussion to introduce the scientific enquiry that followed on. Class management is effective, and teachers and learning support assistants work effectively with pupils who have behavioural difficulties and this minimises any disruption to learning. Classroom relationships are good, and these help to foster pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils' work in groups and as individuals is carefully monitored, and pupils receive support to help them overcome any learning difficulties.
21. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This results in clear explanations, for example about the molecular structure of solids, liquids and gases. Teachers use questions well to check pupils' understanding and to extend their knowledge and understanding. In some lessons, discussion pairs are used to help all pupils to discuss specific questions. There is a good emphasis on teaching the vocabulary associated with each subject, especially in science.
22. There is some effective use of specialist teaching for ICT which uses the ICT equipment well and teaches new skills in a lucid, step-by-step way. Specialist teaching is provided by other schools and organisations including nearby secondary schools, Plymouth University, the Royal Navy, the MusicZone and sports coaches. Teachers use questions well to check pupils' understanding and to extend their knowledge and understanding. In some lessons, discussion pairs are used to help all pupils to discuss specific questions. There is a good emphasis on teaching the vocabulary associated with each subject, especially in science.
23. In the lessons where learning was very good, the interesting variety of carefully sequenced activities and the brisk pace motivated all of the pupils and resulted in rapid learning. Teachers

explanations and instructions were lucid and precise so that pupils were able to start their tasks quickly. Teachers used questions to assess pupils' learning as well as asking questions that made the pupils think. There was a good emphasis on learning literacy, numeracy or ICT skills through other subjects. Teachers and learning support assistants quickly identified pupils who were not learning effectively and helped them overcome their difficulties.

24. Occasional weaknesses are that teachers do not ensure that all pupils are fully involved in concluding plenary sections of lessons or other shared whole-class activities, and there are instances when marking is not done regularly. During the inspection, work in lessons was well matched to pupils' differing learning needs, although pupils' previously completed work in a few classes for mathematics shows that this does not always happen. Usually, clear learning objectives are shared with the pupils as questions or as statements of what they will learn. Occasionally, the learning objective does not have a wording that is readily understood by the pupils. At the ends of lessons, teachers usually return to the learning objectives to check how much pupils have learnt and, in the best lessons, use this as an opportunity to reinforce the key ideas.
25. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are effective and result in pupils' good levels of achievement from their very low standards when they enter the school. Most teachers use ICT to record their curriculum planning and to create learning resources. In the ICT suite, the data projector and interactive whiteboard are used well.
26. Learning support assistants support pupils' learning during whole-class teaching by ensuring that particular pupils are paying attention and understanding what is taught. During the parts of lessons when pupils work in groups, they monitor pupils' progress carefully and respond to any weaknesses in pupils' skills and understanding. Occasionally, their time is not used effectively, they lack the subject expertise to help pupils learn as much as they should or they give pupils the correct answers rather than helping them to correct their own mistakes.
27. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in small groups and individually by teachers, learning support assistants and outside agencies. Teachers work hard to enable all pupils to achieve well. The targets in pupils' individual education plans are relevant to their learning needs, and their progress towards these targets is regularly monitored. Teachers are aware of these targets but do not always use them when planning lessons. For example, in a few mathematics lessons work is not well matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3 %)	12 (32 %)	19 (51%)	5 (14 %)	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.

28. Parents consider that the teaching is good and that their children are treated fairly. The pupils are very positive about all aspects of the teaching and believe that they have to work hard.
29. In the nursery and reception, there is a system of assessing pupils that involves all adults and this provides good information that is then used to plan the next steps of learning for each child. In addition, there is an assessment record that shows children's progress during the reception year. In Years 1 to 6, there are good, established assessment systems for English, mathematics and science. A wide range of assessment data is collected for each pupil for these subjects and used in a good system that tracks the progress of each pupil. This is used to identify underachieving pupils who are then given additional support. In addition to setting each pupil a National Curriculum level target for the end of each year, pupils are set short-term

challenging targets for English and mathematics and these contribute to their good achievement. A well-structured assessment system for ICT was introduced last September, and there is good ongoing assessment during lessons. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issue for assessment from the previous inspection. For most other subjects, there are not yet whole-school assessment systems. The overall quality of assessment is satisfactory.

The curriculum

The overall breadth and balance of the curriculum is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of activities, many of which involve the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for the nursery and reception classes is good.
- The teaching time for the juniors is below the minimum recommended time.
- The organisation of a few short periods of teaching time during the day is not well matched to the needs of some subjects.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, including the Year 1 nurture class.
- Links with the community create many learning opportunities for pupils.
- The school organises a number of stimulating weeks with a special theme or subject focus.
- The planning for history and geography does not help pupils achieve well.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory for the nursery and reception classes.

Commentary

30. The school has effectively adapted the national guidance for teaching children in the nursery and reception so that the curriculum matches their needs well. In contrast, the national guidance for the teaching of history and geography has not been adapted sufficiently to the school's needs. The teaching time per week for the infants is above the recommended minimum but the teaching time for the juniors is below the recommended minimum by one hour per week. The consequence of this is that the juniors do not have enough teaching time to achieve well in history, geography and music. The blocks of teaching time during the school day, for example, between morning break and lunchtime, are not always well matched to the requirements of different subjects and especially English and mathematics. For example, the small amounts of time left between the end of a lesson and lunch were used satisfactorily during the inspection but are not an integral part of teachers' planning for pupils' learning. The good provision for pupils' personal, health and social education includes education about the misuse of drugs and sex education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements.
31. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is well planned and ensures that they all benefit from the learning opportunities that the school provides. In collaboration with a neighbouring primary school, ten Year 1 pupils are given specialist teaching in a nurture class before rejoining mainstream classes for Year 2. These pupils are skilfully taught and guided and make good progress. There is a register for gifted and talented pupils and this includes the provision to meet their particular talents. Some of this provision comes from the schools' partners in the community.
32. There are many links with other schools and organisations, which make a positive contribution to pupils' achievement. For example, a local charity enables all Year 6 pupils go sailing. For dance, pupils perform at the Plymouth Arts Festival and Plymouth Youth Dance Platform, and Year 5 pupils work with the Birmingham Royal Ballet. Pupils work with local artists and their pictures have been displayed in the City Museum and Art Gallery, and a shop near the school. There are very good links with the nearby Parkside Technology College which provides some specialist teaching for science, ICT and design and technology. A link with Plymstock Sports College provides training for staff and specialist teaching in pupils for a range of sports.

33. The school adapts its curriculum to include a number of weeks with a special theme. The Devonport Regeneration Company provides some funding support for these as well as other aspects of the curriculum, such as the nurture class. Each year, there is a science week when all classes are involved in special scientific activities which involve specialist teaching by outside experts and visits to places of scientific interest such as the Eden Project. Other specialist weeks have included multi-cultural and healthy eating themes. In collaboration with a local radio station, Year 5 pupils completed prize-winning work about their local environment. This good level of curriculum innovation contributes to pupils' good levels of achievement and their strong personal development.
34. There is a good range of out-of-school clubs, with an emphasis on sports. Teams enter competitions for football, netball and kwik cricket. There is also a weekly homework club, and a daily quiet club has recently been introduced at lunchtimes. To enhance the curriculum, residential trips are available to all older pupils and all pupils benefit from educational day visits to both local venues and those further afield.
35. The parents consider that their children have a good range of interesting and enjoyable activities. The pupils like the wide range of visits, including the long walk to the beach for older pupils each summer.
36. The school has a stable and well qualified staff, and this makes an important contribution to pupils' good achievement with their learning and personal development. Important improvements have been made to the school's building and site since the last inspection. The playground is well equipped and used during playtimes and for physical education lessons. Classrooms and the hall are spacious. There is a good ICT suite. However, the accommodation for the nursery and reception is unsatisfactory because of limitations to the access to the outdoor learning area and the unreasonable distance from the nursery to the toilets. The dedicated outside area for the nursery and reception does not contain a covered area and is reached by a ramp from the nursery classroom so its use cannot be integrated fully with work in the classroom. The overall quality of learning resources is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good throughout the school. The school provides them with good support, advice and guidance, and involves them well in its work and development. The high quality has been maintained in this area since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a caring ethos.
- Staff know the pupils very well.
- The school counsellor and drama therapist work with pupils each week.
- Adults working in the school are very good role models for pupils.
- Pupils are involved in decision making through the school council and class discussions.

Commentary

37. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils benefit from the education that it provides with many very good features in the way pupils' well-being, general care and safety are promoted. The school provides a caring, supportive, secure and friendly environment for all its pupils. It ensures that all pupils are given consistent support and guidance in all aspects of their school life.
38. Procedures for monitoring the progress and personal development of the pupils are good. A good system of continuous assessment leads on to individual records. Annual written reports meet statutory requirements and include useful information. Both pupils and their parents are given the opportunity to respond to the comments in reports. Good arrangements are in place

for pupils with special educational needs and their effective individual education plans are regularly reviewed. All pupils have targets as a result of good tracking, monitoring and assessment procedures for English and mathematics.

39. The caring staff and a wide range of sound policies enable pupils to receive very good support and guidance and to learn in a happy and safe environment. Teachers and other staff know their pupils very well and there is a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour. However, some midday supervisors are not fully integrated into the whole-school staff team. Pupils are consulted and their opinions valued. The school council meets regularly and various items are discussed. Pupils were involved in setting up the peer mediation scheme to solve playtime disputes. Procedures for monitoring discipline and promoting good behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy is effective and pupils understand and appreciate the standards of behaviour expected from them. The procedures for promoting high levels of attendance are good and most parents are aware of their responsibilities in this area. The educational welfare officer visits the school weekly to monitor attendance and take action where necessary. The school runs a successful breakfast club to ensure that pupils are well prepared for morning lessons.
40. The school counsellor and drama therapist work with pupils each week. They liaise with other staff and support pupils with a wide range of significant social and personal needs. Parents are fully informed and involved. The older pupils consider that the school counsellor is helpful.
41. Procedures for child protection and health and safety checks are very good. The headteacher undertakes the liaison required for child protection and is well trained and informed. Any incidents are dealt with under the LEA's child protection procedures. All the staff underwent training last year using a NSPCC distance learning module as they are aware of their responsibilities in this area and like to be well informed.
42. The school provides a safe environment for all its pupils. Thorough maintenance and vigilant caretaking ensure that the building and equipment are safe. There are sound and effective arrangements for health and safety. There are very good first aid and medical procedures, which are conducive to the well-being of pupils in all situations. Procedures for dealing with accidents are well known to pupils and staff and two members of staff have undergone training in first aid. The administration of medicines is carefully recorded and medicines are kept in a safe place. Inhalers are kept in the classrooms and are named. Health and safety procedures are fully in place and kept under constant review by the governors.
43. The parents consider that their children are well cared for and that there are good arrangements when children join the school. Almost all of the pupils have an adult at the school who they would go to if they were worried.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very strong partnerships with parents, other schools and the community. These partnerships provide pupils with some very good opportunities for learning. Communications between parents and the school are very good. There has been a good improvement in this aspect since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents and carers are given much encouragement to be involved with the school.
- Parents think highly of the school.
- The school and its grounds are used extensively by the local community.
- There are many sporting links with other primary and secondary schools.
- There are good academic links with nearby secondary schools and Plymouth University.

Commentary

44. Parents are very pleased with the school. They consider that they are kept well informed about their children's progress and are comfortable in approaching the school with their questions and concerns. The quality of information provided for parents through reports, newsletters and other leaflets is good. However, the prospectus, although listing detailed information, is insufficiently attractive and easy to read. Parents appreciate the useful information about the school in the many informative induction booklets issued to pupils who start in nursery and reception. Parents are made very welcome in the school and many take the opportunity to bring their children into school and have informal conversations with staff on a daily basis. Parents are asked to come into school at the end of the school day to collect their children, and this works well. There is a comprehensive sharing of information and the school is justifiably proud of its relationship with parents and carers. The school emphasises the importance of working with parents and encouraging them to participate in their children's education. The homework notebooks are a useful way of involving parents in their children's work, as is the regular provision of homework. The parents are consulted about issues affecting the school and their opinions are taken into account. Any complaints are resolved promptly.
45. Effective induction procedures are carefully planned. The school forges particularly good links with the parents of pre-school children by inviting them into school regularly. There is a well-attended toddler group which meets weekly. This is particularly helpful in ensuring that the children see the school as a familiar, friendly place. Parents are invited to class assemblies and are encouraged to celebrate the achievements and successes of their children and the school. The school's partnership with parents is overseen by a designated member of staff and includes parent courses and visiting parents at home. The school also has close links with the LEA's Family and Parent Learning Service, which runs several courses at the school.
46. The school supports every opportunity to maximise community provision. The very good liaison and co-ordination with both primary and secondary schools, involving funding from Sport England and Active Sports, ensure that there are football festivals and coaching in several sports at no cost to the pupils. Some coaching takes place in school, but the evening Street League ensures continuity on new floodlit all-weather surfaces close to the school. This strong links with Plymstock Sports College and Plymouth Argyle Football club provide specialist teaching in physical education lessons for football, netball, hockey, gymnastics, basketball and tag rugby. The special provision for some pupils on the gifted and talented register is provided through the community.
47. The school never locks the gate to its playground and field. Over the years, the parents, children and school have raised money to install and maintain good quality play equipment in the grounds. The playground facilities are well used by the members of the community and pupils out of school hours, who appreciate the trust shown in them and vandalism is minimal. The school premises are used by various groups for meetings on a regular basis, including the Devonport Regeneration Company.
48. The school has a close working partnership with Parkside Community Technology College, the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. The headteachers meet regularly as part of the Devonport and Stonehouse Academic Council and staff in both schools work closely together. An example of this is the close liaison between the science co-ordinators so that some lessons can take place in the laboratories at Parkside. There are also links with other secondary schools. The schools have effective arrangements in place to smooth the transition to secondary school identifying curricular strengths and weaknesses in individual pupils. The school also maintains very good technology links with Seymour House Primary Technology Centre, which is a nearby Centre for Excellence. There are also useful links with Plymouth University especially for the annual science weeks.
49. The school works in partnership with other primary schools. Sports fixtures take place and the nurture class for Year 1 includes half its pupils from a nearby school, benefiting both schools. The school has good links with a wide range of organisations in the local community. These

include the local church, police and local businesses. The community priest attends school assemblies and the school celebrates harvest festival and Christmas in the local church.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior managers provide good leadership and are effective in ensuring the ethos of the school. The school is well managed and the governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good team-work by leaders, senior managers and co-ordinators.
- Very strong commitment to the needs of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, and good management of special educational needs.
- Governors are fully involved and committed to the overall life of the school and have identified the need to develop their role as 'critical friends' to the headteacher and subject co-ordinators.
- The school development plan does not take a sufficiently long-term view of how it is to further improve standards.

Commentary

50. The headteacher leads the school well and is effectively supported by the senior management team and subject co-ordinators. Staff share his vision for the school and know what they are working towards. The headteacher has developed a very strong team spirit by fully involving the staff in decision-making and constantly motivating, supporting and encouraging them. A feature of his leadership is that he is always walking around the school and visiting classrooms in order to praise and encourage staff and pupils. As a result, staff feel valued and are fully committed to the school's aims. This is influential in maintaining and developing the ethos of the school and the strong desire to raise standards. The headteacher reviews the deployment of staff each year and successfully uses teachers' particular interests and expertise throughout the school. He establishes effective teams that benefit pupils' learning and complement the teachers' professional development. The parents consider that the leadership and management of the school are good and that the staff work well together as a team.
51. The headteacher is very committed to welcoming and including pupils of a wide range of ability and background. His management of the pupils with complex behaviour and learning difficulties is very good. He works constantly to support the teachers and pupils when difficulties occur, and has established effective systems and procedures to enable all pupils to benefit from the school's provision. Teachers learn from this good role model and have good behaviour management skills and, in turn, many pupils learn to be patient and tolerant of each other.
52. The school is well managed. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. There is effective delegation of responsibilities, and innovation and initiative are fostered successfully. Performance data, from national and optional tests, are used to set appropriate targets for all pupils in English and mathematics and for those with special educational needs. The quality of arrangements for their performance management is good, and those staff new to the school receive the assistance and advice they need. As a result, the school has a good reputation for retaining its staff and recruiting new teachers. Policies for behaviour and assessment in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and science are consistently implemented. Financial management is good and governors receive regular monitoring reports on the school's budget. Additional funds and specific funds are well used to support educational priorities. The school has a budget carry forward of about five per cent because it is planning to use some of this money to contribute to planned building improvements. The principals of best value are applied well, for example, in planning for building improvements and in the purchase of resources.

53. There has been some effective monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work by the co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science during the autumn term. They identified clear strengths and points for action, and used the outcome of the monitoring to make improvements. However, there are some weaknesses in the effectiveness of monitoring as there is an isolated instance of inconsistency in implementing the school's policy for marking pupils' work. The headteacher has audited the approaches to teaching gifted and talented pupils and checked that there is special provision for each of these pupils, but there is insufficient monitoring of the progress of these pupils.
54. Governors are fully involved in the overall life of the school. They work closely with the headteacher in the development of the school and are well informed by the headteacher and his staff of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have identified the need to improve the school's facilities and produced a long-term plan for future improvements. The governors are thorough in ensuring that they fulfil their statutory duties and have a programme for the review and checking of important areas such as the arrangements for pupils with special educational needs. Governors are already aware of the need to develop their role as 'critical friends' to the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. The headteacher's termly reports to the governing body give insufficient information about the quality of teaching and the evaluation of pupils' standards.
55. There is a detailed, well-structured school development plan. It is based on an analysis of the school's performance, is constructed in consultation with governors and staff, and is monitored regularly. However, it does not make clear an order of priority for areas of improvement and it does not look more than one year ahead. Individual plans for the improvement of each subject are also limited to one year at a time and, consequently, contain numerous and wide-ranging areas for improvement in the short-term. These plans are being implemented but, for a few subjects, they result in the introduction of too many improvements in a short time. For improving standards, plans for some subjects such as English and mathematics have types of targets that are commonly found in subject development plans in many schools. However, these targets are not always based on a clear diagnosis of the weaknesses in pupils' standards, with clear practical steps to remedy these weaknesses that cause the below average standards.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April [2003] to March [2004]

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	716,113
Total expenditure	680,869
Expenditure per pupil	3,660

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39,630
Balance carried forward to the next	35,244

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes (ie the Foundation Stage) is very good. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. She has a good understanding strengths and weaknesses of the provision, and has made significant improvements in a relatively short time.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in the nursery and reception is very good. The main strengths of the teaching are the very effective planning, based on the very good assessment information and modification of the national guidance, high expectations and the caring and enthusiastic learning atmosphere provided by all the adults who work in the Foundation Stage. Support staff are usually very effective in helping pupils to learn but there are occasions when they are not used well enough to support learning during whole-class teaching.

In all six areas of learning, children enter the nursery class with very low levels of attainment in comparison with national expectations for the children's ages. They achieve well as a result of the very good teaching and enter the reception class with improved standards, but these remain well below national averages. In personal, social and emotional development, the majority of children achieve really well and are on course to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, a small minority of children are on course to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. The accommodation inside is bright and well resourced, but the rather cramped conditions limit the opportunities for the full range of activities to be made available at any one time. The toilet areas are unsatisfactory because they are outside of the classrooms and too far from the nursery class. The dedicated outside area does not contain a covered area and is reached by a ramp from the nursery classroom so its use cannot be integrated fully with work in the classroom. Reception class children can only access the outside area by walking through the nursery classroom. However, the teachers make the best use of the accommodation available by planning a varied curriculum according to the conditions.

During the inspection, sufficient teaching was seen for three areas of learning and so there is enough evidence to make judgements about the quality of provision for those areas of learning. These areas of learning are:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy;
- mathematical development.

For the other three areas of learning, provision and pupils' work were sampled.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is very good.
- A challenging and supportive environment encourages children to become confident and independent.

Commentary

56. Overall, the children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development in the nursery and reception classes. The quality of teaching is very good. A wide variety of activities is provided for the children to develop in this area, for example, in circle times the children are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you' as they receive pieces

of fruit and a drink from each other and to listen carefully to what others are saying. All children take part in a wide range of directed and self-chosen activities. Great care is taken to foster the children's self-confidence and to encourage positive attitudes to learning. Staff introduce the children to school life well. They visit them at home and organise induction meetings and open days which help them to enter the school confidently and happily. Children who require additional support are identified early.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the challenging teaching.
- Very good opportunities are provided to develop children's speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

57. Children make good progress because of the very high emphasis the teachers place on developing speaking and listening skills. For example, in the reception class children were seen using Lego but did not discuss their activity with others unless the teacher prompted them. Their speaking was limited to comments made to themselves. Teachers take every opportunity during activities to develop children's vocabulary through questioning and discussion, and in whole-class sessions they set high expectations for children to contribute appropriately and listen carefully to each other as well as to the adults. The positive and very lively learning environment helps to give children the confidence to talk and to feel that their contribution is valued. Overall, children thoroughly enjoy their lessons. This was particularly evident when the teacher was seen introducing the sound *r* and asked the children to name objects which began with that sound which she then attempts to draw. There was much delight and laughter as one child volunteered *rhinoceros!* Children enjoy stories and rhymes, and are developing an early interest in books and writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the very good teaching.
- Teachers make very good use of assessment data to meet the needs of all the children.

Commentary

58. The very good teaching helps most pupils achieve as well as they can in both the nursery and reception classes. Teachers plan a very good range of tasks to develop children's mathematical understanding and use every opportunity to consolidate their learning. For example, during the registration period the teachers encourage children to count the number of children present and to work out the number absent by counting on. Very effective use of number songs and rhymes stimulate children's learning. Teachers use a very good range of teaching strategies to maintain children's interest and enthusiasm which makes learning fun and exciting, and results in a very positive atmosphere in which children feel confident and try hard to succeed. For example, in the reception class the teacher makes deliberate mistakes which children take great delight in correcting. Teachers have a very good knowledge of what each child knows and can do because of the very effective assessment systems and procedures. As a result, activities are carefully planned to meet the needs of individuals and ensure that all pupils can progress at their own level of ability.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

59. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards, but the work on display shows that standards are below those expected. At registration times, the teacher develops children's knowledge and understanding by asking them about the days of the week and questioning them about *today* and *tomorrow*. Children describe the weather and through listening to stories learn about clouds and rain. All children are provided with good opportunities to use a computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

60. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards because no teaching was observed in the hall during the inspection. The designated outside area is cramped and limits opportunities for outdoor play. There is no covered section and this limits the use of the outdoor area. Teachers' planning indicates that a wide range of activities are available to help pupils develop their skills in handling small equipment and different materials.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

61. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards, but the limited amount of work seen indicates that standards are well below national averages. Teachers' planning indicates that a wide range of opportunities are made available to the children which include experimentation with different textures, colours, shapes and role-play activities. Children enjoy singing and learn songs that help them consolidate their learning in other areas.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching ensures good learning and progress so that pupils achieve well.
- There is still scope to raise standards in all areas of the English curriculum.
- Leadership and management are good and the subject co-ordinator has a very good grasp of how to improve provision.
- Procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are good and mean that teachers are able to set pupils effective targets to help them improve.
- Teachers do not consistently make best use of opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills through extended and personal writing in other subjects.

Commentary

62. The results of the national tests in 2003 for pupils at age seven and eleven were well below national averages in both reading and writing. Pupils' standards are very low when they enter the school. The progress of the current Year 2 pupils has been made from a very low baseline, and their standards are still well below national averages. Progress continues to be good in the juniors, and the standards of the current Year 6 pupils are below national averages. Pupils' achievement is good because teaching is challenging for pupils of all abilities so that most pupils make at least the expected progress.
63. Most pupils come into the school with speaking and listening skills that are low and with very limited vocabularies, and this severely limits their rates of progress. In a Year 1 lesson, most pupils tended to answer in single words and found difficulty expressing themselves, and it was only the very skilful questioning and support of the teacher that encouraged them to try to expand on what they were saying. By Year 2, pupils are much more confident in talking and

they chat together and with adults but, for many, their vocabularies and powers of expression remain well below what would be expected at that age. By Year 6 about half of the pupils are working at about or above the expected level. Many are beginning to develop the ability to express themselves and to give explanations and reasons to support a point of view, for example, about the pros and cons of keeping animals in captivity, but they are not yet up to the expected level.

64. Pupils' below average speaking and listening skills impact upon their reading skills. In general, pupils are very positive about reading and are keen to develop their skills but, by Year 2, they are still well below the expected level. Many pupils, for example, struggle to read the big book story of *Little Red Riding Hood* even though they have 'read' it in the class several times before. Year 6 pupils are also positive in their attitudes and most read at home, though only a minority read frequently for pleasure. They have sound book skills and most are able to talk about contents pages and indexes, and explain how to use them in research. The better readers are fluent and read clearly with good understanding but some are still hesitant and are fumbling to pronounce some words. The majority are below the level expected for their age.
65. Writing skills are also below average and this follows from weaknesses in speaking, listening and reading. There are several pupils in Year 2 who still have difficulty in forming their letters consistently and are not able to write more than a sentence or so. Standards further up the school remain generally low, though there are very commendable examples of work that match national averages, such as the poems arising out of the *Sense of Place Project*.
66. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school, with some examples of very good teaching. Teachers work well with the teaching assistants to make sure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and make good progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Teachers have a good range of teaching and behaviour management skills that motivate pupils and encourage good attitudes and behaviour, and very positive attitudes to learning. There were occasional weaknesses in some lessons and these included: a learning objective that was not in language that was easy for the pupils to read; and that not all pupils could hear the conversation between the teacher and individual pupils during whole-class teaching.
67. The subject co-ordinator has a very clear grasp of how English needs to be developed. A number of priorities have already been identified, one of which is the need for a strategic plan to develop speaking and listening skills systematically throughout the school. The present development plan identifies issues for improvement, and the type of targets for improvement that it includes are similar to those found in other schools. However, there are weaknesses in exactly how improvements to pupils' standards are going to be made, measured and evaluated over a period of time. There is good monitoring and tracking of how well the pupils are doing so that extra support can be targeted where needed. All pupils are given specific targets on how they can improve and many pupils spoken to recognise the value of these and say that they help them a lot. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

68. The English co-ordinator has rightly flagged this up as a priority because there needs to be a whole-school approach across all subjects so that pupils are consistently learning and using good techniques that will help them improve their language skills. There are good examples of personal and extended writing being developed in various subjects. The Coppelgia Dance Project with Years 5 and 6 for example has produced some good work, and there are instances of longer pieces of writing in history and religious education. However there is a lack of consistency. Basic rules of writing are not always applied, for example in mathematics, and this gives mixed messages and leads to confusion and perhaps a sense that 'it does not really matter'. There is relatively little extended writing in history and geography, and in science the writing is very closely structured with much emphasis on work sheets in some classes. Use of computers to support literacy is satisfactory and is improving in the school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and so pupils achieve well.
- In a few classes, tasks and activities do not take enough account of the pupils' different levels of ability.
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills.
- Good leadership of the subject.

Commentary

69. A very high proportion of pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are very low when compared with the national expectations. Pupils make good progress in the time between entering the nursery class and reaching the end of Year 2, when standards are well below average. Pupils' good achievement continues in Years 3 to 6, and overall standards rise so that the current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach below average standards next summer. Pupils achieve well as a result of the good teaching and they are enthusiastic and try hard because they enjoy the subject. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and achieve as well as other pupils.
70. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and classroom assistants contribute well to the effective support given to different groups of pupils. The best teaching is characterised by:
- planning with clear learning objectives which are made clear to the pupils;
 - effective questioning to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and extend their learning;
 - regular marking of pupils' work which informs them of the ways in which they can improve their learning;
 - challenging pace and variety of activities in lessons which maintain interest and develop understanding;
 - good use of assessment data to inform planning and provide appropriate activities for the wide range of abilities.
71. However, in a few lessons, planning takes insufficient account of pupils' different levels of ability and stages of learning. Consequently, in these few classes much of the work is the same for all pupils which results in a lack of challenge, particularly for the more-able pupils. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' mental number skills and start each lesson with an effective oral and mental session. However, a significant minority of pupils are insecure in their understanding of the value of each digit in a number.
72. Leadership of mathematics is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and eager to find ways to raise standards. She has established good procedures for tracking pupils' progress. For example, test results, pupils' work and regular monitoring of teachers' planning are used to provide information about areas for improvement. The co-ordinator has completed a review of the subject and introduced a wide range of systems and procedures that are helping teachers to raise standards but these have not had enough time to have their full effect. However, there is no long-term planning for improvement and initiatives for this year are numerous and wide-ranging. They do not set out step-by-step action to be taken over a longer period of time in order to provide a specific focus for improvement. As a result, the implementation of some of these numerous initiatives is not fully consistent. The co-ordinator does not observe lessons throughout the school on a regular basis to ensure that improvements are implemented consistently.

Mathematics across the curriculum

73. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills as part of their work in other subjects, for example, in measuring and recording data in science, and measuring in design and technology. However, opportunities tend to occur incidentally rather than as a result of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The co-ordinator takes practical steps to raise standards.
- Pupils' achievement improves because of the annual science week and partnership with local secondary schools.
- Pupils complete much practical, experimental work in science.

Commentary

74. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach standards that match national averages by next summer. In Year 2, pupils' overall standards are below national expectations. In all years, pupils' achievement is very good and the school adds much value to pupils' standards, which were very low when they entered the school. Boys and girls achieve similar standards. There are examples of good achievement in scientific enquiry in each year. For example, Year 2 pupils worked with a range of materials to investigate the effects of different forces on a range of materials, Year 3 pupils tested different types of paper for absorbency, and pupils from Years 5 and 6 carried out experiments to investigate the properties of gases. The pupils from Years 5 and 6 finished their lesson with a particle model made from plastic balls for solids, liquids and gases. Pupils' investigative work involves a good range of measurement, and data is recorded in an appropriate variety of ways.
75. Teaching and learning are always at least good, with some very good and excellent lessons. Teaching is based on well-structured guidance and a good assessment system so that pupils' work builds on and extends their earlier learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and so plan pupils' work carefully with a good emphasis on practical work and the use of the correct scientific vocabulary. Classroom teaching is enriched by a week when all pupils are involved in a wide range of science activities including, for example, teaching by staff from Plymouth University and a visit from a planetarium, as well as visits to the Eden Project and a science centre in Bristol. Two local secondary schools provide science teaching for Years 5 and 6 in science laboratories. Until last December, there was a science club funded by the Plymouth Education Action Zone.
76. Leadership and management of the subject are very effective. The co-ordinator analyses the results of the Year 6 national tests each year and checks the quality of pupils' recorded work and teachers' planning. This monitoring information is then used to secure improvements when weaknesses are identified. Since the last inspection, there has been a good improvement to science provision as pupils' very good achievement has been maintained and the quality of teaching is now higher. Sound use is made of ICT, and pupils use data logging as part of their experimental work. There is a good emphasis on scientific vocabulary but pupils rarely write at length in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality ICT suite has been used every week by each class since last summer.
- Good teaching is provided by a specialist and pupils' standards are rising.
- Sound use is made of ICT to enhance pupils' learning in English, mathematics, science and music.
- A good start has been made in planning the use of ICT by other subjects but, as the school is aware, more remains to be done.

Commentary

77. The overall standards of pupils in Years 2 and 6 are below national expectations because the ICT suite has only been used for a relatively short time owing to technical difficulties. Consequently, pupils have not had enough time to develop all the necessary skills and knowledge. Standards have improved since the last inspection and, for example, Year 2 pupils give instructions to control a programmable toy, data logging is used in science by Year 4, and Year 6 pupils follow a unit of work on control technology at Parkside Technology College. Pupils' achievement is now good because of the effective teaching that makes good use of the up-to-date learning resources that have been fully operational since the last summer term.
78. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and so teach new skills in a clear, step-by-step way. In the ICT suite, there is effective use of the data projector and interactive whiteboard. Whole-class teaching is brisk so that pupils have plenty of time working on computers, and they are given effective individual support. Ongoing assessment is used well in lessons to adapt the teaching to pupils' learning needs. A good assessment system was established last September.
79. Leadership and management are good. The targets in the improvement plan are being tackled, and the key issue for ICT from the last inspection has been addressed. The co-ordinator has had a few opportunities for monitoring, and has used the resulting information well to guide future plans for improvement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. As well as learning specific ICT skills, pupils make satisfactory use of computers to support their learning in some other subjects. For example, pupils from Year 3 and 5 use computers to create musical compositions, and they review and modify their work as they progress. In a Year 4 English lesson, higher-attaining pupils worked at the classroom's two computers and used a carefully prepared template to create sentences that generated sinister feelings. All co-ordinators have identified how ICT can be used to support pupils' learning in their subjects and an appropriate range of software has been purchased. However, subjects have not yet integrated the use of ICT into their medium-term curriculum planning. There is specialist teaching by the MusicZone that uses computers and this results in good achievement. There is a good ICT club that is helping pupils develop above-average skills of music composition.

HUMANITIES

81. Only one lesson was seen in history and two in geography. Therefore, it is not possible to make firm overall judgements about provision for these subjects. In addition to observing lessons, the inspector had discussions with the co-ordinator and scrutinised the co-ordinator's file and pupils' previously completed work.

82. In **history** and **geography**, there are indications that pupils' standards are well below national expectations because the amount of teaching time given to these subjects is below that recommended. The school uses national guidance as the framework on which lessons are based, but it is teaching more than is required by the National Curriculum. Also, it has not adapted the guidance sufficiently to the needs of its pupils and has not identified what will be studied in outline and what will be studied in depth. In history, Year 3 pupils take the role of Roman soldiers and write good letters home that are based on historical evidence. Year 5 pupils complete factual research about the working lives of Victorian children. For geography, Year 5 pupils have written vivid, imaginative poems about Devonport as part of BBC Radio Devon's *Sense of Place* competition. However, in both subjects, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their literacy skills for writing. Portfolios of pupils' work are being developed but the work is not yet labelled to explain the standards that they show.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' work covers the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 produce some thoughtful personal writing but the overall range of writing is limited.

Commentary

83. In Years 2 and 6, the majority of pupils meet the standards expected by the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' achievement is good, including those with special educational needs. For example, Year 1 pupils know the story of Jonah and why he said sorry, and apply the idea of sorry to their own lives. Older pupils write thoughtfully about their experiences of temptation and forgiveness, and Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of the Israelites in Egypt and of the Passover celebration. They recognise that religions have some common features and some differences. A weaker aspect of their knowledge is the identification of the significant features of key religious figures.
84. Pupils develop a few units of work in depth, such as the one on faith. Also, they have a few opportunities to write at length but too much of their writing is of short sentences on worksheets. Pupils have some interesting learning activities. For example, Year 4 pupils created models of the interior of a church and a Jewish visitor spoke to Year 5 pupils. There is a good link with the local parish church and its staff have contributed to religious education lessons.
85. Lessons are well planned with a variety of interesting tasks that secure the pupils' interest. Learning support assistants are used effectively to support discussions and other activities in groups. Paired discussions are used well, and lessons have a brisk pace and strong sense of purpose.
86. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Progress is underway with the targets in the subject development plan. Monitoring is informal, which is a weakness. A portfolio of pupils' work has been established although this work is not yet labelled to explain its assessed standard. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

87. Only one lesson was seen in design and technology and music, and none were seen in art and design. Consequently, it is not possible to make firm overall judgements about provision for these subjects. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors had discussions with co-

ordinators and pupils, and scrutinised the co-ordinator's file and pupils' previously completed work.

88. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in **art and design**, but teachers' planning and photographic evidence show that all elements of the National Curriculum are being covered. There is some work of above-average standards, such as the work done on the Jewish Rosh Hashanah Festival and the Years 5 and 6 artwork being done with the support of an artist-in-residence, which effectively developed and used pupils' ICT skills. The subject co-ordinator left at the end of last term and has yet to be replaced.
89. The evidence indicates that the standard of pupils' work in **design and technology** matches national expectations. The school has made good improvements to the subject since the last inspection. Year 5 pupils design and make plastic key rings and moving toys. Year 6 pupils design and make slippers, shelters and bread rolls. They evaluate their finished products although these evaluations are a weaker aspect of their work. Pupils' work in Year 5 benefits from the links with Parkside Technology College and HMS *Drake*. Also, weeks with a special focus contribute to pupils' good achievement in design and technology. For example, the world culture week gave pupils the opportunity to create food from different countries and healthy eating week included teaching from Royal Navy staff and practical support from parents as pupils chose and created healthy recipes.
90. The school has developed good links with local **music** specialists based at the nearby MusicZone. In the one lesson seen, Year 5 pupils used computer software to compose and edit their work in preparation for the production of a compact disc. Pupils were enthusiastic and concentrated well. They confidently selected the sounds and effects they desired and enjoyed editing and improving their work. In discussion, Year 6 pupils described a very limited experience of music and were not able to talk about famous composers and their work. Pupils attend a weekly singing practice with the co-ordinator and have opportunities to receive specialist tuition provided by visiting teachers in violin and keyboard instruction.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and results in good learning and achievement.
- Very good use is made of opportunities offered by outside agencies and other schools to enrich provision.
- There are no consistent procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' development through the school.

Commentary

91. Many pupils have underdeveloped physical skills when they come into the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, progress well through the school and, by Year 6, standards are in line with those expected nationally in dance and games, and approaching expected standards in gymnastics. Pupils enjoy physical education and have very positive attitudes.
92. Year 3 pupils were observed with an outside professional coach, learning basketball skills. There is a wide range of ball control skills with some pupils able to throw, catch, bounce, dribble and control the ball with dexterity. Year 4 also had outside coaching from outside professionals and were learning soccer skills. They were developing sound skills of moving, passing and controlling together with tactics such as anticipating the ball. Years 5 and 6 were observed in a dance lesson. They showed interest in and good awareness of principles of dance such as positive, strong movements and the use of arms, fingers and facial expression.

Almost all of the pupils were able to work in pairs or threes to produce a sequence of interpretative movements together and synchronise them with music.

93. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good with a significant amount of very good teaching. Attention is paid to warming up and cooling down, and pupils explain why this is necessary. Teachers manage classes well, and most lessons are well paced and brisk with a good variety of activities which keep pupils motivated. However, although individual teachers know the pupils well and some good use is made of evaluation during the lessons, there are no consistent procedures for assessing how well pupils are progressing through the school.
94. The subject co-ordinator is well qualified and knowledgeable, and leads and manages effectively. Very good use is made of outside agencies to come in and raise standards. For example, there is soccer coaching through Plymouth Argyle Football Club and basketball coaching is provided by a professional player. There is a separate knowledgeable dance co-ordinator. The Coppelia Dance Project link with the Birmingham Royal Ballet Company is proving effective and popular. There are good links with other schools in arranging fixtures and competitions. There are strong links with Plymstock Sports College which provides specialist teaching in physical education lessons for football, netball, hockey, gymnastics, basketball and tag rugby.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

95. Only two lessons were observed for **personal, social, health and citizenship education** (PSHCE) and one of these was very short but further evidence comes from observing the breakfast club, toddler group, the schools council and clubs. It also comes from reviewing planning and discussions with pupils, staff and other supporting adults and parents. However, there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision.
96. Pupils are very positive about the school and talk about the good relationships and fairness of teachers. They feel they are given good support and guidance and this is borne out by what was observed, for example in a Year 1 registration which quite naturally included a lot of social and personal development in the interaction between staff and pupils.
97. The school involves pupils in a range of events designed to develop PSHCE. For example, a Year 5 project involved pupils in writing a mini-manifesto that was published in a local newspaper, and analysing a video about stereotyping. Circle time is used to help pupils explore issues and a range of visitors, including the police and the school nurse, come to discuss issues such as 'Stranger Danger'. Other visitors focus on life skills. The pupils are involved in a range of community events, such as the *Sense of Place* project, the *Life Skills Caravan* and the *Children in Need* fund and these develop pupils' awareness of some issues beyond their own home and school life. Lessons are based on national guidance for the subject, but this guidance has not been adapted to the needs of pupils at this particular 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	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	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).